Diagnostic Test

Middle School English

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Developed by a teacher, for teachers

Founded in 1996, XAMonline began with one teacher-in-training who was frustrated by the lack of materials available for teacher certification exam preparation. From a single state-specific guide, XAMonline has grown to offer over 300 study guides for every state exam, as well as the PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II tests.

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Quality Content from Quality Teaching Professionals

XAMonline’s superior quality standards are maintained by seasoned, professional teachers. We choose from a pool of over 1,500 certified teachers to write, review, and edit our guides. Each certification study guide includes an extensive practice test, which features varied levels of rigor and in-depth answer rationale. Just like the study guide, the practice test questions are aligned with the current state or PRAXIS test parameters, providing you with an experience that parallels the real test.
Testing Tips

1. **Do not read anything into the question.** Do not assume that the test writer is looking for something else than what is asked. Stick to the question as written and do not read extra things into it.

2. **Read the question and all the choices twice before answering the question.** You may miss something by not carefully reading and then re-reading both the question and the answers. If you really do not have a clue as to the right answer, leave it blank on the first time through. Go on to the other questions, as they may provide a clue as to how to answer the skipped questions. If later on, you still cannot answer the skipped ones...**guess.** The only penalty for guessing is that you might get it wrong. Only one thing is certain; if you do not put anything down, you will get it wrong!

3. **Turn the question into a statement.** Look at the wording of the questions. The syntax of the question usually provides a clue. Does it seem more familiar as a statement rather than as a question? Does it sound strange? By turning a question into a statement, you may be able to spot if an answer sounds right, and it may trigger memories of material you have read.

4. **Look for hidden clues.** It is actually very difficult to compose multiple-foil (choice) questions without giving away part of the answer in the options presented. In most multiple-choice questions, you can often readily eliminate one or two of the potential answers. This leaves you with only two real possibilities and automatically your odds go to fifty-fifty for very little work.

5. **Trust your instincts.** For every fact that you have read, you subconsciously retain something of that knowledge. On questions about which you are not really certain, go with your basic instincts. **Your first impression on how to answer a question is usually correct.**

6. **Mark your answers directly on the test booklet.** Do not bother trying to fill in the optical scan sheet on the first pass through the test. **Mark your answers carefully when you transcribe them to the scan sheet.**

7. **Watch the clock!** You have a set amount of time to answer the questions. Do not get bogged down trying to answer a single question at the expense of ten questions you can more readily answer.
Multiple-Choice Questions

1. **Children’s literature became established in the (Easy)**
   
   A. Seventeenth century  
   B. Eighteenth century  
   C. Nineteenth century  
   D. Twentieth century

2. **Which of the following would be the most significant factor in teaching Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey to any particular group of students? (Rigorous)**
   
   A. Identifying a translation on the appropriate reading level  
   B. Determining the students’ interest level  
   C. Selecting an appropriate evaluative technique  
   D. Determining the scope and delivery methods of background study

3. **Written on the sixth grade reading level, most of S. E. Hinton’s novels (for instance, The Outsiders) have the greatest reader appeal with (Easy)**
   
   A. Sixth graders  
   B. Ninth graders  
   C. Twelfth graders  
   D. Adults

4. **Diction is best defined as (Average)**
   
   A. The specific word choices an author makes in order to create a particular mood or feeling in the reader.  
   B. Writing that explains something thoroughly.  
   C. The background, or exposition, for a short story or drama.  
   D. Word choices that help teach a truth or moral.
5. **What is the best course of action when a child refuses to complete an assignment on the grounds that it is morally objectionable? (Rigorous)**

   A. Speak with the parents and explain the necessity of studying this work.
   
   B. Encourage the child to sample some of the text before making a judgment.
   
   C. Place the child in another teacher’s class where students are studying an acceptable work.
   
   D. Provide the student with alternative material that serves the same curricular purpose.

6. **A figure of speech in which someone absent or something inhuman is addressed as though present and able to respond describes** (Easy)

   A. Personification
   
   B. Synechdoche
   
   C. Metonymy
   
   D. Apostrophe

7. “**Clean as a whistle**” and “easy as falling off a log” exemplify (Average)

   A. Semantics
   
   B. Parody
   
   C. Irony
   
   D. Clichés

8. **The appearance of a Yankee from Connecticut in the Court of King Arthur is an example of a/an** (Easy)

   A. Rhetoric
   
   B. Parody
   
   C. Paradox
   
   D. Anachronism
9. **Consider the following poem:**

   My name is John Welington Wells,
   I’m a dealer in magic and spells,
   In blessings and curses,
   And ever-fill’d purses,
   In prophecies, witches, and knells.
   (Easy)

   A. Sonnet
   B. Haiku
   C. Limerick
   D. Cinquain

10. **Which of the following is not a theme of Native American writing?**
    (Average)

   A. Emphasis on the hardiness of the human body and soul
   B. The strength of multi-cultural assimilation
   C. Indignation about the genocide of native peoples
   D. Remorse for the loss of the Indian way of life

11. Which item below is not a research-based strategy that supports reading? (Rigorous)

    A. Reading more
    B. Reading along with a more proficient reader
    C. Reading a passage no more than twice
    D. Self-monitoring progress

12. A teacher has taught his students to self-monitor their reading by locating where in the passage they are having difficulty, identifying the specific problem there, and restating the difficult sentence or passage in their own words. These strategies are examples of
    (Average)

    A. Graphic and semantic organizers
    B. Metacognition
    C. Recognizing story structure
    D. Summarizing
13. Which of the following bits of information best describes the structure of English? (Average)
   A. Syntax based on word order
   B. Inflected
   C. Romantic
   D. Orthography is phonetic

14. Which of the following sentences contains an error in agreement? (Easy)
   A. Jennifer is one of the women who writes for the magazine.
   B. Each one of their sons plays a different sport.
   C. This band has performed at the Odeum many times.
   D. The data are available online at the listed website.

15. Which level of meaning is the hardest aspect of a language to master? (Rigorous)
   A. Denotation
   B. Jargon
   C. Connotation
   D. Slang

16. This statement, “I’ll die if I don’t pass this course,” exemplifies a/an: (Easy)
   A. Barbarism
   B. Oxymoron
   C. Hyperbole
   D. Antithesis

17. Consider the following sentence:
   Joe didn’t hardly know his cousin Fred, who’d had a rhinoplasty. Which word group below best conveys the intended meaning of the underlined section above? (Average)
   A. Hardly did know his cousin Fred
   B. Didn’t know his cousin Fred hardly
   C. Hardly knew his cousin Fred
   D. Didn’t know his cousin Fred
18. Which aspect of language shows the most evident change over time? (Average)

A. Phonetics  
B. Vocabulary  
C. Syntax  
D. Spelling

19. What factor below introduced Modern English? (Rigorous)

A. The Great Vowel Shift  
B. The printing press  
C. The invasion of the Normans  
D. Phonetic spelling

20. Which of the following is not true about English? (Rigorous)

A. English is the easiest language to learn.  
B. English is the least inflected language.  
C. English has the most extensive vocabulary of any language.  
D. English originated as a Germanic tongue.

21. If a student uses slang and expletives, what is the best course of action to take in order to improve the student’s formal communication skills? (Rigorous)

A. Ask the student to rephrase their writing; that is, translate it into language appropriate for the school principal to read  
B. Refuse to read the student’s papers until he conforms to a more literate style  
C. Ask the student to read his work aloud to the class for peer evaluation  
D. Rewrite the flagrant passages to show the student the right form of expression

22. Oral debate is most closely associated with which form of discourse? (Average)

A. Description  
B. Exposition  
C. Narration  
D. Persuasion
23. A conversation between two or more people is called a/an: (Easy)
   A. Parody
   B. Dialogue
   C. Monologue
   D. Analogy

24. Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) accommodates all of the following factors in reading instruction except for (Average)
   A. Free-form responses to comprehension questions
   B. Increased motivation
   C. The addition of speech with computer-presented text
   D. The use of computers for word processing, and the integration of writing instruction with reading

25. Which of the four underlined sections of the following sentence contains an error that a word processing spellchecker probably wouldn’t catch? (Rigorous)
   He tuc the hors by the rains and pulled it back to the stabel.
   A. Tuc
   B. hors
   C. rains
   D. stable

26. All of the following techniques are used to observe student progress (conduct ongoing informal assessment) except for (Average)
   A. Analyzing the student work product at key stages
   B. Collecting data from assessment tests
   C. Posing strategic questions
   D. Observing students as they work
27. Effective assessment requires that (Rigorous)

A. Students not be involved in the assessment process.
B. Testing activities are kept separate from the teaching activities.
C. It assesses what classroom instruction has prepared the student to read.
D. Tests, in order to be reliable, should never use materials previously studied in the classroom

28. Reading a piece of student writing to assess the overall impression of the product is (Easy)

A. Holistic evaluation
B. Portfolio assessment
C. Analytical evaluation
D. Using a performance system

29. What type of comprehension do questions beginnings with “who,” “what,” “where,” or “how” assess? (Average)

A. Evaluative
B. Inferential
C. Literal
D. Narrative

30. In ‘inverted triangle’ introductory paragraphs, the thesis sentence occurs (Easy)

A. At the beginning of the paragraph
B. In the middle of the paragraph
C. At the end of the paragraph
D. In the second paragraph
Answer Key
1. A
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. D
6. D
7. D
8. D
9. C
10. B
11. C
12. C
13. A
14. A
15. C
16. A
17. C
18. B
19. A
20. A
21. A
22. D
23. B
24. A
25. C
26. B
27. C
28. A
29. C
30. C