NEW YORK STATE | Department of Civil Service

Test Guide

for the

Psychologist 2 Series

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INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Civil Service has developed this test guide to familiarize you with the multiple-choice test for the Psychologist 2 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 test questions for the Psychologist 2 Series will cover the following four subject areas:

1. **DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT:** These questions test for knowledge of basic theories of intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance use disorder, and co-occurring disorders-used to develop, implement and evaluate treatment. Questions may relate to children, adolescents and adults and may include areas such as human development, treatment modalities, treatment evaluation, and impact of support network on prevention and continuity of care.

2. **PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES:** These questions test for knowledge of intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance use disorder, and co-occurring disorders related to children, adolescents and adults and used to perform and evaluate psychological tools and techniques. Questions may relate to choosing and conducting standard psychological tests, performing functional assessments of strengths and weaknesses, facilitating rehabilitation, evaluating and planning discharge, and consultation with team members, as well as other professionals.

3. **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 among four choices, the best order for the sentences.

4. **UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL:** These questions test for the ability to understand and interpret written material. You will be presented with brief reading passages and will be asked questions about the passages. You should base your answers to the questions only on what is presented in the passages and not on what you may happen to know about the topic.

The next sections of this test guide explain how you will be tested in each of the subject areas 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

DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT: These questions test for knowledge of basic theories of intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance use disorder, and co-occurring disorders used to develop, implement and evaluate treatment. Questions may relate to children, adolescents and adults and may include areas such as human development, treatment modalities, treatment evaluation, and impact of support network on prevention and continuity of care.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with concepts and situations similar to those encountered by psychologists who develop, implement, and evaluate psychological treatment in a variety of settings. You must apply knowledge of contemporary psychological treatment theories in order to select the most appropriate course of action to take with regard to the presenting concerns of various populations.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Which one of the following statements best describes the most important characteristic necessary to establish rapport and provide assistance to families receiving services?

A. confidence
B. empathy
C. leadership
D. determination

Choice B is the correct answer to this sample question.

SOLUTION:

*This question asks for the **most important** characteristic necessary to establish rapport.*

***Choice A** is not correct. Although confidence may show that a psychologist is capable, confidence alone does not create emotional safety or trust, which is needed to establish rapport.*

***Choice B** is the correct answer to this question. Showing empathy is the most important characteristic to establish rapport because it allows psychologists to build a foundation of emotional safety, nonjudgemental acceptance, and trust.*

***Choice C** is not correct. Leadership can help guide teams and manage organizations, but its main focus is not on building rapport with individual families.*

***Choice D** is not correct. Although determination can help a psychologist persist through various challenges, psychologists must show an understanding of a family's emotional state in order to establish rapport with them.*

SUBJECT AREA 2

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES: These questions test for knowledge of intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance use disorder, and co-occurring disorders related to children, adolescents and adults and used to perform and evaluate psychological tools and techniques. Questions may relate to choosing and conducting standard psychological tests, performing functional assessments of strengths and weaknesses, facilitating rehabilitation, evaluating and planning discharge, and consultation with team members, as well as other professionals.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with concepts and situations related to the psychological assessment tools and techniques that psychologists may use on the job. You must apply knowledge of evidence-based psychological assessments in order to select the most appropriate course of action to take with regard to the various psychological assessments needed for various populations.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Which one of the following actions should be taken first with individuals who display unpredictable behavior?

A. Train individuals in relaxation techniques.
B. Reward individuals for non-aggressive behavior.
C. Ignore inappropriate behaviors.
D. Conduct a functional assessment of behavior.

Choice D is the correct answer to this sample question.

SOLUTION

*This question asks for which action should be taken **first** with individuals who display unpredictable behavior.*

***Choice A** is not correct. Teaching relaxation techniques can be a secondary strategy, but psychologists should identify if it is an appropriate strategy for the situation first.*

***Choice B** is not correct. While a reward system might be beneficial, it should not be undertaken until after a functional assessment of behavior is completed.*

***Choice C** is not correct. A functional assessment should be completed before evaluating if this is an appropriate strategy, as ignoring inappropriate behavior could increase safety risk.*

***Choice D** is the correct answer to this question. A functional assessment of behavior should be completed first to identify the underlying cause, purpose, or "function" maintaining the behavior and determine the best strategy to address it.*

SUBJECT AREA 3

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately and for the ability to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly.

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.

- 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 choices, the best order for the sentences.

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.

The correct answer to this sample question is choice C.

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.*

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 human services job, 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 among occupations in the field of human 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

The correct answer to this sample question is choice D.

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 the main idea of the paragraph (Sentence 4) in between two detail sentences (Sentences 1 and 3). The logical sequence of the information presented in the paragraph is therefore interrupted.*

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 human 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.*

SUBJECT AREA 4

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test for the ability to understand and interpret written material. You will be presented with brief reading passages and will be asked questions about the passages. You should base your answers to the questions only on what is presented in the passages and not on what you may happen to know about the topic.

TEST TASK: You will be provided with brief reading passages and then will be asked questions relating to the passages. All the information required to answer the questions will be provided in the passages.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

"Increasingly, behavior termed 'road rage' is being viewed as a public health issue, because of the number of deaths and injuries related to it. Such behavior is often a reaction to the feeling that one has been treated unfairly by another driver, and it is much less likely to occur if a driver is treated fairly. 'Fair play' on the road includes the observance not only of traffic regulations but also of the rules of courtesy. Courteous driving is based on common sense consideration for other drivers and a strong desire to make the roads safe for everyone. Good highway manners should become just as much a matter of habit as other kinds of manners."

Which one of the following statements is best supported by the above selection?

A. Courteous driving contributes to road safety.
B. Those who are generally polite are also courteous drivers.
C. Unlike driving courtesy, the observance of traffic regulations is a matter of habit.
D. Being courteous when driving is more important than observing traffic regulations.

The correct answer to this sample question is choice A.

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** states, "Courteous driving contributes to road safety." Choice A is supported by the statement in the written selection that, "Courteous driving is based on…a strong desire to make the roads safe for everyone." This is the correct answer.*

***Choice B** states, "Those who are generally polite are also courteous drivers." Choice B is not supported by the written selection. The written selection does not mention "those who are generally polite" at all. Choice B is not the correct answer to this question.*

***Choice C** states, "Unlike driving courtesy, the observance of traffic regulations is a matter of habit." Choice C is not supported by the written selection. The written selection makes no such bold statement. Instead, the written material mildly suggests that "Good highway manners should become just as much a matter of habit as other kinds of manners." Choice C is not the correct answer to this question.*

***Choice D** states, "Being courteous when driving is more important than observing traffic regulations." Choice D is not supported by the written selection. The written selection states, "'Fair play' on the road includes the observance not only of traffic regulations but also of the rules of courtesy." The written selection does not state that being courteous is more important than observing traffic regulations. Choice D is not the correct answer to this question.*

GENERAL TEST-TAKING GUIDELINES

Read all test directions and instructions carefully. Make sure that you carefully read and follow all directions and any special instructions for the test. If sample questions are provided, do them for practice. *Make sure you understand the directions and instructions before you start to answer the questions*.

Make sure you are answering the correct test questions in the correct test booklets. The particular test you are taking may involve skipping some questions in the test booklet or may involve answering questions in more than one test booklet. You are responsible for making sure you get the right test booklets for your particular test and for determining which questions you are to answer. Refer to your test materials for information on which test booklets and questions you are to answer.

Make sure the choice you mark on your answer sheet matches the question you are answering in the test booklet. Most multiple-choice tests are scanned and scored by machine. You will not get credit for choices you mark in the wrong place on the answer sheet. Check your work to make sure that the number of the question you are answering in the test booklet matches the choice you are marking on your answer sheet.

Make sure you record all your answers on the answer sheet. Only the answers you mark on your answer sheet will be counted toward your score.

Make sure you fill in the circles for your choices completely and carefully. Avoid making stray pencil marks on your answer sheet. The scanning machine may interpret these marks to be your answers.

STRATEGIES THAT MAY IMPROVE YOUR TEST PERFORMANCE

Budget your time wisely
Take note of the test time allowance and of the starting and stopping times. Look at the whole test first and then decide how much time to allow yourself for each part.

You may want to answer the easy questions first. You get just as much credit for an easy question as for a hard one. Do not take too much time trying to answer the difficult questions. Jot down the number of the difficult questions and then come back to them later if you have time. *(If you do skip a question in the test booklet, make sure you skip that answer on your answer sheet as well.)*

Keep track of the time as you go through the test. Know how much time you have and how many questions you have left to do. If some parts of your test are separately timed, work as rapidly as you can but stay calm and pay attention to the time limit.

Read each question carefully
Make sure you read what is actually printed in the test booklet. The questions are designed to test your knowledge, skills, or abilities in a subject area. They are not meant to trick you or to be deceptive.

- Read each question carefully, follow the directions given, and answer each question based on the information given and on the actual question asked.
- After you read the question carefully, read each choice carefully.
- Make sure that you understand each choice before you decide which one is best.
- Pick the one choice that best answers the question given.
- Do not jump to conclusions.
- Be thorough and think about all the choices. If you do not read each choice carefully, you could easily miss the best one.

Be alert to key words
Key words establish a condition that only the *correct* answer meets. Words like *best, greatest, always,* or *most* are examples of key words. If a question asks you to identify the *best* choice among four given, it may be that each of the four choices is a *possible* answer, but only *one* of the four choices is the *best* answer. To answer this type of question correctly, you must carefully read and compare all the choices given.

Here are some examples of questions that contain key words. These examples may be different than the types of questions used in the tests covered by this test guide. They are presented here only to illustrate the importance of key words.

1. Of the following foods, which one provides the most vitamin C in a one-cup serving?

A. grapefruit juice
B. sliced peaches
C. mashed potatoes
D. chopped broccoli

Answer:
This question asks which of the foods listed provides the **most** vitamin C in a one-cup serving. The key word in this question is ***most***. All of the foods mentioned in the choices contain some vitamin C. Many people know that citrus fruits, like oranges, lemons, and grapefruits, are good sources of vitamin C. That makes choice A look attractive. But one cup of broccoli actually contains more vitamin C than one cup of grapefruit juice. Choice D is the ***best*** answer. To answer this question correctly, you must read **all four** choices carefully before you can determine the **best** answer.

2. Of the following, which one is generally the best way to repair a Compton machine that will not start?

A. Replace the entire engine.
B. Replace the ignition wires.
C. Clean the carburetor.
D. Clean the valves.

Answer:
This question asks which one of the choices listed is generally the best way to repair a Compton machine that will not start. The key words in this question are ***generally*** and ***best***. Assume that in 99 out of 100 cases, the best way to repair a Compton machine that will not start is to replace the ignition wires. Then choice B, replace the ignition wires, is ***generally*** the ***best*** way to do the repair. Choice B is the correct answer to this question.

Questions that use words like *generally* are looking for the rule, not the exception. Other key words of this type are *common, likely, more, often, primarily, probably, typically*, and *usually*. When you see these words in a question, look for the choice that would be correct most of the time.

- Do not select the choice that would be correct only some of the time or on rare occasion.
- Be alert to questions that use words like *disadvantage, except, least,* and *not*.
- If the question asks about a *disadvantage*, be sure not to choose an advantage as your answer. Words that begin with *non-* or *un-* are ways of saying *not*.

3. If grease in a pan catches fire, it is **unwise** to do which one of the following?

A. Cover the pan with a lid.
B. Pour water on the fire.

Answer:
This question asks you to identify which action is unwise to do if grease in a pan catches fire. The key word in this question is ***unwise***. This word should alert you that the question is looking for what you should ***not*** do, rather than what you should do if grease in a pan catches fire. Choice A, covering the pan with a lid, would smother the fire by cutting off the oxygen it needs to burn. Choice A is what you *should* do if grease in a pan catches fire. However, since this question asks what is *unwise* to do, choice A is the *wrong* answer to this question. Choice B, pouring water on the fire, would cause the grease and fire in the pan to spatter because water and grease do not mix. This could cause injury or make the fire spread. So, it is *unwise* to pour water on the fire. Therefore, Choice B is the *correct* answer to this question.

4. If an alarm goes off in a mechanical room and the situation appears to be a threat to health or safety, what should you do first?

A. Turn off the power.
B. Call your supervisor.
C. Call the security staff.
D. Have people leave the area.

Answer:
This question asks what you should do first if an alarm goes off in a mechanical room. The key word in this question is ***first***. When a question uses the word *first*, consider the choices in the order in which they should be done. For the question above, all four choices list actions that should be taken. The important thing to know is which to do first in the situation. Since the situation could be life-threatening or could result in injury, the first thing to do is to have people leave the area. This allows people to remain safe while the reason for the alarm is determined and the situation is fixed. Choice D is the first thing to do. If the situation were **not** life-threatening, choice A, turning off the power, might be the first thing to do.

When you see a question like this, make sure you understand the question and the situation thoroughly. When you think you have decided the right order for the actions, mark down the choice that you think is the first action to take in the situation. That way, you think about the whole series of possible actions to take, not just one action by itself, and you are more likely to choose the correct answer.

Break large problems into smaller parts
A very large or complex problem may make more sense if you break it down and look at it one part at a time. Make diagrams or notes on your scratch paper to help you understand each of the separate parts, and how those parts collectively make up the whole problem. Sometimes you can work backwards from the answer to see which answer best fits the problem. Try each answer, in turn, to find the one that works best.

Use a process of elimination
Most multiple-choice questions give you four possible choices. You may not be sure of the answer, but you may see right away that one or two of the choices are not correct. If this is the case, immediately eliminate the choices you know are not correct. Then, just think about the others. Pick the best of the choices that remain. Even if one choice seems only a little better than the others, pick that one. If you can eliminate one or more of the choices and make an educated guess about the choices that remain, your chances of success are better than if you make a completely wild guess.

Guess if you do not know the answer to a question
If you do not answer a question, you will not get credit for it. If you guess correctly, you will get credit. Therefore, if you are not sure of an answer, you should still try to answer the question.

HELPFUL TIPS

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 become familiar with what the test will cover.
- Study and review the subject areas that will be covered on the test.
- Study and review the New York State Department of Civil Service publication, "How to Take a Multiple-Choice Test." It is available on the same page as this and other test guides through www.cs.ny.gov, Job Seekers, Employment Opportunities with NYS Government, State Examinations, Test Guides and Resource Books. The direct link is: https://www.cs.ny.gov/pio/publications/how-to-take-a-multiple-choice-test.pdf. It includes a considerable amount of information on Civil Service tests, including a section titled, General Test-Taking Guidelines." This includes advice such as: **Read each test question carefully and completely. Read all of the choices before selecting your answer.**

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 **allowed** materials.
- 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 (in addition to the test room, this includes hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, and parking lots) could result in your disqualification.
- Do **NOT** use the calculator function on your cell phone.

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 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.

TEST SECURITY

The test you will be taking is the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service.

1. Candidates may not remove test material from the test site and may not reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others.
2. Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine.
3. Candidates violating test security may be disqualified from appointment to positions for which the examination is being held and from being a candidate for any civil service examination for five years.
4. You should not discuss the questions and answers, even in general terms, after you take the test.
5. You should be careful that you do not inadvertently violate test security and put yourself at risk.

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Civil Service to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure effective communication of information to individuals with disabilities. If you need an auxiliary aid or service to make this information available to you, please contact the New York State Department of Civil Service Public Information Office at (518) 457-9375.

Department of Civil Service

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