

**Old Dominion University
Darden College of Education
Middle School Education/6-8
Initial Licensure
Comprehensive Exam
QUESTIONS**

English/Language Arts Education Question

Explain the essential parts of Atwell's writing workshop, including the role of the teacher and students.

Mathematics Education Question

The *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* articulates an ambitious vision of a rigorous, high-quality mathematics learning environment, with a clear and comprehensive goal to stimulate efforts for the improvement of mathematics education and mathematical competence for students in grades prekindergarten through twelve. You are to identify and discuss any three (3) principles, any three (3) content standards, and at least two (2) process standards. Include in your discussion how each of the principles and process standards will be evidenced in your future classroom.

Science Education Question

Two areas of reform in science education include increased attention to the nature of science and implementation of inquiry-based instructional strategies. Considering the importance of these areas for the teaching and learning of science, please respond to the following:

- (a) Describe at least three alternative conceptions regarding the nature of science typically held by children and adults.
- (b) Describe the parts of a learning cycle instructional model (select either a 3-E, 4-E, or 5-E model) and emphasize why learning cycle strategies are considered to be inquiry-based.
- (c) Describe how you would satisfy the requirements of each phase of your learning cycle when teaching a science concept of your choosing.

Social Studies Education Question

The citizen's role in a democracy is active and complex. Describe a classroom scenario in which the actions of a third grader OR an eighth grader are those actions common with the role of a citizen in a democracy. In your answer specify at least three (3) standards-based (3) instructional experiences designed by the classroom teacher to encourage the students' authentic, democratic involvement.

Children's/Young Adult Literature Question

You are interviewing for a position as a teacher at Mount Pleasant Middle School. During the course of the interview with the principal, she remarks that she sees high quality children's and/or young adult literature as a key to uniting the curriculum and to helping students improve their reading. Then she turns to you and asks the following questions. (Respond to each of them.)

- Identify at least three (3) specific awards or recognized selection sources you believe would help you select high-quality literature to use with your students. For each award, explain why the award is given (the major criteria for the award). In addition, for each award or selection source, identify the authority (association, organization, etc.) that is responsible for the award or for developing the selection source.
- Select a grade level and identify at least three (3) examples of high-quality literature that you would recommend for middle school students. For each book, provide the following information: a) the title; b) an explanation on why you selected each book; and c) evidence that the book supports the Virginia Standards of Learning for that grade level.
- Provide at least three (3) specific examples of techniques and/or instructional strategies that you would use to integrate high-quality literature into your classroom. Explain how you would use each of the strategies in your classroom.

Content Area Reading Question

In an essay discuss how you would teach vocabulary through the PAR framework. Discuss why and how vocabulary needs to be taught through PAR. Provide at least three (3) specific activities. Make sure each step of PAR is explained for each activity.

Human Growth and Development Question

Human growth and development occurs as a continuous process from birth until death. However, theorists view this process differently.

- a) Discuss the similarities and differences of at least **four noted theorists** from the field of human development on this process of human growth and development.
- b) Integrate the theoretical perspectives as you describe and discuss at least **one developmental period** of the lifespan within the secondary level of the students you are or will be certified to teach.

Instructional Technology Question

Productivity Tools (word processing, spreadsheet, concept mapping, presentation) are available to most classroom teachers. How the tool is used in the classroom, not the tool itself, is critical to the integration of the computer into the curriculum. Explain how you plan to integrate these tools into your classroom (cite at least three specific examples) and how this can enhance student learning.

Middle School Education Question

Discuss the purpose of the elementary school and the secondary school, and then discuss the purpose of the middle school. What is the middle school's rationale or purpose? Provide information other than it being a "transitional" school between the elementary and secondary school – the rationale needs to be more specific. Your response should or can include information on young adolescents' development, their need for a developmentally responsive curriculum, a school climate that promotes their physical and psychological well-being, and their need for socialization experiences.

Research Questions

Question #1: Compare and contrast experimental and non-experimental designs in terms of purpose, prototypical studies, and threats to internal and external validity. Develop an experimental research question and identify a corresponding experimental design to determine the impact of test-taking skills/ training on academic achievement.

Question #2: Your school principal has read about a new math program that may be more effective than the current math program for promoting achievement among students. She has asked you to develop a research study to compare the effectiveness of the two programs. The principal has provided ample resources to implement both programs. Describe the research study and be sure to address the research question, type of design, variables, sample/assignment, and potential threats to validity.

Question #3: How do classroom assessments differ from high-stakes tests like the SOL exam? In your response address distinctions pertaining to purpose, development, types of items, use of results, and reliability and validity considerations.

Special Education Question

The principal at your school has assigned three students with mild but varying disabilities **to your tenth grade classroom** for the upcoming academic year. As part of this inclusion process, the principal has requested that you work closely with the special education case manager who will provide ongoing support (not direct support) to your classroom. The successful integration of these three students requires collaboration between you and the special educator.

- **First**, discuss your approach to inclusion citing specific examples (**at least three**) of HOW you will collaborate with the special education teacher to promote the success of the special education students in the mainstream of your class.
- **Secondly, describe at least four of the most frequent types of deficits** (general characteristics) **the three** students might display and
- **Lastly**, give at least **three examples** of interventions and/or strategies that you the secondary education general education teacher will implement to meet **each** of their academic and social needs. **Support your answers with “best practice” guidelines.**