



Testing Tips

The information in this document is designed to help candidates taking a NES test

- develop a preparation plan, and
- learn strategies for successful test taking.

Planning Your Course of Study

Step 1: To assess your content knowledge, read the test competencies and answer the sample questions.

The complete set of test competencies—the test framework—is the only source that specifies the information covered by a NES test.

- Read through the entire test framework for each test you are taking to get a general picture of the material the test covers.
- The competencies included in the test framework form the foundation and focus for the test questions. The descriptive statements that follow each competency provide examples of content covered by the competency. Read each competency and its descriptive statements carefully to obtain a thorough understanding of the content knowledge you will be required to demonstrate on the test.
- After you have become familiar with the test competencies, try to answer the sample test questions for the test you are taking.

Step 2: Develop a preparation plan to focus your studies.

- **Identify the most appropriate resources.** These may be textbooks from courses you have taken. You may also wish to consult your class notes and materials, as well as publications from professional education organizations.
- **Develop a study schedule.** Consider reviewing a book on study-skills development or studying with other people who will be taking the test by forming or joining a study group.

Strategies for Success on the Day of the Test

Review the following strategies to help you do your best when taking the NES.

Follow directions.

Follow all test directions, including any oral instructions from the test administrator in addition to the directions presented as part of your test.

Pay close attention to the computer-based testing tutorial.

At the testing center, you will complete a tutorial before taking the actual test. The tutorial demonstrates how to move from question to question, how to mark and change answers, and how to go back and review previously answered or skipped questions. If the test you are taking includes constructed-response assignments, you will be shown how these questions will be presented and how to record your responses during the actual test.

Minimal computer skills are required to complete the computer-based tests. You need to be comfortable with a Windows environment and with using a mouse, including clicking and scrolling.

Pace your work.

The test is designed to allow sufficient time for you to complete your test. If your test contains constructed-response assignments, remember to leave enough time to respond to the assignments.

Read carefully.

Do not try to save time by skimming directions or by reading the test questions quickly. You may miss important information and instructions.

Determine the "best answer."

Your response to each multiple-choice question should be the best answer of the alternatives provided. Read and evaluate all four answer choices before deciding which one is best.

Evaluate your options.

Your multiple-choice results will be based on the number of questions you answer correctly. You will not be penalized for guessing. If you are unsure about a question, use your knowledge of the content area to eliminate as many of the alternatives as you can. Then select from the remaining choices.

Review your work.

Generally, you may choose to answer the test questions in any order you wish. However, if you skip questions, be sure to go back later to answer them.

You may wish to use any remaining time at the end of the test session to review your work.

Respond to constructed-response assignments fully and clearly.

If the test you are taking includes constructed-response assignments, be sure to read the instructions carefully and respond to each part of the assignment as asked.

You should also communicate your responses as clearly as possible. It is important for scorers to be able to understand your responses.