

**New York State
Department of Civil Service**

Committed to Innovation, Quality, and Excellence

A Guide to the Written Test

for the

State and Local Identification Series

Opportunities at **work.**



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Governor

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Civil Service has developed this test guide to familiarize you with the written test for the State and Local Identification Series. This test guide provides a general description of the subject areas which will be tested and the different types of questions you may see on the test.

The written test for the State and Local Identification Series has an overall time allowance of 5 hours. The following lists all of the subject areas that are included in this series. The exam announcement will tell you which of the following subject areas you will be tested on.

- 1. Name and number checking** – These questions test for the ability to distinguish between sets of words, letters, and/or numbers that are almost exactly alike. Material is usually presented in two or three columns, and you will have to determine how the entry in the first column compares with the entry in the second column and possibly the third. You will be instructed to mark your answers according to a designated code provided in the directions.
- 2. Preparing written material** – These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences.
- 3. Understanding and interpreting written material** – These questions test how well you comprehend written material. You will be provided with brief reading selections and will be asked questions about the selections. All the information required to answer the questions will be presented in the selections; you will not be required to have any special knowledge relating to the subject areas of the selections.
- 4. Pattern recognition** – These questions test for a knowledge of and the ability to recognize patterns. You will be asked to look at various patterns, including but not necessarily limited to fingerprints, and to identify and/or compare them.
- 5. Verification techniques involving the recognition of fingerprint minutiae** – Candidates will be required to identify matching fingerprint images, if present, on the basis of the minutiae present.
- 6. Fingerprint pattern recognition** – These questions will test the candidate's ability to identify common fingerprint patterns or characteristics of common fingerprint patterns. Questions dealing with the classification of fingerprints according to the Henry or National Crime Information Center Fingerprint Classification Systems will be included.
- 7. Supervision** – These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline.

The remainder of this test guide explains how you will be tested in each subject area listed above. A **TEST TASK** is provided for each subject area. This is an explanation of how a question is presented and how to correctly answer it. Read each explanation carefully. This test guide also provides at least one **SAMPLE QUESTION** for each subject area. The sample question is similar to the type of questions that will be presented on the actual test. This test guide provides the **SOLUTION** and correct answer to each sample question. You should study each sample question and solution in order to understand how the correct answer was determined.

SUBJECT AREA 1

NAME AND NUMBER CHECKING: These questions test your ability to proofread – that is, to check whether the names and numbers on one list are the same as those on another list. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be provided with two lists of names and numbers. You must determine whether the two lists contain the same names and numbers and, if not, where the difference is located.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Below are two lists, each consisting of three lines of names and numbers. In List I, the words are written entirely in capital letters, and in List II, only the first letter of each word is capitalized. Compare List II with List I and determine whether List II contains the same names and numbers as List I or whether List II contains a mistake in one of the lines.

Mark choice A if List II contains a mistake in line A.
Mark choice B if List II contains a mistake in line B.
Mark choice C if List II contains a mistake in line C.
Mark choice D if List II contains no mistakes.

LIST I

- A. CLAYTON L. BARKER
- B. 461 NORTH HURON
- C. 090-40-5961

LIST II

- Clayton L. Barker
- 461 North Huron
- 090-04-5961

SOLUTION:

To answer this question correctly, you must compare the names and numbers on each line of List I with the names and numbers on the same line of List II. In this sample, lines A and B are the same on both lists. On line C of List II, the fourth and fifth digits are written -04- instead of -40-. Therefore, List II contains a mistake in line C, so the correct answer to this sample question is choice C.

The correct answer to this sample question is C.

SUBJECT AREA 2

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK:

There are two separate test tasks in this subject area.

- For the first, **Information Presentation**, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. There will be ten Information Presentation questions on the written test.
- For the second, **Paragraph Organization**, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order, and then be asked to choose, from among four suggestions, the best order for the sentences. There will be five Paragraph Organization questions on the written test.

INFORMATION PRESENTATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions. His failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Which one of the following best presents the information above?

- A. Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions that caused a personal injury accident.
- B. Proper precautions, which Martin Wilson failed to take, caused a personal injury accident.
- C. Martin Wilson's failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.
- D. Martin Wilson, who failed to take proper precautions, was in a personal injury accident.

SOLUTION:

Choice A conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice B conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice C best presents the original information: Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions and this failure caused a personal injury accident.

Choice D states that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident. The original information states that Martin Wilson caused a personal injury accident, but it does not state that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident.

The best answer to this sample question is C.

SUBJECT AREA 2 (continued)

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL (continued)

PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

The following question is based upon a group of sentences. The sentences are shown out of sequence, but when correctly arranged, they form a connected, well-organized paragraph. Read the sentences, and then answer the question about the best arrangement of these sentences.

1. Eventually, they piece all of this information together and make a choice.
2. Before actually deciding upon a job in nutrition services, people usually think about several possibilities.
3. They imagine themselves in different situations, and in so doing, they probably think about their interests, goals, and abilities.
4. Choosing an occupation in the field of nutrition services is an important decision to make.

Which one of the following is the best arrangement of these sentences?

- A. 2-4-1-3
- B. 2-3-4-1
- C. 4-2-1-3
- D. 4-2-3-1

SOLUTION:

Choices A and C present the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. In both **A** and **C**, sentence 1 comes before sentence 3. The key element in the organization of this paragraph is that sentence 3 contains the information to which sentence 1 refers; therefore, in logical sequence, sentence 3 should come before sentence 1.

Choice B also presents the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. Choice **B** places sentence 4 in between sentence 1 and sentence 3, thereby interrupting the logical sequence of the information in the paragraph.

Choice D presents the information in the paragraph in the best logical sequence. Sentence 4 introduces the main idea of the paragraph: "choosing an occupation in the field of nutrition services." Sentences 2-3-1 then follow up on this idea by describing, in order, the steps involved in making such a choice. Choice **D** is the best answer to this sample question.

The best answer to this sample question is *D*.

SUBJECT AREA 3

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test how well you comprehend written material. You will be provided with brief reading selections and will be asked questions about the selections. All the information required to answer the questions will be presented in the selections; you will not be required to have any special knowledge relating to the subject areas of the selections. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: For each question, you will be provided with a brief written selection, followed by a question and a set of alternative statements relating to the selection. You must choose the statement that best answers the question. Your answer should be based on the information found in the selection only, NOT on knowledge you may have about the subject from other sources.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

“The increasing demands upon our highways from a growing population and the development of forms of transportation not anticipated when the highways were first built have brought about congestion, confusion, and conflict, until the yearly toll of traffic accidents is now at an appalling level. If the death and disaster that traffic accidents bring throughout the year were concentrated into one calamity, we would shudder at the tremendous catastrophe. The loss is no less catastrophic because it is spread out over time and space.”

Which one of the following statements concerning the yearly toll of traffic accidents is best supported by the passage above?

- A. It is increasing the demands for safer means of transportation.
- B. It has resulted in increased congestion, confusion, and conflict on our highways.
- C. It does not shock us as much as it should because the accidents do not all occur together.
- D. It has resulted mainly from the new forms of transportation.

SOLUTION: To answer this question correctly, you must evaluate each choice against the written selection and determine the one that is best supported by the written selection.

Choice A: *Nowhere in the passage does it say that there has been any demand for safer means of transportation. Someone who picks this choice may believe that there could be or should be a demand for safer transportation, but there is nothing in the passage to base it on. This choice is incorrect.*

Choice B: *The passage states that it is the congestion, confusion, and conflict which results in the high toll of traffic accidents and not the other way around. A person who picks this choice could either be confused as to which is the cause and which is the effect or not have read the choice carefully. This choice is incorrect.*

Choice C: *This choice is supported by the last two sentences in the passage. The writer says, “If ..., we would shudder.” (A shudder is a response to shock.) The implication is that we don’t shudder because traffic accidents do not all occur at the same time and place. The writer then points out that we should think of the yearly toll as being catastrophic (shocking) even though the accidents are spread out over time and space. This choice is supported by the information in the passage.*

Choice D: *There are two reasons given in the passage for the high accident rate. One is the development of new forms of transportation; the other is the increased highway use from a growing population. Neither one is described as the main reason. It is clearly incorrect to say that the new forms of transportation are the main reason. This choice is incorrect.*

The correct answer to this sample question is C.

SUBJECT AREA 4

PATTERN RECOGNITION: These questions test for a knowledge of and the ability to recognize patterns. You will be asked to look at various patterns, including but not necessarily limited to fingerprints, and to identify and/or compare them. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: There are two separate test tasks in this subject area.

For the first, **Pattern Recognition**, you will be given an image of a pattern, either a fingerprint or a string of letters, numbers, or shapes, and will be asked which one of the patterns labeled A, B, C or D below contains the same pattern that is in the first image. One of the images will match. You are to select the letter of that image.

For the second, **Fingerprint Pattern Recognition**, you will be given the Directions preceding the Fingerprint Pattern Recognition Sample Question below, the image of a fingerprint and will be asked to select the appropriate choice based on the directions.

Pattern Recognition Sample Questions

SAMPLE QUESTION #1



Which one of the following contains the same pattern as found above?



SOLUTION:

The fingerprint image presented at the top of this question contains a v-shaped or semi-circular line next to a rounded white with a dark fill. There is a white line leading away from the rounded area in the direction away from the v-shaped or semi-circular line. These features are located about midway down the image. None of these features appear in the images labeled A., C., or D. When you look at choice B., even though the slant of the image is reversed, and they appear somewhat higher up the image, you can identify the same v-shaped or semi-circular line next to a rounded white with a dark fill. The same white line leads from the rounded area away from the v-shaped or semi-circular line. Choice B. is the only possible match for the original image.

SUBJECT AREA 4 (continued)

PATTERN RECOGNITION (continued)

SAMPLE QUESTION #2



Which one of the following contains the same pattern as found above?

- A.** $(())(())(())(())(())($
- B.** $(((()))((()))((()))(($
- C.** $((()))((()))((()))(($
- D.** $((()))((()))(())(())$

SOLUTION:

The image of curved lines presented at the top of this question begins with three lines with the closed side of the curve closest to the question number. There is no set of three lines like this in choice A, therefore, A cannot be the correct answer. The next part of the first image is two lines curved in the opposite direction. Choice B contains several sets of three or more lines that match the original image. Each time they appear though, they are followed by three lines curved in the opposite direction, B cannot be the correct answer. Choice D again contains 3 lines with the open side of the curve closest to the question number. There is no such set of lines in the original image. Choice C is the only possible answer.

SUBJECT AREA 4 (continued)

PATTERN RECOGNITION (continued)

Fingerprint Pattern Recognition Sample Question

DIRECTIONS: The next question requires you to select the MOST appropriate Pattern Type for each fingerprint image presented. Each question presents one image and four choices. The Pattern Type abbreviations used in the choices are as follows: **A** = Arch, **** = Right-Slant Loop, **/** = Left-Slant Loop, and **W** = Whorl. Select the Pattern Type which BEST represents each fingerprint image.



- A. A
- B. /
- C. \
- D. W

SOLUTION:

There is no delta visible in this fingerprint. It cannot be a loop, which would have one delta and would be further distinguished as right slanting or left slanting depending on the direction in which the top (closed end) of the loop points. B and C cannot be correct answers. The fingerprint does not have two or more deltas or a circular pattern in the core (center) of the fingerprint. It cannot be a whorl. D cannot be the correct answer. The lines in this fingerprint proceed directly across the fingerprint and do not make a backward turn. The fingerprint can only be an arch. Choice A is the only possible answer.

SUBJECT AREA 5

VERIFICATION TECHNIQUES INVOLVING THE RECOGNITION OF FINGERPRINT MINUTIAE: Candidates will be required to identify matching fingerprint images, if present, on the basis of the minutiae present. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be given an image of a fingerprint with a set of images as choices. “There is no matching image” may be a choice. You are to select the letter of the image that matches the first image or to select or “There is no matching image” if you believe that is the proper answer.

NO SAMPLE QUESTION IS INCLUDED: Images in this subject area are reproduced with very fine detail. The monitor or printer used to reproduce this Test Guide may not have sufficient resolution to adequately show these images.

Questions are essentially identical to **SAMPLE QUESTION #1** in **SUBJECT AREA 4**. You may bring a magnifying glass and use it at the test site if these questions are included in your written test.

SUBJECT AREA 6

FINGERPRINT PATTERN RECOGNITION: These questions are the same as described as the test task 2 for Subject Area 4, Pattern Recognition on page 8, although the questions may be at a greater level of Complexity. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

Fingerprint Pattern Recognition Sample Question

DIRECTIONS: The next question requires you to select the MOST appropriate Pattern Type for each fingerprint image presented. Each question presents one image and four choices. The Pattern Type abbreviations used in the choices are as follows: **A** = Arch, **** = Right-Slant Loop, **/** = Left-Slant Loop, and **W** = Whorl. Select the Pattern Type which BEST represents each fingerprint image.



- A. A
- B. /
- C. \
- D. W

SOLUTION:

The lines of the fingerprint do not proceed directly across the finger with out recurving or reversing direction. The fingerprint cannot be an arch. A cannot be the correct answer. There are two deltas readily visible in the finger print. The fingerprint cannot be a loop which would have one and only one delta. B or C cannot be correct answers. A line drawn between the two deltas intersects at least one recurving line clearly defining this pattern as a whorl. Choice D is the only possible answer.

SUBJECT AREA 7

SUPERVISION: These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with situations in which you must apply knowledge of the principles and practices of supervision in order to answer the questions correctly.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Assume that the unit you supervise is given a new work assignment and that you are unsure about the proper procedure to use in performing this assignment. Which one of the following actions should you take FIRST in this situation?

- A. Obtain input from your staff.
- B. Consult other unit supervisors who have had similar assignments.
- C. Use an appropriate procedure from a similar assignment that you are familiar with.
- D. Discuss the matter with your supervisor.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is not correct. Since this assignment is new for your unit, your staff would not be expected to be more knowledgeable than you about the proper procedure.

Choice B is not correct. Although discussing this matter with other supervisors may increase your knowledge of the new assignment, similar assignments performed in other units may differ in some important way from your new assignment. Other units may also function differently from your unit, so the procedures used to perform similar assignments may differ accordingly.

Choice C is not correct. Since this assignment is new for your unit, you would have no way of knowing whether the procedure from a similar assignment is appropriate to use. You would need someone with the appropriate knowledge, usually your supervisor, to determine if the procedure from a similar assignment could be used before you actually employed this procedure in the performance of your new assignment.

Choice D is the correct answer to this question. Your supervisor is more likely to be informed about what procedure may be appropriate for work that he or she assigns to you than would other unit supervisors or your staff. Even if your supervisor does not know what procedure is appropriate, a decision regarding which procedure to use should be made with his or her participation, since he or she has the ultimate responsibility for your unit's work.

The correct answer to this sample question is D.

TEST SECURITY

The test you will be taking is the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service. Candidates may not remove test material from the test site and may not reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others. Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. Additionally, candidates may be disqualified from appointment to the positions for which the examination is being held and from being a candidate for any civil service examination for five years. After you take the test, other individuals may want to talk with you about the test. You should not discuss the questions and answers, even in general terms. You should be careful that you do not inadvertently violate test security and put yourself at risk.

CONCLUSION

Your attitude and approach to the test will influence how well you perform. A positive attitude will help you do your best.

Before the test ...

- Study and review this guide to familiarize yourself with some of the material which the test will cover.
- Study and review the subject areas to be covered on the test.

On the day of the test ...

- Arrive at the test site on time.
- Bring your Admission Notice, two No. 2 pencils, a photo ID containing your signature, a quiet lunch or snack, and any other materials as instructed on the admission notice or the announcement.
- Do **NOT** bring this test guide to the test site.

At the test site ...

- Do **NOT** bring cell phones, beepers, headphones, or any electronic or other communication devices to the test site.
- The use of such devices anywhere on the grounds of the test site (this includes the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, and parking lots) could result in your disqualification.

During the test ...

- Read and follow all directions on your Admission Notice, test booklets, answer sheets, and Candidate Directions.
- Follow the Monitor's instructions.
- Keep track of the time.

After the test ...

- Do **NOT** remove any test materials from the test room.
- Do **NOT** paraphrase, reconstruct, or reproduce the test material in any way.
- Do **NOT** discuss the test material with others.

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