



Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

TEST INFORMATION BOOKLET

26 French

MA-SG-FLD026-04

Massachusetts Department of Education

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French (Field 26)

Test Overview Chart

Sample Test Directions and Test Items

Answer Key

Information on Scoring

Test Objectives

***Test Overview Chart:
French (26)***

Subareas	Approximate Number of Multiple-Choice Items	Number of Open-Response Items
I. Listening Comprehension	9–11	
II. Reading Comprehension	9–11	
III. Linguistics and Language Structures	19–21	
IV. Cultural Understanding	14–16	
V. Written Expression		1
VI. Oral Expression		1

The French test is designed to assess the candidate's knowledge of the subject matter required for the Massachusetts Foreign Language Teacher certificate. This subject matter knowledge is delineated in the Massachusetts Department of Education *Regulations for the Certification of Educational Personnel in Massachusetts* (April 1995), 603 C.M.R. 7.12, "Competencies for Specific Certificates," Section (13) (a) 2. "Competency I: Subject Matter Knowledge."

The French test assesses the candidate's proficiency and depth of understanding of the subject at the level required for a baccalaureate major, according to Massachusetts standards. Candidates are typically nearing completion of or have completed their undergraduate work when they take the test.

The multiple-choice and open-response items cover the subareas as indicated in the chart above.

Sample Test Directions and Test Items: French (26)

Sample General Test Directions

This test consists of four sections: (1) a listening section with multiple-choice questions, (2) a reading section with multiple-choice questions, (3) a writing assignment, and (4) a speaking assignment. The first three sections will be administered in this room. The speaking assignment (Section Four) is contained in a separate test booklet and may be administered in a separate room. The directions for each section appear before that section.

Each question in the first two sections 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 **Answer Sheet A** 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.**

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.

Sample Listening Comprehension Test Directions

The first section of this test contains questions that involve listening to a recording. Each listening passage will begin with directions that will tell you what to listen for. The directions will be read aloud on the recording. They are also printed in your test booklet. Listen carefully to the recording and follow along in your test booklet. Ample time is provided between questions for your responses. Record your answer on **Answer Sheet A** in the space that corresponds to the question number. Unless otherwise indicated, each listening passage will be read twice.

Once the recording has begun, it cannot be stopped, nor can any part of it be replayed. Therefore, listen carefully. If you have any questions or if you cannot hear this recording clearly, please raise your hand now.

1. (You will see in the test booklet and hear on the recording:)

Listen carefully to the following conversation to determine the relationship between the two speakers.

(You will hear on the recording:)

[female voice] Vous avez choisi?

[male voice] Pas encore. Qu'est-ce que vous pourriez nous proposer?

[female voice] Les poires Belle Hélène et les religieuses au chocolat sont très bonnes.

[male voice] Entendu. Une de chaque, alors.

Now answer the question.

(You will see in the test booklet:)

Quel rapport social existe-t-il entre la femme qui parle et la personne à qui elle parle?

- A. serveuse à client
- B. maîtresse de maison à invité
- C. mère à enfant
- D. professeur à étudiant

END OF LISTENING SECTION

Please go on.

2. Use the passage below from *Du côté de chez Swann* by Marcel Proust to answer the question that follows.

Mais le concert recommença et Swann comprit qu'il ne pourrait pas s'en aller avant la fin de ce nouveau numéro du programme. Il souffrait de rester enfermé au milieu de ces gens dont la bêtise et les ridicules le frappaient d'autant plus douloureusement qu'ignorant son amour, incapables, s'ils l'avaient connu, de s'y intéresser et de faire autre chose que d'en sourire comme d'un enfantillage ou de le déplorer comme une folie, ils le lui faisaient apparaître sous l'aspect d'un état subjectif qui n'existait que pour lui, dont rien d'extérieur ne lui affirmait la réalité; il souffrait surtout, et au point que même le son des instruments lui donnait envie de crier, de prolonger son exil dans ce lieu où Odette ne viendrait jamais, où personne, où rien ne la connaissait, d'où elle était entièrement absente.

Pourquoi Swann aurait-il voulu partir avant la fin du concert?

- A. Il avait l'impression que le public était composé de gens stupides et ignorants qui se moquaient de lui et ne faisaient pas attention à ses sentiments.
- B. L'orchestre jouait si mal que cela lui donnait envie de pleurer et d'aller en hâte rejoindre Odette dans un endroit calme.
- C. Les gens qui l'entouraient ne savaient rien de ses sentiments pour Odette et, même s'ils avaient été au courant, auraient été incapables de les comprendre.
- D. Odette lui manquait et sa seule envie était d'aller la retrouver dans son exil où personne ne la connaissait et où il savait qu'elle souffrait.

3. In contrast to an adult learner, a child learning the structure of a second language is more likely to:

- A. depend on written representation of the second language.
- B. apply the deep structure of the second language spontaneously.
- C. memorize grammar rules of the second language.
- D. compare the structures of the native and second languages consciously.

4. **Choisissez la meilleure transposition à la forme *négative* de la phrase ci-dessous.**

Chacun a apporté des fleurs.

- A. Personne a apporté de fleurs.
- B. Personne n'a pas apporté de fleurs.
- C. Personne n'a apporté des fleurs.
- D. Personne n'a apporté de fleurs.

5. Lesquels des événements suivants sont les meilleurs succès politiques de la carrière de Charles de Gaulle?

- I. son rôle comme chef de la Résistance à Londres pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale
- II. la fin de la guerre d'Algérie et l'octroi de leur indépendance aux anciennes colonies d'Afrique du Nord
- III. la fin de la guerre d'Indochine
- IV. la nouvelle constitution qui établit la Cinquième République et restaura la stabilité du gouvernement français
- V. la fin des émeutes et des grèves de 1968

- A. I et III
- B. I, II, et IV
- C. II, IV, et V
- D. II et V

Description of Open-Response Items

Written Expression

The candidate is required to produce a well-organized written response in the target language in response to a prompt. Each assignment will specify a particular type of written product (e.g., a letter, a narrative description, etc.) and an audience for whom the written product is intended. The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to communicate in an appropriate register, using a range of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and simple and complex linguistic structures, and displaying cultural knowledge and sensitivity.

Oral Expression

The candidate is required to speak on tape in response to a prompt, which is presented in written form in the test booklet. Each assignment describes an imaginary situation requiring oral communication in the target language (e.g., a response to a problem encountered in the course of travel, a description of a hypothetical course of events, or a discussion of the advantages and/or disadvantages of a proposed idea). Candidates are given one minute to formulate their response and two minutes to speak on tape. The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, using an appropriate range of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and simple and complex language structures, and displaying cultural knowledge and sensitivity.

Sample Written Expression Test Directions

This section of the test consists of a writing assignment to which you must respond **in the target language**. The assignment appears on the following page. A list of suggestions is provided to help direct your writing for the assignment. It is not necessary that you cover every point on the list, nor are you limited in your response to those points indicated. You are, however, required to write about the general assignment that you are given, and part of your score will be based on the degree to which you elaborate on the assignment by addressing either the suggested points or points of your choosing.

You may use any blank space on the unlined pages following the writing assignment to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response, but remember to record your final response in **Written Response Booklet B**.

Your score will be based solely on the version of your response written in Written Response Booklet B.

Your response will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the objective of the assignment is achieved and the response is appropriate for the intended audience
- **COHERENCE:** organization and clarity of ideas
- **CONTENT:** development of ideas and relevance of supporting details
- **GRAMMAR:** accuracy of grammatical forms and syntax
- **VOCABULARY:** command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions
- **MECHANICS:** accuracy of spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation

Be sure to write about the assigned topic and use **MULTIPLE PARAGRAPHS**. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. This should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes you think will improve your written response.

6. Imagine that you have a warm relationship with a family with whom you lived during a year of study in a francophone country. You have stayed in touch with them since returning to the United States, but several months have passed since you last wrote. To reestablish contact with them, write a letter in French to the parents of the family, a couple in their fifties. You may wish to include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
- reminiscences about your stay with them;
 - inquiries about their health and activities;
 - your own recent activities;
 - your plans for the immediate future.

Sample Oral Expression Test Directions

For this section of the test, you will speak on tape in response to an assignment presented in your test booklet. You will read the assignment in your test booklet and have one minute to consider your response, then two minutes to speak. You will be provided with a list of suggestions to help direct your response. It is not necessary that you address every point in the list, nor are you limited to the points mentioned. However, what you say must be relevant to the situation with which you are presented, and part of your score will be based on the degree to which you elaborate on the topic by addressing either the suggested points or points of your choosing. You may NOT write in this test booklet. **You will be scored only on the response you provide on the audiotape after the announcer instructs you to begin speaking.**

Your response will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **CONTENT:** the adequacy of the information presented, including the number of ideas, the development of ideas, and the depth and specificity of supporting details
- **COHERENCE:** the organization and clarity of the ideas communicated
- **GRAMMAR:** the accuracy of grammatical and syntactic constructions (e.g., conjugation of verbs, appropriate use of tenses, subject/pronoun and article/noun agreement)
- **VOCABULARY:** the command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and appropriateness of word choice
- **FLUENCY:** the ability to maintain a flow of speech, without hesitations or pauses that affect the overall comprehensibility of the response
- **PRONUNCIATION:** the comprehensibility of articulation and the appropriateness of stress

Once recording has begun, it cannot be stopped, nor can you re-record your response.

When you have finished reading these directions, please look up. You will receive further instructions from your test administrator.

Look up when you are ready to begin.



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

7. (You will see in the test booklet and hear on the recording:)

Read the instructions below. You will have 1 minute to study these instructions. Then, when you are told to do so, begin to respond in French. You may take up to 2 minutes to complete your response. You will be told when the 2 minutes are up. You may begin studying the instructions now. You will be told when to begin speaking.

(You will see in the test booklet:)

Imagine that you are the faculty advisor to a student from a francophone country who is spending a year at your school on an exchange program. After two weeks in the United States, the student is unhappy and wants to go home. The student's parents telephone to express their concern and ask your advice. Speaking in French, reassure them about the situation and explain to them why you feel their child should make the effort to stay for the full year. You may wish to include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- possible reasons for the student's discontent, and any changes that could improve the situation;
- the potential benefits to the student of a year's stay in the United States;
- what the parents might do to encourage the student to stay;
- what the student could do to adapt more successfully to the new situation.

(You will have 1 minute to study the instructions above. Then you will have 2 minutes to respond on the audiotape.)

Answer Key:
French (26)

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective*
1.	A	Infer meaning from oral communications in the target language.
2.	C	Apply skills of inference and interpretation in a variety of authentic materials in the target language.
3.	B	Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language and language acquisition.
4.	D	Transform sentences or passages in the target language according to given instructions.
5.	B	Understand major developments in the history of cultures associated with the target language and the cultural significance of those developments.

*Each test objective is clarified and further described by a descriptive statement, which provides examples of the types of knowledge and skills covered by the test objective. The test objectives for the French test begin on page 42.

Information on Scoring: French (26)

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.

Responses 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 performance characteristics for each type of open-response item guide scorers in considering responses to open-response items of that type. It may be helpful to you to be aware of the performance characteristics for each type of open-response item as you prepare for and take the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure.

Scoring scales. The scoring scale for each type of open-response item is used by scorers in assigning scores to responses to open-response items of that type. Note that the description of each score point on a scoring scale is given in terms of the performance characteristics for the type of open-response item being scored.

The performance characteristics and scoring scales for this group of fields are provided on the following pages.

**Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—WRITTEN EXPRESSION**

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the objective of the assignment is achieved and the appropriateness of the response for the intended audience.
Coherence	Organization and clarity of ideas.
Content	Development of ideas and relevance of supporting details.
Grammar	Accuracy of grammatical forms and syntax.
Vocabulary	Command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.
Mechanics	Accuracy of spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response thoroughly fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and is completely appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas are well organized and clearly expressed. • Ideas are extensively developed and well-supported with relevant information. • The response shows a comprehensive command of syntax and grammar, with only minor errors that do not interrupt communication. • Vocabulary reflects a broad command of the language and appropriate use of idiomatic expressions. • Spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation are mastered, with few, if any, errors.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response satisfactorily fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and is generally appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas show some organization and are generally clear. • Ideas are adequately developed with some elaboration and support of specific points. • The response shows a good command of syntax and grammar, though some errors may cause minor interruptions in communication. • Vocabulary and idiomatic expressions are general, but adequate for communicating a complete message. • There are minor errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation that do not interfere with communication.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and may not be entirely appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas show limited organization and are somewhat unclear. • Ideas are developed in a limited way with minimal support. • The response shows a limited command of syntax and grammar, with frequent errors that partially impede communication of ideas. • Vocabulary is simple and lacks key words and expressions but is sufficient for communicating a partial message. • There are some errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation, which partially interfere with communication.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fails to fulfill the purpose of the written assignment and is inappropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas are unorganized and unclear. • Ideas are developed minimally, if at all, and lack any relevant supporting detail. • The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, with numerous and frequent errors that impede communication. • Vocabulary is not adequate for communicating a complete message, with word usage errors and misformations that impede communication. • Errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation are so numerous that they impede communication.
U	The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not written in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

**Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—ORAL EXPRESSION**

Performance Characteristics:

Content	Adequacy of the information presented, including the number of ideas, the development of ideas, and the depth and specificity of supporting details.
Coherence	Organization and clarity of ideas communicated.
Grammar	Accuracy of grammatical and syntactic constructions (e.g., conjugation of verbs, appropriate use of tenses, subject/pronoun and article/noun agreement).
Vocabulary	Command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and appropriateness of word choice.
Fluency	Ability to maintain a flow of speech, without hesitation or pauses which affect the overall comprehensibility of the response.
Pronunciation	Comprehensibility of articulation and the appropriateness of stress.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speaker's ideas are well developed and elaborated. • The candidate's ideas are logically sequenced, well connected, and consistently clear. • The response shows a comprehensive command of syntax and grammar, making only minor errors that do not interfere with the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates extensive command of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate maintains a strong flow of speech, with few, if any, hesitations or pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is easily intelligible, with few, if any, errors.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speaker's ideas are adequately developed, with some elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are adequately organized and are generally clear. • The response shows good command of syntax and grammar, though some errors may cause minor interruptions in the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a good command of generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate generally maintains a steady flow of speech, with only occasional hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is generally intelligible, with only minor errors.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speaker's ideas show limited development and elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are only partially organized and are at times unclear. • The response shows a limited command of syntax and grammar, with frequent errors that partially impede the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a limited range of expression, using very simple vocabulary and lacking some key words and phrases. • The candidate does not maintain a consistent flow of speech, having frequent hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation contains several errors and is occasionally difficult to understand.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speaker's response provides few, if any, comprehensible ideas, with minimal development. • The candidate's ideas are not organized and are largely unclear. • The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, with numerous and frequent errors that make ideas incomprehensible. • The candidate demonstrates little knowledge of vocabulary beyond the most common words, and may misuse and misform numerous words and expressions. • The candidate fails to maintain any flow of speech, with frequent hesitations and pauses that interrupt comprehensibility. • The speaker's pronunciation contains numerous errors and is at times unintelligible.
U	The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, inaudible/incomprehensible, not spoken in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

Test Objectives: French (26)

SUBAREAS:

LISTENING COMPREHENSION
READING COMPREHENSION
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE STRUCTURES
CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
WRITTEN EXPRESSION
ORAL EXPRESSION

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

0001 Derive essential information from oral messages in the target language.

For example: understanding a question or comment likely to be encountered in a social situation; understanding the main idea or details in a spoken passage; understanding a telephone message or public address announcement; and understanding a sequence of steps described in a set of oral directions.

0002 Infer meaning from oral communications in the target language.

For example: characterizing the tone, mood, or point of view of one or more speakers; analyzing a relationship (e.g., cause-and-effect) implied but not stated in an oral communication; and analyzing the social context of a spoken exchange or the relationship between speakers.

READING COMPREHENSION

0003 Understand the literal content of a variety of authentic materials in the target language.

For example: analyzing a passage to determine the stated main idea or an accurate summary; discerning details regarding character, setting, or events described in a passage; and analyzing a passage to determine the sequence of events.

0004 Apply skills of inference and interpretation in a variety of authentic materials in the target language.

For example: making inferences about setting or character from information provided in a passage; discerning implied cause-and-effect relations in a passage; inferring an author's assumptions, purpose, or point of view in a passage; and interpreting figurative language (e.g., metaphors, similes) in a literary passage.

LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

0005 Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language and language acquisition.

For example: applying general concepts of the nature of language; analyzing the communication process using concepts and strategies associated with pragmatics and discourse analysis; and applying knowledge of theories and processes of first- and second-language acquisition.

0006 Transform sentences or passages in the target language according to given instructions.

For example: transforming a positive statement, question, or comment to a negative one, or vice versa; transforming the tense or mood of a sentence or passage; transforming a sentence or passage from direct to indirect discourse, or vice versa; and combining two or more sentences into one sentence that preserves the meaning of the original sentences.

0007 Analyze sentences in the target language to determine grammatically correct words or phrases to complete them.

For example: using the correct noun or pronoun form or particle for a given context; using verb forms or phrases as appropriate for a given context; using the appropriate modifying word or phrase to complete a sentence; and using the appropriate subordinate clause to complete a sentence.

0008 Revise written passages in the target language to correct errors in structure and syntax that interfere with accurate communication.

For example: selecting revisions to correct inappropriate use of tenses, forms, or constructions.

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

0009 Understand major developments in the history of cultures associated with the target language and the cultural significance of those developments.

For example: analyzing the role of major historical events and figures in the development of cultures associated with the target language; understanding major political, economic, social, and cultural trends and developments that have shaped the history of cultures associated with the target language and analyzing their historical and contemporary significance; and analyzing the nature and significance of historical interactions between the cultures associated with the target language and other cultures.

0010 Understand geographic, economic, social, and political features of contemporary cultures associated with the target language, including the ways in which values influence these features.

For example: relating natural geographic features (e.g., climate, location, natural resources) of nations using the target language to the economies of these nations (e.g., mineral and agricultural products, commercial relations with other nations); analyzing major features of the economic systems of nations using the target language (e.g., the roles of free-market institutions or central planning); understanding key features and processes associated with governmental institutions of nations using the target language and their historical or cultural significance; and understanding characteristic features of daily life in nations in which the target language is the major vehicle of communication.

0011 Understand literature, the nonliterary arts, science, and technology as aspects of cultures associated with the target language.

For example: recognizing major movements, writers, and works in the literature of the target language and understanding their cultural significance; understanding characteristic forms and elements of the visual arts and music of cultures associated with the target language and their cultural significance; and recognizing scientific and technological achievements (historical or contemporary) of cultures associated with the target language and understanding their cultural significance.

WRITTEN EXPRESSION

0012 Write a well-organized passage in the target language that is appropriate in style and diction for a given audience, purpose, and occasion and that communicates a message effectively through use of a range of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and simple and complex linguistic constructions.

For example: a letter to a professor requesting a recommendation for a particular job or program of study, including the writer's reasons for being interested in the job or academic program; an account describing to a teacher or other acquaintance the reasoning behind a significant personal decision; or a letter of thanks written to an appropriate audience in the target culture (e.g., a family with whom the writer has spent a summer as an exchange student).

ORAL EXPRESSION

0013 In response to a prompt, construct connected oral discourse in the target language that communicates a message effectively and that demonstrates command of a range of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and simple and complex linguistic structures.

For example: describing events or actions in tenses appropriate to the task; discussing advantages and disadvantages of an idea or proposed course of action; or responding to a hypothetical situation (e.g., a traffic accident) by explaining or describing events or by requesting assistance.