



LITERACY AND NUMERACY TEST FOR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Literacy

Practice Questions September 2023

LITERACY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

These Literacy practice questions are presented in printable format. The actual test is taken online.

There are 20 practice questions in this paper. The actual Literacy test has 65 questions.

Answers to the questions appear at the end of this PDF. Worked solutions appear in a separate PDF.

FIRST DAY

The following text, taken from a novel published in 1935 and set in London, describes Dorothy Millborough's first day of work as a teacher.

'Now, girls,' said Mrs Creevy, 'this is your new teacher, Miss Millborough. As you know, Miss Strong had to leave us all of a sudden after she was taken so bad in the middle of the arithmetic lesson; and I can tell you I've had a hard week of it looking for a new teacher. I had seventy-three applications before I took on Miss Millborough, and I had to refuse them all because their qualifications weren't high enough. Just you remember and tell your parents that, all of you – seventy-three applications! Well, Miss Millborough is going to take you in Latin, French, history, geography, mathematics, English literature and composition, spelling, grammar, handwriting, and freehand drawing; and Mr Booth will take you in chemistry as usual on Thursday afternoons. Now, what's the first lesson on your timetable this morning?'

'History, Ma'am,' piped one or two voices.

'Very well. I expect Miss Millborough'll start off by asking you a few questions about the history you've been learning. So just you do your best, all of you, and let her see that all the trouble we've taken over you hasn't been wasted. You'll find they can be quite a sharp lot of girls when they try, Miss Millborough.'

'I'm sure they are,' said Dorothy.

'Well, I'll be leaving you, then. And just you behave yourselves, girls! Don't you get trying it on with Miss Millborough like you did with Miss Brewer, because I warn you she won't stand it. If I hear any noise coming from this room, there'll be trouble for somebody.'

She gave a glance round which included Dorothy and indeed suggested that Dorothy would probably be the 'somebody' referred to, and departed.

Dorothy faced the class. She was not afraid of them – she was too used to dealing with children ever to be afraid of them – but she did feel a momentary qualm. The sense of being an impostor (what teacher has not felt it at times?) was heavy upon her. It suddenly occurred to her, what she had only been dimly aware of before, that she had taken this teaching job under flagrantly false pretences, without having any kind of qualification for it. The subject she was now supposed to be teaching was history, and, like most 'educated' people, she knew virtually no history. How awful, she thought, if it turned out that these girls knew more history than she did! She said tentatively:

'What period exactly were you doing with Miss Strong?'

Nobody answered. Dorothy saw the older girls exchanging glances, as though asking one another whether it was safe to say anything, and finally deciding not to commit themselves.

‘Well, whereabouts had you got to?’ she said, wondering whether perhaps the word ‘period’ was too much for them.

Again no answer.

‘Well, now, surely you remember something about it? Tell me the names of some of the people you were learning about in your last history lesson.’

More glances were exchanged, and a very plain little girl in the front row, in a brown jumper and skirt, with her hair screwed into two tight pigtails, remarked cloudily, ‘It was about the Ancient Britons.’ At this two other girls took courage, and answered simultaneously. One of them said, ‘Columbus’, and the other ‘Napoleon’.

Somehow, after that, Dorothy seemed to see her way more clearly. It was obvious that instead of being uncomfortably knowledgeable as she had feared, the class knew as nearly as possible no history at all. With this discovery her stage-fright vanished. She grasped that before she could do anything else with them it was necessary to find out what, if anything, these children knew.

Question 1

‘Just you remember and tell your parents that, all of you – seventy-three applications!’ (paragraph 1)
What is Mrs Creevy mainly intending to communicate here?

- A that her teaching staff are of high quality
- B that high standards are expected of her students
- C that she values parental engagement in learning
- D that the job prospects awaiting school leavers are good

Question 2

‘If I hear any noise coming from this room, there’ll be trouble for somebody.’ (paragraph 5)
Who does Dorothy Millborough think that Mrs Creevy would blame in the event of any noise?

- A the parents
- B the students
- C Miss Brewer
- D Dorothy herself

Question 3

Why does Dorothy Millborough ‘feel a momentary qualm’ when she meets her students? (paragraph 7)

- A She senses their hostility towards her.
- B She has little experience of working with children.
- C She feels that she lacks the required content knowledge.
- D She knows that the students were devoted to their old teacher.

Question 4

How does Dorothy Millborough interpret the students' responses to her questions?

- A The students have no desire to learn.
- B There is nothing more she can teach the students.
- C The students have a solid foundation on which to build.
- D The students have little recall of what they have previously been taught.

Question 5

The final paragraph of the text suggests that Dorothy Millborough suddenly feels

- A amused.
- B irresolute.
- C motivated.
- D apprehensive.

Question 6

What does the text imply about the relationship between Dorothy Millborough and Mrs Creevy?

- A Mrs Creevy admires Dorothy.
- B Dorothy looks up to Mrs Creevy.
- C Dorothy feels superior to Mrs Creevy.
- D Mrs Creevy doubts Dorothy's competence.

Question 7

Which of the following sayings best reflects Dorothy Millborough's approach to teaching at the end of the story?

- A When one teaches, two learn.
- B Spare the rod and spoil the child.
- C What salt is to food, passion is to teaching.
- D Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.

EGGCORNS

An eggcorn is a recently coined term for an English usage that

- © is incorrect
- © sounds like the correct usage, and
- © makes (or almost makes) its own sense.

Example 1

Correct usage: When I let out the dogs they hurtled into the yard.

Eggcorn: When I let out the dogs they hurdled into the yard.

Example 2

Correct usage: The closing of the airport sounded the death knell for the resort.

Eggcorn: The closing of the airport sounded the death nail for the resort.

Question 8

In each of the sentences below, is the underlined word correct English or an eggcorn?

Select 'Correct' or 'Eggcorn' for each sentence.

Sentence	Correct	Eggcorn
Increased funding has given the old primary school a new <u>leash</u> on life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There will be only minor changes to the process after all is <u>said</u> and done.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The scenery for the play was a <u>mixmatch</u> of different styles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ASSIGNMENTS

Question 9

Which verb would best complete the sentence below?

By the end of the term, if I don't get sick again, I _____ all my assignments.

- A have completed
- B will have completed
- C would have completed
- D had completed

UNIVERSITY

A high school Guidance teacher is preparing a handout for his students about what to expect at university. He has decided to use the following headings.

- I. Self-direction
- II. Study–life balance
- III. Teaching and learning
- IV. Timetables and schedules

Question 10

Under which heading would he best place the ideas listed below?

Select 'I', 'II', 'III' or 'IV' for each idea.

Idea	I	II	III	IV
Class sizes vary, and they may number 100 students or more.				
Lecturers may not remind you of incomplete work.				
You will be confronted not only with new subject areas to master but new opportunities to make friends.				

SUMMIT

Question 11

The sentence below has **one** comma that is used incorrectly.

As the morning wore on, it became obvious that the original goal of reaching the summit in time for lunch, was overly ambitious, and a new, less demanding plan would have to be devised.

After which word does the **incorrect** comma appear?

- A on
- B lunch
- C ambitious
- D new

THEATRICAL EXCURSION

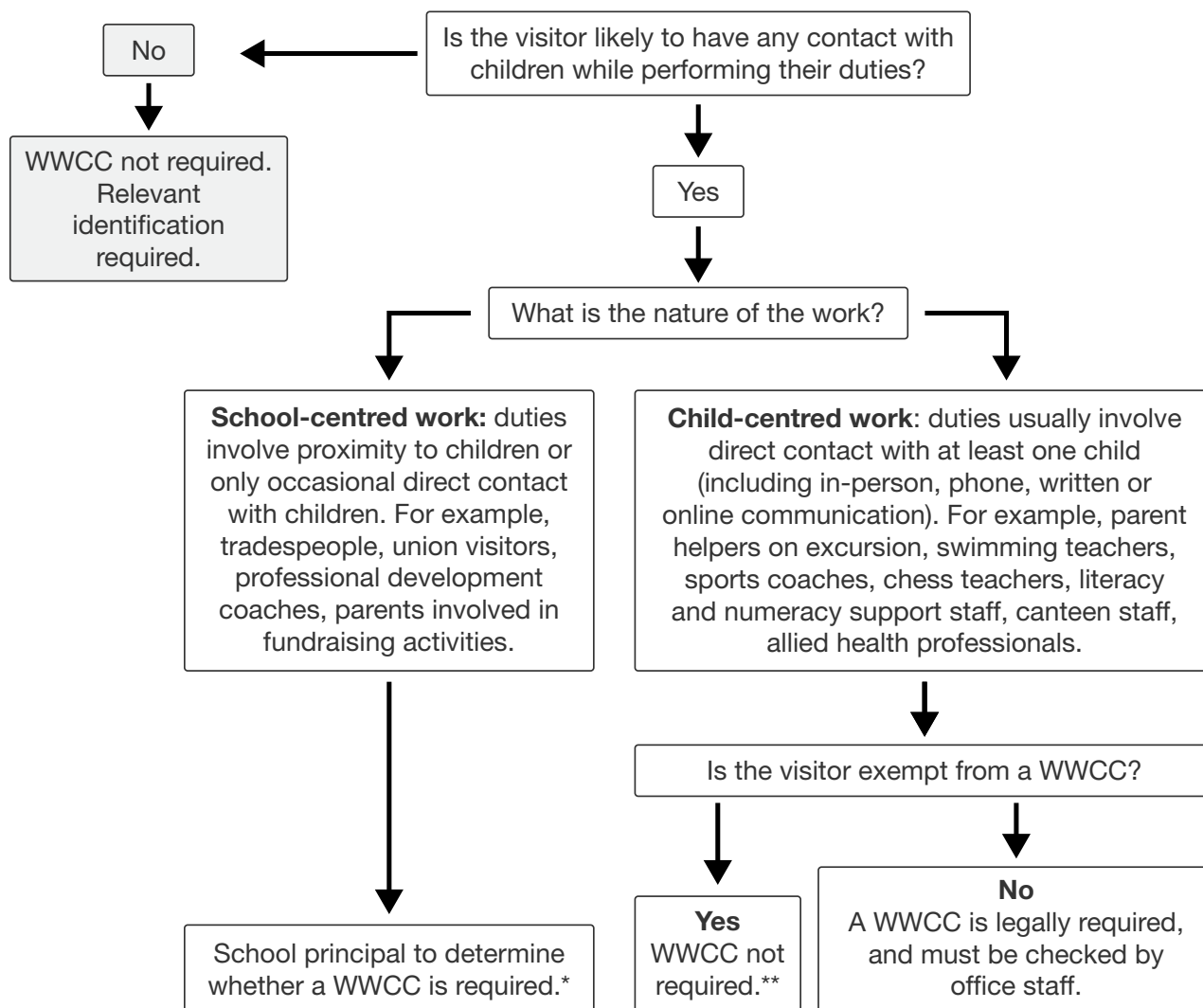
Question 12

A student has written the following sentence in a report of an excursion. If the sentence contains a spelling error, correct the error by writing the word as it should appear (write **only one word**); if there is no error, write **N**.

Receiving the opportunity to see a theatrical production at the State Performing Arts Complex has peaked my curiosity about becoming a professional entertainer.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The following is a flow chart related to student safety and Working With Children Check (WWCC) requirements, developed by a Victorian primary school.



* A WWCC is recommended when the visitor will visit the school repeatedly. ** Some visitors are legally exempt from a WWCC, such as people who have already undergone a higher level of screening (e.g. teachers, police officers). Other visitors (such as parent volunteers, if their child ordinarily participates in the activity) are also exempt, as are visitors under 18. Other identification may be required (such as a Victorian Institute of Teaching card). See [Working with Children Check – Exemptions](#) for more information on who is exempt from Working With Children Checks.

Question 13

According to the text, are the following characteristics a reason that a visitor may be exempt from needing a WWCC?

Select 'Yes' or 'No' for each characteristic.

Characteristic	Yes	No
the visitor's age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the visitor's profession	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the visitor's previous visits to the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 14

According to the text, which of the following visitors would most likely be required to show a WWCC?

- A a visiting speech pathologist
- B a teacher visiting from another school
- C a parent attending a school council meeting
- D an electrician attending the school on the weekend

Question 15

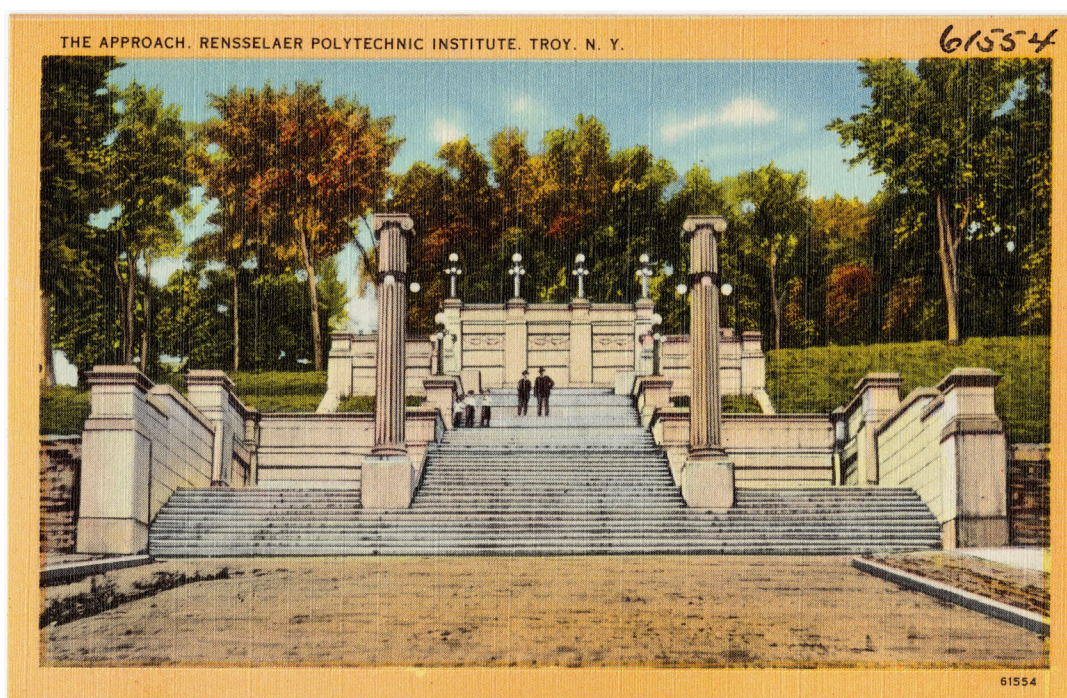
Who is responsible for ensuring that visitors who require a WWCC have one?

- A office staff
- B the principal
- C any teacher assigned the task
- D a representative of the school council

THE APPROACH

The following text is an extract from an academic article.

In an influential article about breaking down the barriers between universities and the communities around them, Ellen Cushman first described the steep steps of 'the Approach', a set of stairs, long in disrepair, between the city of Troy, New York, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. The Approach, for her, symbolized that which 'prohibit(s) scholars from approaching people outside the University'. Every day, she writes, 'we reproduce this distance so long as a select few gain entrance to universities, so long as we differentiate between experts and novices, and so long as we value certain types of knowledge we can capitalize on through specialization'. Here is a postcard picture of how the steps used to look.



The steps are made of a light grey stone. They are about 20 meters wide on their bottom flight, which is at the forefront of the photo, so that we look up from the very bottom. The steps narrow further up, at the point where two large cylindrical marble columns stand. The steps continue to climb up to an imposing set of gates. Behind these gates there are green trees and foliage and, we assume, the university. Five people stand up near the very top of the steps and they look very small, giving perspective on just how steep and massive the approach is.

The very fact that these steps are featured in a postcard reveals the ways that such structures are the stylistic and aesthetic centre of many campuses. If we were to object that such steps make the university inaccessible, many universities would make the argument that steep steps are stylistically desirable, that they fit with the template, the architectural fingerprint of the school: all the buildings are the same colour, with the same size Ionic columns, maybe even the same number of stairs leading up to buildings. These counterarguments show the ways that in the construction and maintenance of the steep steps there is also a latent argument about aesthetics or appearances, one that trips over to the classroom, into ideology and into pedagogy, where teachers are also sometimes concerned about pattern, clarity, propriety – and these things are believed to be 'beautiful'.

Today, the steps in this postcard are in ruins, but the ideology of the steep steps persists, at Rensselaer and elsewhere. Even as universities have become more accepting of diversity, academics tend to stay 'inside', as Ellen Cushman suggests. And the steps aren't the only way in which the university is inaccessible, even if they might be the most physically arresting and apparent. As a select few stay in, disability is kept out, often quite literally. If it isn't the steep steps of this approach, it might be the ornate gates you encounter in the approach to Ivy League schools like Harvard and Princeton — gates that are reproduced in a movie like *Monsters University* as emblematic of college architecture and its ideology.

Question 16

How are the steps of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute presented in the text, in relation to 'the barriers between universities and the communities around them' (paragraph 1)?

- A as a way of breaking through the barriers
- B as an embodiment of the barriers
- C as a device for concealing the barriers
- D as a denial of the barriers

Question 17

In the text as a whole, the steps' current state of 'disrepair' (paragraph 1) is used to

- A provide a contrast with the continuing existence of discrimination.
- B highlight that discrimination has an ancient history.
- C suggest that discrimination is increasingly being dismantled.
- D imply that the removal of discrimination comes at a cultural cost.

Question 18

The text uses the people on the stairs in the postcard (paragraph 2) to emphasise

- A the persistence of human values in a hostile environment.
- B the small-scale ambitions of university education.
- C the rewards of individual achievement.
- D the intimidating effect of the university's architecture.

Question 19

Which of the following practices, explicitly mentioned in the text, is most directly illustrated by the example of the Rensselaer Polytechnic steps?

- A scholars not interacting with the wider community (paragraph 1)
- B experts being differentiated from novices (paragraph 1)
- C disciplines being divided into more specialist areas (paragraph 1)
- D access to people with disability being restricted in practice (paragraph 4)

Question 20

What is the main persuasive technique used in the text?

- A citing a variety of sources
- B presenting a range of evidence
- C elaborating on a symbolic connection
- D relating a personal experience

End of Literacy practice questions.
Answers on next page.

Answers

Question 1	A: that her teaching staff are of high quality
Question 2	D: Dorothy herself
Question 3	C: She feels that she lacks the required content knowledge.
Question 4	D: The students have little recall of what they have previously been taught.
Question 5	C: motivated.
Question 6	D: Mrs Creevy doubts Dorothy's competence.
Question 7	A: When one teaches, two learn.
Question 8	Eggcorn; Correct; Eggcorn
Question 9	B: will have completed
Question 10	III; I; II.
Question 11	B: lunch
Question 12	piqued
Question 13	Yes; Yes; No.
Question 14	A: a visiting speech pathologist
Question 15	A: office staff
Question 16	B: as an embodiment of the barriers
Question 17	A: provide a contrast with the continuing existence of discrimination.
Question 18	D: the intimidating effect of the university's architecture.
Question 19	D: access to people with disability being restricted in practice (paragraph 4)
Question 20	C: elaborating on a symbolic connection

