The Focused Questions

- The four focused questions (questions on Domains I, II, III, and IV) are scored on a scale of 1-3. The scoring scale for these questions is on the following page.

- You will have a maximum of one lined page to answer each question on Domains I and IV.

- You will have a maximum of two lined pages to answer each question on Domains II and III.
### Performance Characteristics

**Purpose**

The candidate demonstrate an understanding of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domain(s) by fulfilling the purpose of the assignment.

**Application of Content**

The candidate accurately and effectively applies the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domain(s).

**Support**

The candidate supports the response with appropriate examples, evidence, and rationale based on the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge applicable RICA domain(s).

### RICA Focused Educational Tasks and Problems Scoring Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>The &quot;3&quot; response reflects a thorough understanding of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domain. The response completely fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding fully to the given task. The response demonstrates an accurate and effective application of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains. The response provides strong supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>The &quot;2&quot; response reflects an adequate understanding of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domain. The response generally fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding adequately to the given task. The response demonstrates a generally accurate and reasonably effective application of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains. The response provides adequate supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>The &quot;1&quot; response reflects a limited or no understanding of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domain. The response partially fulfills or fails to fulfill the purpose of the assignment by responding in a limited way or inadequately to the given task. The response demonstrates a limited and/or ineffective application of the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains and may contain significant inaccuracies. The response provides limited or no supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on the relevant content and pedagogical knowledge from the applicable RICA domains.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The response is unscored because it is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, written in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score or off task.</td>
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ASSIGNMENT A

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A new student enters a fifth-grade classroom. The teacher wishes to determine the student's independent reading level.

Examinee Task: Use the lined space provided below.

Write a response in which you describe an appropriate procedure for accomplishing this goal.
Sample Response for Assignment A—Domain I

An informal reading inventory can assess a student’s independent reading level. Here are the steps:

1. Administer a word recognition test using grade-level word lists (start at 3rd-grade level for a 5th grader).

2. Stop when the student misses more than 20% of the words on a list.

3. Have the student read aloud from a graded series of passages (start one level below the highest level list the student passed).

4. For each passage, tally the miscues and ask 5-10 literal and inferential comprehension questions.

The student’s independent reading level is the highest level at which he/she reads 99-100% of the words accurately and answers at least 90% of the questions correctly.

Evaluation of Sample Response

Assignment A assesses one or more competencies in Domain I. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by describing procedures for conducting an informal reading inventory, a method commonly used in the classroom for assessing independent reading level. The writer provides an accurate description of the procedures involved in an informal reading inventory as they would be applied with a fifth-grade student. The highly specific list of steps provides evidence of the writer’s thorough grasp of this subject matter.

Note: In a response to an assignment such as the one above, candidates may refer to a specific reading program or product (e.g., for this assignment, a commercially available informal reading inventory). It would not be considered an adequate response, however, to simply name a particular program or product.
There are many ways a teacher can determine a student's independent reading level. Some methods are more time consuming than others, so it really depends how quickly the teacher wishes to find out the student's reading level.

If the teacher wants a quick idea but not a 100% accurate answer to the reading level, she simply has the student read a short paragraph of a fifth-grade textbook. If the student's rate of reading is average to her other students and he knows how to attack an unfamiliar word, then the teacher can be somewhat sure that he is reading at a fifth-grade level.

If the teacher wants a more accurate assessment of the student's reading level, she may have to administer a traditional reading test. For example, the teacher may want to use an IRI (Independent Reading Inventory). This test is quite time consuming and is best administered on a one-on-one basis. That is the teacher should evaluate the student before or after school to have an appropriate testing environment. The IRI will give the teacher the student's independent reading level, comprehension level, listening comprehension level, and instructional level.
There are several ways in which the teacher can determine the student’s independent reading level. The way is to get a writing sample. The writing sample would give the teacher an idea of the student’s use of language such as sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar. The topic could be as simple as what the student did over the weekend, describing his favorite thing to do, or writing about his family.

Another way is to determine the student’s independent reading level is having the student read a page or two from the book the class is reading. By having the student read aloud, the teacher may have an idea of the student’s ability reading fluency and word attack skills. Finally, a third way the teacher can determine a student’s independent level is observing the types of books he chooses to read during independent reading time and asking the student questions about what he is reading.

The teacher may also have the student read silently and ask the student questions regarding his reading.
One way to determine a student's independent reading level is to administer an individualized Reading inventory such as the Burnt and Roe model. This type of assessment enables the teacher to determine where the student can read independently both orally and silently. Although this test focuses on comprehension after the child has read, it gives a good indication of the grade level where the child could read at an independent level. This information will help the teacher with respect to the child's instructional needs.
ASSIGNMENT A

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A new student enters a fifth-grade classroom. The teacher wishes to determine the student's independent reading level.

Examinee Task Use the lined space provided below.

Write a response in which you describe an appropriate procedure for accomplishing this goal.

I will give the student a passage to read and do a running record of the student so I can see where he is regarding his reading.

Also, I will do an IRA test to test the student's knowledge of single words, whether they can read the words correctly and then ask the student to read the 5th grade level passages to check his comprehension of the passages.

Besides the above, I will also give the student Peabody test to see how he/she is doing with recognizing the pictures in the words.
 ASSIGNMENT B

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A sixth-grade teacher substitutes blank spaces for several nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a newspaper article and distributes copies of the modified text to her students. Students work in pairs to determine reasonable and logical words that could fill in the blanks.

Examinee Task Use the lined space provided below.

Using your knowledge of English language structures, write a response in which you explain one way that the activity described above can enhance the students' reading development.
Sample Response for Assignment B—Domain IV

One way that this activity can enhance students' reading development is by promoting their ability to use syntactic and semantic cues to aid in reading comprehension. In order to determine a "reasonable and logical" word for each blank, the students will need to pay attention to how different parts of speech are structured and placed within a sentence. Increased knowledge of language rules and patterns will promote students' reading comprehension and fluency by helping them group words into meaningful chunks as they read.

Evaluation of Sample Response

Assignment B assesses one or more competencies in Domain IV. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by using knowledge of English language structures to explain how the instructional activity described can enhance students' reading development. The response reflects an accurate understanding of the role of syntactic and semantic cues in enhancing reading comprehension. Support for the writer's argument is found in a clear explanation of connections involving a reader's ability to use syntactic cues and language rules/structures when reading, the reader's ability to "chunk" text, and the reader's fluency and comprehension.
This activity is useful to help students develop skills in using context to appropriately guess what an unknown word means or what an unrecognized word is. Students will always come across words they cannot sound out and words for which they do not know the meaning. It is an important skill to develop to use the context of the sentence to correctly guess what a word must mean in a particular sentence. Students can use clues in these sentences, and/or grammatical clues. It is a good way to improve vocabulary and comprehension. It forces the student to pay attention to the meaning of the sentence. This is called a close procedure.
AssignmenB

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A sixth-grade teacher substitutes blank spaces for several nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a newspaper article and distributes copies of the modified text to her students. Students work in pairs to determine reasonable and logical words that could fill in the blanks.

Examinee Task Use the lined space provided below.

Using your knowledge of English language structures, write a response in which you explain one way that the activity described above can enhance the students' reading development.

I will explain to the students to always try to use active voice. So when they try to figure out what to put in the blanks, I will ask them to think of a noun put in the blank first. Since these are sixth graders, they should know that nouns are naming words. Then I will ask them to think of a verb put after the noun. The verb is an action word, it tells us the timing. Then I will explain to them that adjectives are words used to describe the noun. While adverbs are words I will give a sentence walking quickly to the restaurant. This is a noun. If walking is present, continuous tense, quickly refers to her walking action, it describes the verb so it is an adverb. Beautiful describes the restaurant which is a noun, so beautiful is an adjective.
Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A sixth-grade teacher substitutes blank spaces for several nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a newspaper article and distributes copies of the modified text to her students. Students work in pairs to determine reasonable and logical words that could fill in the blanks.

**Examinee Task** Use the lined space provided below.

Using your knowledge of English language structures, write a response in which you explain one way that the activity described above can enhance the students' reading development.

This teacher is using the **CLOSE PROCEDURE** to enhance the students' reading development. The procedure forces students to use their background knowledge of what they know about language structure. The task also helps them use context for deriving the meaning of a word or sentence. The discussion allows the students to brainstorm about what the most appropriate reasonable words fit in the blanks based on the context of the article.
ASSIGNMENT C

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A second-grade teacher is assessing the reading performance of a student named Tony. As Tony reads aloud from an unfamiliar book, the teacher notes his performance on her copy of the passage. Printed below is an excerpt from the teacher's record of Tony's performance:

Do you like to have a carrot or a piece of celery for a snack? Do you like strawberries, figs, and grapes? Many of the fruits and vegetables that we buy in the grocery store come from farms in California. Farms in our state also grow grains for cereal. Some of these farms are huge. Trains, planes, and large trucks carry food from these farms to cities and towns all over our country.

Key:
- O deletion
- ] short pause
- — repetition
- @ self-correction
- A insertion
- ] long pause
- 8 substitution

Tony's teacher also gives him a worksheet designed to test his understanding of certain elements of phonics. Printed below are Tony's responses to part of the worksheet. The directions read as follows: "Read the word in dark type. Circle the word after it that has the same sound as the underlined part of the first word."

1. cereal cake pencil page garden
   coat cider pick pg bridge
   city dance pick good
   cat cold nice gym
   cat cold nice

Examinee Task

Use the two lined pages provided.

Based on your analysis of Tony's performance on the assessments shown above, write a response in which you: (1) identify one important need demonstrated by Tony in the area of word decoding; (2) describe an instructional strategy or activity to help address the identified need; and (3) explain why the strategy or activity you describe would be effective for this purpose.
Sample Response for Assignment C—Domain II

1) Tony's decoding need: Knowing that the consonants c and g make "soft sounds" (/s/ and /j/) when followed by the vowels e, i, and y and "hard sounds" (/k/ and /g/) when followed by other letters (a, o, u, or other consonants).

2) Strategy: Begin by focusing on c.

Materials:
- Pocket chart
- Set 1 of about twenty soft c and hard c word cards with the vowels e, i, and y following c in red
- Set 2 of the soft c and hard c word cards without the vowels colored

Steps:
1. Display Set 1 cards in the pocket chart and ask the student, "What do you notice?"
2. Teach the rule that when c is followed by e, i, or y, it sounds like /s/ in "sun."
3. Read the words in the pocket chart aloud together, applying the rule.
4. Give Set 2 to the student and work together to sort by soft c and hard c words.
5. After the words are sorted, ask the student to read them aloud.

3) Explanation: This activity should help Tony read words with the soft c because he has been taught the rule and has been asked to apply it by seeing, saying, and manipulating words using the rule.

Evaluation of Sample Response

Assignment C assesses one or more competencies in Domain II. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by identifying a decoding need based on Tony's performance (i.e., distinguishing soft from hard c and g), describing an effective teaching strategy for helping Tony learn to recognize hard versus soft c in words, and explaining why the strategy would be effective. The writer demonstrates an accurate understanding of phonics issues related to Tony's need (e.g., the rules for soft versus hard c and g) and also describes effective procedures for using a pocket chart and word cards to foster Tony's learning and reinforcement of the rule for soft c. The writer offers strong support for the response by providing appropriate, accurate details and an accurate rationale explaining why the described instructional strategy would be effective.
Tony confuses the soft and hard sounds of "c" and "k". Reinforcement of the phonetic rules for these letters would be called for. Also, a sorting exercise would help. He should be given C & K words on cards, and he should try to sort them into hard and soft piles. All the soft C's in one pile, hard C's in another. He needs some repetition, a chance to apply the phonetics repeatedly, to a number of different examples.

The teacher also might check to see if Tony has similar problems with other consonants which have two sounds.
After carefully looking at Tony's assessments, I feel that he is confusing the two consonant letters C and G. In his assessment, he misses the word Celly and the word huge, and many others like them.

To help Tony, the teacher should help build his awareness of the major sounds that letters represent, and maybe even create a consonant chart. Whern Tony encounters a letter or letter combination that he gets confused on, her can refer to the chart. This chart can be helpful in fostering Tony's learning and self-esteem.
Tony's performance in the above assessments show his lack of understanding in the difference between a hard "c" and soft "c" as well as a hard "g" and soft "g". Before doing an activity with Tony regarding the differentiation of the hard and soft "c" and "g" sounds, I would explain that the two sounds exist next to each letter and when they are hard and when they are soft.

I would tell Tony that the letter "c" is a hard "c" and makes the /k/ sound when it is before an "a", "o", or "u". The letter "g" is a hard "g" and makes the /g/ sound when it is before an "e" or "i". Then we would look at a list of words and see if the rule works. The list of words could include city, celery, cat, cake, pencil, page, large, country, garden. After deciding and trying out the rule, we could go over the worksheet and make the necessary corrections.

I believe the activity would be effective because it gives Tony a strategy when he is confused about whether to use the hard or soft "c" or "g".
1. It is obvious that Tony has difficulty differentiating between the hard and soft C, F, G. For example, in the passage, he says pick for piece, kelsy for celery, groksy for grocery, cereal for Kernal. He also made the same mistake in the phone worksheet.

2. Since Tony is a 2nd grader, I would teach him that g and c represent two sounds, /g/ as in goat or /j/ as in grant and /k/ as in cat and /c/ as in city. When they are reading and come across a word that they are not sure of the pronunciation, they would use this knowledge to sound out the word, using both sounds. For example, for the word cent, they would first pronounce it with a hard /c/, /k/ent on if it doesn’t make sense then realize they would pronounce it with a soft /s/ as in sent. The students would determine which sounds correct and/or make sense.
This story would be effective for Tony or anyone else in the same situation because he might have never been taught the differences between these two sounds.
ASSIGNMENT D

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A first-grade teacher is assessing Amie's reading comprehension of a story that she reads fluently and accurately by having Amie retell the story in her own words. The story is printed below.

Pam is at school. She plays a new game. A girl tells her how to play the game. First, Pam has to run as fast as she can. She likes to run. When she runs fast, she can feel the wind on her face. Next, the girl says, "Red light!" Pam has to stop. She must stand very still. Then the girl says, "Green light!" Now, Pam can run again. She runs fast. Pam likes the new game. She wants to play it with her friend Rosa after school.

After Amie reads the story, the teacher asks some questions. Printed below is a transcript of their conversation.

| Teacher: | Can you tell me what you were reading about? |
| Amie:    | It's a story about some girls. One girl is named Pam. She doesn't know how to cross the street. |
| Teacher: | How do you know that Pam needs to learn about crossing the street? |
| Amie:    | Because she doesn't even know about red lights and green lights. How red is for stop and green is for go. I think she's a little kid. |
| Teacher: | What happens to Pam in this story? |
| Amie:    | This other girl bosses her around. Pam wants to run in the wind. The other girl makes her stop. She says, "Red light!" and then Pam stops. I think the other girl tells her about crossing the street when the cars stop. So, she learns about it. |
| Teacher: | What else do you think Pam will do? |
| Amie:    | Maybe she'll tell the girl to stop bossing her around. |

Examinee Task Use the two lined pages provided.

Using your knowledge of reading comprehension, write a response in which you: (1) identify one reading comprehension need demonstrated by Amie; (2) describe an instructional strategy or activity to help address this need; and (3) explain why the strategy or activity you describe would be effective for this purpose.
Amie demonstrated difficulty with literal comprehension, which led to her making incorrect inferences. Since Amie read the story aloud "fluently and accurately," she may have been concentrating more on decoding than on comprehension. Therefore, the first thing I would do is have Amie reread the story silently.

If after silent reading Amie's answers to literal questions, like the teacher's first and third questions, were still weak, I would help her "reconstruct" the story by modeling self-questioning as a strategy, using two kinds of basic questions:
1) "W" questions, like "where is Pam? What is she doing? Who is she with?"
2) Sequencing questions, such as "what does Pam do first? Next?"
At first I would ask the questions out loud and answer them myself, then I'd ask them of Amie; then finally I'd encourage her to ask and answer her own questions. As a follow up, I'd have Amie practice this self-questioning strategy with other passages.

This strategy would be effective in improving Amie's literal comprehension because it models and reinforces a technique she can use to monitor her own literal understanding as she reads.

Evaluation of Sample Response

Assignment D assesses one or more competencies in Domain III. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by discussing Amie's reading need in literal comprehension (which also led to problems in inferential comprehension), describing an effective strategy for addressing Amie's need by promoting her use of self-questioning and self-monitoring during reading, and explaining why this approach would enhance Amie's comprehension. The writer accurately identifies Amie's literal comprehension need, as well as possible causes and consequences of that need, and then goes on to demonstrate knowledge of an effective strategy for enhancing Amie's literal comprehension by modeling and promoting her use of self-questioning. The writer supports the response with relevant, accurate details (e.g., regarding types of questions to use when modeling self-questioning for literal comprehension, the importance of giving Amie follow-up activities for practice) and a clear rationale explaining why the strategy described can be expected to improve Amie's literal comprehension.
Annie's answers to her teacher's questions illustrate a lack of attention to detail. She remembers the red light and green light and assumes that Pam in the story is crossing the street. In the story, it clearly states that Pam is playing a game.

Another reason for Annie's lack of understanding of the story could be her inexperience with the game "Red Light, Green Light." By having Annie play the game by herself, she may have a better understanding of the story because she would no longer associate red light, green light with only crossing the street. I believe having Annie play the game a few times so that she is familiar with the game would be an effective way for Annie to understand the story she read about Pam.

In regards to helping Annie in her reading to pay better attention to detail, the teacher could use the request method. The request method would make Annie pay better attention to her reading in order to make up questions to ask the teacher.
1. Amie seems to demonstrate lack of inference. She has obviously memorized the story and has had some background knowledge of what “red light and green light” represent.

2. An activity I would do with Amie would be to ask her to show me (in the text) where the author talks about crossing the street. If she can’t point to the actual text (obviously she can’t), I would then ask her why she thinks Pam doesn’t know how to cross the street.

3. I think this activity would help Amie think of her responses more clearly and she would also need to refer back to the text to find the answer, allowing her to re-analyze her answers.
Amie seems to be missing some detail in the story and depending too much on outside knowledge. The teacher should help her attend more closely to what is happening in the story. One approach to this could be modeling a think-aloud strategy. Amie and the teacher could read a story together. Every sentence in turn, they can stop and each can say what they think is going on, and what they think about it. This way Amie can see how the teacher attends to each detail and ties them together to understand the writer’s main idea. At the same time, Amie can practice this skill. Stopping often can keep the student from getting too far off task.

Also, the teacher might check to see if Amie is having trouble on the playground.
I believe Amie is having problems with the main idea of the story. The strategy that her teacher could use with her is classification. For example, the teacher could ask Amie to categorize words and tell which word tells about all the others like pears, apples, grapes, and strawberries. After Amie has perfected that activity, she could move on to categorizing sentences in a paragraph and tell which sentence tells about all the others.

These activities will help Amie derive main ideas from real paragraphs and familiarize her with not only main ideas, but also details.