



California Subject Examinations for Teachers®

TEST GUIDE

ENGLISH SUBTEST IV

Sample Questions and Responses and Scoring Information

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Sample Test Questions for CSET: English Subtest IV

Below is a set of constructed-response questions that are similar to the questions you will see on Subtest IV of CSET: English. You are encouraged to respond to the questions without looking at the responses provided in the next section. Record your responses on a sheet of paper and compare them with the provided responses.

For each constructed-response assignment in this section, you are to prepare a written response of approximately, but not limited to, 75–125 words on the assigned topic.

Read each assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

Your responses will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

PURPOSE: the extent to which the response addresses the constructed-response assignment's charge in relation to relevant CSET subject matter requirements

SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE: the application of accurate subject matter knowledge as described in the relevant CSET subject matter requirements

SUPPORT: the appropriateness and quality of the supporting evidence in relation to relevant CSET subject matter requirements

The assignments are intended to assess subject matter knowledge and skills, not writing ability. Your responses, however, must be communicated clearly enough to permit a valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. Your responses should be written for an audience of educators in the field.

Your responses should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may not use any reference materials during the testing session. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your responses.

1. **Complete the exercise that follows.**

The interaction between a speaker and an audience creates interest during an oral presentation. An alert speaker adapts to various audience responses during the speech. Write a response in which you:

- identify one type of audience response that might occur during a speech or oral presentation; and
- describe one strategy the speaker could use in adapting to that audience response while sustaining the speech or oral presentation.

In your response, be sure to address both of the tasks described above.

2. **Complete the exercise that follows.**

Discriminating readers, viewers, and listeners routinely evaluate the reliability and credibility of news stories in the media. Write a response in which you:

- briefly describe a characteristic of reliable and credible news reporting (e.g., objectivity, balance, thoroughness); and
- describe a strategy that readers, viewers, and listeners can use to determine whether a news story demonstrates this characteristic.

3. **Complete the exercise that follows.**

A director is staging a modern farce. The comedy depends on fast, clear-cut physical reactions, quick repartee, a relentless tempo, and seamless transitions from one scene to the next. Halfway through the rehearsal process, the actors are having trouble maintaining the rapid pace that many of the scenes require. To address this difficulty, the director considers the following three rehearsal strategies:

- a "speed-through" of the text (actors deliver lines at twice the normal speed with no movement, pauses, or inflection);
- a "speed-through" of the blocking (actors rehearse stage movement and physical business at twice the normal speed, without speaking their lines); and
- a "cue" game (actors must toss a ball to another actor on each "beat" of the text without dropping lines or changing blocking).

Select *one* of the rehearsal strategies described above, and write a response in which you:

- describe how this rehearsal strategy is likely to help the actors find an effective overall pace; and
- explain why this rehearsal strategy is likely to enhance the comedy of the play.

In your response, be sure to address both of the tasks described above.

4. Complete the exercise that follows.

A high school student has been assigned to plan and deliver a reflective narrative presentation that explores the significance of a personal experience through sensory language, narrative techniques, and comparisons between the specific experience and broader themes. The student's preliminary draft appears below.

¹As a kid, I spent a lot of time sitting in the backseat of my family's minivan, watching the scenery pass my window in a blur. ²It seems like we were always on our way somewhere. ³Like to soccer practice or baseball practice or karate lessons or the supermarket. ⁴When we were on our way to my grandparents' house, we would be all dressed up and looking forward to having a slice of Gram's special chocolate cake. ⁵My grandmother is the best baker and the best card player and the best storyteller I know. ⁶She taught me to shuffle cards. ⁷When she served us cake, she'd always tell us about the time when our mom and our aunt were kids and they baked a cake but it turned out wrong. ⁸They didn't want their mother to find out, so they buried the cake in the backyard.

⁹If we were on our way somewhere early in the morning, we'd stop at the doughnut shop for honey-glazed crullers. ¹⁰If my mom was in a certain kind of mood, she'd detour through our town's historic district and point out the architectural wonders she thought we should learn to appreciate. ¹¹When I look back on these drives, I realize that life is a journey and, if you're not looking carefully as you travel along on that journey, you might miss a sight that is special or strange or beautiful. ¹²As I sat in the backseat of our minivan, the world presented me with all kinds of different lessons. ¹³All I had to do was keep my eyes wide open. ¹⁴Now that I can drive myself places, I don't pay attention to the scenery like I used to.

Using your knowledge of oral communication, write a response in which you:

- describe one type of revision the student could make to improve the draft; and
- explain why this type of revision would enhance the effectiveness of the presentation.

Examples of Strong Responses to Sample Constructed-Response Questions for CSET: English Subtest IV

Communications: Speech, Media, and Creative Performance

Question #1 (Score Point 3 Response)

One type of audience response that might occur during a speech or presentation is heckling by a hostile audience member. The primary strategy the speaker should use is to remain calm and reasonable. For example, the speaker can acknowledge the heckling with a slight pause, and then resume speaking. However, if the heckling continues, the speaker can tell the heckler that he or she will respond to questions or arguments after the presentation. Humor can sometimes help defuse tension. A speaker should appeal to reason, fairness, and good manners by being scrupulously polite. To the extent that a heckler is unreasonable and disruptive while the speaker remains calm and patient, the audience is likely to feel increased respect for the speaker.

Question #2 (Score Point 3 Response)

One characteristic of reliable and credible news reporting is balance. A balanced news story presents multiple perspectives and lets the reader, viewer, or listener form an opinion based on those perspectives. For example, a reliable and credible news story about the Bush/Gore election controversy would present views from both the Bush and Gore camps, voters who took part in the election, and legal experts.

One strategy that readers, viewers, and listeners can use to determine whether a news story is balanced is to compare coverage of the same story by different news organizations. Balanced coverage provides a clear and complete presentation of facts from reliable sources and does not appear to favor one viewpoint or faction over another.

Question #3 (Score Point 3 Response)

A speed-through rehearsal of text, in which actors rattle off their lines very quickly, but don't move about on stage or make any effort to say the lines expressively, can be a very effective technique for speeding up the ultimate pace of a play. It helps the actors become so familiar with their lines that they deliver them without thinking. It also forces actors to speak very clearly, even with exaggerated clarity, which requires placing the consonants far forward in the mouth—a good technique for stage delivery. This technique also makes the lines silly, even sillier than they already were, partly because the inflection is missing. Some of the speed can be retained even after movement and inflection are added back in. After a speed-through rehearsal, actors will deliver their lines more quickly, without stumbling and blanking out, and with better enunciation. Different line deliveries may suggest themselves, and the added sense of silliness will heighten the comedy.

Question #4 (Score Point 3 Response)

One type of revision the student could make would be to use specific details that would more fully engage the audience's interest and more clearly convey the student's attitude. For example, the student might begin the presentation by describing the interior of the minivan using details that appeal to all the senses, thus letting listeners feel as if they were sharing the student's experience. The student could select details that convey the student's attitude toward the minivan. At the same time, the student should eliminate extraneous information such as the cake-baking misadventure, which, though amusing, is irrelevant to the topic. In addition, the student could provide specific descriptions of the town's "architectural wonders." Such descriptions would indicate whether the student uses this phrase seriously or ironically. At the end of the second paragraph, the student says "the world presented me with all kinds of different lessons," without specifying what those lessons were. The presentation would be much more effective if the student described one specific lesson.

Scoring Information for CSET: English Subtest IV

There are four constructed-response questions in Subtest IV of CSET: English. Each of these constructed-response questions is designed so that a response can be completed within a short amount of time—approximately 10–15 minutes. Responses to the constructed-response questions are scored by qualified California educators using focused holistic scoring. Scorers will judge the overall effectiveness of your responses while focusing on the performance characteristics that have been identified as important for this subtest (see below). Each response will be assigned a score based on an approved scoring scale (see page 9).

Passing status is determined on the basis of total subtest performance. You do not pass individual subtest assignments.

Your performance on the subtest will be evaluated against a standard determined by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing based on professional judgments and recommendations of California educators.

Performance Characteristics for CSET: English Subtest IV

The following performance characteristics will guide the scoring of responses to the constructed-response questions on CSET: English Subtest IV.

PURPOSE	The extent to which the response addresses the constructed-response assignment's charge in relation to relevant CSET subject matter requirements.
SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE	The application of accurate subject matter knowledge as described in the relevant CSET subject matter requirements.
SUPPORT	The appropriateness and quality of the supporting evidence in relation to relevant CSET subject matter requirements.

Scoring Scale for CSET: English Subtest IV

Scores will be assigned to each response to the constructed-response questions on CSET: English Subtest IV according to the following scoring scale.

SCORE POINT	SCORE POINT DESCRIPTION
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a command of the relevant knowledge and skills as defined in the subject matter requirements for CSET: English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is an accurate application of relevant subject matter knowledge. • There is appropriate and specific relevant supporting evidence.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a general command of the relevant knowledge and skills as defined in the subject matter requirements for CSET: English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a largely accurate application of relevant subject matter knowledge. • There is acceptable relevant supporting evidence.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects a limited or no command of the relevant knowledge and skills as defined in the subject matter requirements for CSET: English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is only partially or not achieved. • There is limited or no application of relevant subject matter knowledge. • There is little or no relevant supporting evidence.
U	<p>The "U" (Unscorable) is assigned to a response that is unrelated to the assignment, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, or does not contain a sufficient amount of original work to score.</p>
B	<p>The "B" (Blank) is assigned to a response that is blank.</p>