



**VIRGINIA**

**Communication  
and Literacy  
Assessment®**



Reading Subtest (91)

and

Writing Subtest (92)

**STUDY GUIDE**

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PEARSON EDUCATION, INC.

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## SECTION 1

# ABOUT THE VIRGINIA COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY ASSESSMENT

The Virginia Department of Education has contracted with the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to create and administer the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment® (VCLA™), which measures the communication and literacy skills necessary for Virginia educators.

For current information on requirements and program policies for the VCLA, see the most recent version of the registration bulletin. You are encouraged to read these requirements and policies carefully and to determine with your academic advisor the best time for you to take the VCLA.

The Virginia Department of Education and the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson are available to answer questions you may have. Select "Contacts" from the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessments Web site at [www.va.nesinc.com](http://www.va.nesinc.com) for more information.

## Test Development Process

This topic describes the major steps in developing the VCLA.

Step	Description
Develop the Test Blueprint	<p>The content of each subtest is documented in the test blueprint. The VCLA test blueprint consists of a set of test objectives, along with a set of descriptive statements that elaborate on the content of each test objective.</p> <p>During preparation of the test blueprint, key state and national documents and Virginia educators were consulted. Committees of Virginia educators reviewed the test blueprint and made revisions, as necessary, to ensure that the test blueprint is accurate, free of bias, job related, representative of the diversity of the Commonwealth, and consistent with the purposes of the program.</p>
Validate Test Content	<p>The content validation survey was conducted using randomly sampled licensed and practicing Virginia public school teachers and teacher preparation program faculty to ensure that the test blueprint reflects the knowledge and skills considered to be important for performing the job of an entry-level teacher in Virginia public schools.</p>
Develop Test Items	<p>Test items were developed to assess the content defined by the test blueprint. Committees of Virginia educators were convened to review and approve the test items. Students preparing to teach at different licensure levels participated in field tests of the test items at field test sites throughout Virginia.</p>
Set Passing Standards	<p>A committee of Virginia educators was convened following the first test administration to recommend the passing standard for each VCLA subtest. The final passing standards will be determined by the Virginia Board of Education.</p>

## Structure of the Test

The VCLA comprises two areas—reading and writing. Each area will be assessed by a separate subtest—a reading subtest and a writing subtest. The reading subtest contains multiple-choice items. The writing subtest contains multiple-choice items, short-answer items, and two writing assignments—a written summary and a written composition. The multiple-choice items require candidates to select the best choice from a list of four possible responses. Each short-answer item requires candidates to rewrite a sentence to correct one or more grammatical errors. The writing assignments require candidates to write a response to an assignment.

Areas tested include the comprehension and analysis of readings; development of ideas in essay form on specific topics; outlining and summarizing; interpretation of tables and graphs; and mastery of grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary. The content of each VCLA subtest is documented in the test blueprint, which is available in Section 4 of this guide or on the VCLA Web site at [www.va.nesinc.com](http://www.va.nesinc.com). Refer to "Read the Test Blueprint" in Section 2 for a description of the content and format of the VCLA test blueprint.

The VCLA test structure is as follows:

- Each content area of the VCLA will be assessed by a separate subtest—a reading subtest and a writing subtest.
- Each subtest includes a set of test objectives. The test objectives are broad, conceptual statements, written in language that reflects the skills, knowledge, and understanding that an entry-level teacher needs in order to teach in Virginia public schools.
- Each test objective is clarified and further described by one or more descriptive statements that provide examples of the knowledge and skills covered by the test objective.
- Each multiple-choice item, short-answer item, and writing assignment is written to assess understanding of a test objective.

Refer to the sections that follow for detailed information on the content of each subtest.

## The VCLA Content

The VCLA reading subtest consists of approximately 40 multiple-choice items. The VCLA writing subtest consists of approximately 40 multiple-choice items, 3 short-answer items, and 2 writing assignments, including a written summary assignment and a written composition assignment.

The following table lists the number of multiple-choice items, short-answer items, and writing assignments occurring on each section of the subtests. Refer to Section 4 of this guide or the VCLA Web site at [www.va.nesinc.com](http://www.va.nesinc.com) to read the test blueprint.

Section 1: About the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment

Subtest	Multiple-Choice Items	Short-Answer Items	Writing Assignments
<b>Reading Subtest: Reading Comprehension and Analysis</b>	40	—	—
<b>Writing Subtest: Writing Knowledge and Proficiency</b>	40	3	2