

Talogy

Department of Correction Head Cook Exam

Assessment Preparation Guide

Terms and Conditions

This Assessment Preparation Guide is the copyrighted work of Talogy. This guide contains information that is legally protected, confidential, and intended ONLY for REGISTERED CANDIDATES who are preparing to take the Talogy Department of Correction Head Cook Exam. Except as specifically permitted, no portion of this guide may be distributed or reproduced by any means or in any form, without Talogy's prior written permission.

As a registered candidate, you may view and print a single copy of this guide to be used for your personal use to prepare for the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. Any copy of the guide or portion thereof must include all copyright notices in the same form and manner as on the original guide. You are expressly prohibited from distributing copies of this guide. This guide may not be modified in any way.

By accessing this guide, you agree to these conditions. Only candidates registered to complete the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam have permission to access this guide. Unauthorized reproduction of this guide by any other individuals is strictly prohibited. Talogy reserves the right to seek all remedies available by law for any violation of these terms and conditions. All rights not expressly granted herein are reserved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION	2
SECTION 2: TEST COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS	4
PART I: TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE TEST.....	4
PART II: ABILITY TEST	5
PART III: WORK STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE	6
PART IV: LIFE EXPERIENCE SURVEY	7
SECTION 3: PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING RESPONSES	8
SECTION 4: TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE (TK) TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES	13
SECTION 5: ABILITY TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES	18
PART I: GENERAL TEST INFORMATION.....	18
A. OBJECTIVES	18
B. GENERAL MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES	19
C. ERROR ANALYSIS	21
PART II: ABILITY AREAS	24
A. ABILITY TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES	25
1. WRITTEN EXPRESSION	25
2. WRITTEN COMPREHENSION	28
3. PROBLEM SENSITIVITY	30
4. DEDUCTIVE REASONING	34
5. INDUCTIVE REASONING.....	39
B. SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS: ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS	42
FINAL WORDS.....	45

INTRODUCTION

This Assessment Preparation Guide is designed to help you prepare for the Department of Correction (DOC) Head Cook Exam. The Correction Officer Head Cook Exam consists of the following four test components: the Technical Knowledge Test, the Ability Test, the Work Styles Questionnaire, and the Life Experience Survey.

The **Technical Knowledge** test is designed to assess candidates' knowledge in specific topic areas of relevance to the job, such as criminal justice and interviewing.

The **Ability Test** is designed to assess a series of abilities, such as Written Comprehension, Problem Sensitivity, and Reasoning, determined to be important to the effective performance of Correction Officers.

The **Work Styles Questionnaire** is designed to assess work style related preferences and approaches to situations determined to be important to the effective performance of Correction Officers.

The **Life Experience Survey** is designed to assess candidates' past history and experience determined to be important to the effective performance of Correction Officers.

All four Correction Officer Head Cook Exam test components will be scored and your scores from all four components will be combined to determine your continued eligibility in the selection process.

Please note that the order in which the four test components are administered is the same as the order in which they are listed above (i.e., Technical Knowledge Test, Ability Test, Work Styles Questionnaire, and Life Experience Survey). This guide provides an overview of the testing procedures, the types of questions you will encounter on each test component, and the systematic methods of study and preparation that you should use in preparing for each test component.

You should review this guide as many times as necessary to become comfortable with the information and test-taking strategies presented.

This Assessment Preparation Guide is organized into the following sections:

Section 1: General Information: This section provides you with general information regarding the schedule and logistics for the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

Section 2: Test Component Descriptions: This section describes the Technical Knowledge Test, Ability Test, Work Styles Questionnaire, and Life Experience Survey. The descriptions include an overview of the administrative procedures as well as sample questions for each test component where possible. For the Life Experience Survey, **we strongly recommend that you review your previous school and/or work-related documents (e.g., school transcripts, resume, evaluations from previous supervisors and/or instructors) to ensure that you are able to answer the Life Experience Survey questions regarding your past experiences as accurately as possible.**

Section 3: Procedures for Recording Responses: This section describes the procedures for recording your responses to each component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

Section 4: Test Preparation Strategies: This section provides you with general test-taking strategies for the Technical Knowledge and Ability Test questions (such as identifying important words in questions) as well as suggestions that are specific to each ability assessed in the Ability Test. For each ability, this section provides a definition, test-taking strategies, and sample questions.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

When participating in the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, follow these general guidelines:

1. **Read all of the instructions carefully and pay careful attention to any additional instructions provided by administrators.** Instructions will be provided for each test component. It is very important that you read these instructions carefully before starting each test component to ensure that you understand the procedures that need to be followed.
2. **Know how much time you have to take the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam and how much time you should spend on each of the three components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.** You will have approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes (195 minutes) to read the test instructions and take the four components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. The four components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam will not be timed separately. The amount of time that you should allot to each component will be recommended in the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam instructions you receive at the test site. As a general guideline, it should take approximately 15 minutes to read all of the instructions (about 4-5 minutes for each set of instructions that precede each of the four components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam). You should plan on spending about 45 minutes on the Technical Knowledge Test, about 75 minutes on the Ability Test, about 25 minutes on the Work Styles Questionnaire, and about 35 minutes on the Life Experience Survey. Please note that these are just suggested times to ensure that you are able to finish all four components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam in the allotted time. When you appear for the actual Correction Officer Head Cook Exam administration, you will receive information about the total time allotted to take the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam and the suggested amount of time for each of the four individual test components. You can divide the total available time among the four Correction Officer Head Cook Exam components as you wish. You will see an on-screen timer during the exam that will tell you how much time you have remaining for exam completion. Be sure to check this often to keep track of your remaining time as you proceed through the exam.
3. **Make sure you know how to correctly record your responses.** Section 3 of this guide explains the procedures to be followed for recording your responses. You should also pay attention to the specific instructions that will be provided during the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam administration. Be careful when recording your responses during the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam to avoid losing credit due to response entry errors.
4. **Test administrators will be available to help you.** If you have any questions about the testing procedures, ask for assistance or clarification. However, keep in mind that administrators will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give, in any manner, guidance on answering questions.
5. **Take a mental break if and when needed.** If you are having difficulty concentrating at any point during the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, take a brief mental break. Take a minute to clear your mind and relax. Of course, you must keep in mind the time limit for the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, but a brief mental break may be worth the time it takes.
6. **Answer every question on each of the four test components.** Do not leave any questions blank.
 - a. When completing the Technical Knowledge Test and the Ability Test, the result is the same whether you respond incorrectly to a question or do not respond at all (i.e., you receive no credit for the question). When you respond you have the opportunity, even if by chance, to answer the question correctly. Therefore, you should respond to all Technical Knowledge and Ability Test questions even if you are not sure of the correct answer.
 - b. If you are unsure how to respond to Work Styles Questionnaire and Life Experience Survey questions, choose the alternative that most accurately describes your past experiences, behavior or how you feel. Candidates who do not respond to all questions on the Work Styles Questionnaire and Life Experience Survey may be disqualified from the selection process.

7. **Use extra time wisely to review your responses to the Technical Knowledge and Ability Test questions.** If you complete the Technical Knowledge Test or the Ability Test before the suggested time period has expired, you may review your responses to the test questions (particularly questions to which you were unsure of the correct answer) before moving on to the other components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. However, once the suggested time period is up, or soon thereafter, you should move on to the remaining test components to ensure that you have enough time to complete them. Keep in mind, however, that once you exit an individual component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam you will NOT be permitted to return to that component to review or change any of your answers. Additional information concerning exiting from the test components will be provided in Section 3 of this guide.
8. **Respond honestly when taking test components that ask you to describe your past experiences, behavior, or feelings.** This guideline applies to the Work Styles Questionnaire and Life Experience Survey. It is possible that others may have suggested that you respond in certain ways to increase your chances of success, even if those responses do not accurately reflect your experience or feelings. There are two important reasons why you should respond honestly. First, each of these two components contains internal mechanisms that can be used to identify candidates who are not responding honestly. If the pattern of your responses suggests that you are not responding honestly, you may be disqualified from the selection process. Second, background investigations and other similar procedures may be conducted on each eligible candidate. During these procedures, specific information related to the Work Styles Questionnaire and Life Experience Survey questions may be obtained. If the information obtained during these investigations is inconsistent with your Correction Officer Head Cook Exam responses, you may be disqualified from the selection process.
9. **Be sure to bring the form(s) of identification required by the agency to which you are applying when you appear to take the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.** Before you appear for testing you should identify the specific identification forms required by the agency with which you are testing and be sure to bring the identification required to the test site.
10. **Do NOT bring any electronic communication devices (i.e., cell phones, laptops, smartwatches, tablets) into the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam test site.** Communication devices should be left at home or in your car.

SECTION 2: TEST COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS

PART I: TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE TEST

The Technical Knowledge Test is designed to assess knowledge of the information covered in the published reading list for the Correction Officer Head Cook position. The Ability Test contains 35 questions. Each question will be followed by four response alternatives (A through D). For each question, candidates should identify the single best answer and record the response chosen (see example below in the boxed area).

You should use approximately 45 minutes of the total Correction Officer Head Cook Exam assessment time to complete the Technical Knowledge Test. You should respond to every question. Questions that are left unanswered will be scored as incorrect. Therefore, even if you are not sure of the correct answer to a question, you should record a response rather than leave the question blank.

Section 4 of this guide provides a set of preparation strategies for the Technical Knowledge Test. We encourage you to carefully review and practice these strategies before taking the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

The following examples are presented ONLY for illustrative purposes and do not actually appear on the Technical Knowledge Test component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. Please note that the examples below are *illustrative only* and are not necessarily drawn from the materials listed on the published reading list.

Example 1

1. The final sanitizing rinse in a high temperature dish machine must be at least:
 - A. 135 degrees F.
 - B. 165 degrees F.
 - C. 180 degrees F.
 - D. 212 degrees F.

Example 2

2. When receiving deliveries to the kitchen, food temperatures:
 - A. should be checked after the items are put away.
 - B. should be taken as the items are brought into the kitchen.
 - C. do not need to be checked, as the boxes will have the temperature written on them.
 - D. should be checked before the items are unloaded from the truck.

PART II: ABILITY TEST

The Ability Test is designed to assess a series of abilities, such as Written Comprehension, Problem Sensitivity, and Reasoning, determined to be important to the effective performance of entry-level Correction Officers. The Ability Test contains 25 questions. Each question will be followed by four response alternatives (A through D). For each question, candidates should identify the single best answer and record the response chosen (see examples below in the boxed area).

You should use approximately 75 minutes of the total Correction Officer Head Cook Exam assessment time to complete the Ability Test. You should respond to every question. Questions that are left unanswered will be scored as incorrect. Therefore, even if you are not sure of the correct answer to a question, you should record a response rather than leave the question blank.

Section 5 of this guide provides a comprehensive set of preparation strategies for the Ability Test. We encourage you to carefully review and practice these strategies before taking the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

The following examples are presented ONLY for illustrative purposes and do not actually appear on the Ability Test component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. Please note that the second example in the boxed area is preceded by a passage. Although there is only one question associated with the passage below, during the actual Ability Test you may be presented with passages that apply to more than one question.

Example 1

1. As a Correction Officer arrived at the scene of a disturbance near the outer perimeter, the Officer noticed a van leaving the scene. Since the investigation revealed that the fencing on the outer perimeter had been tampered with, the Officer felt that the van leaving the scene should be included in the report. The most effective way for the Officer to report this is to say:
- A. "As I arrived at the outer perimeter, I saw a van driving away from the scene."
 - B. "A van which should not have been there was near the outer perimeter."
 - C. "The suspects escaped in a van."
 - D. "I don't know if it's important but as I got there, I saw a vehicle leaving the scene."

Example 2

Use the information in the following passage to answer question 2.

Officer Thompson has noticed that in his experience, most of the assaults occur in Housing Units A and B eastern and northern sections, while most gang-related incidents occur in Housing Units C and D, and most drug-related incidents occur in Housing Unit D.

The majority of gang-related incidents take place between 3 a.m. and 7 a.m. Most of the drug-related incidents occur either between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. or between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. Most of the assaults occur between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. or between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.

In addition, the drug-related incidents commonly occur on Mondays and Fridays, the assaults occur on any day from Wednesday through Saturday, and gang-related incidents typically occur on weekday mornings.

2. According to the preceding passage, Officer Thompson most likely would be able to reduce the number of assaults by patrolling:
- A. Housing Unit A between 5 a.m. and 1 p.m.
 - B. Housing Unit A between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
 - C. Housing Unit D between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
 - D. Housing Unit B between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

PART III: WORK STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

In addition to the cognitive and physical ability requirements placed upon Correction Officers, certain personal characteristics are also important to effective performance. The Work Styles Questionnaire will be used to assess these important characteristics.

You should use approximately 25 minutes of the total Correction Officer Head Cook Exam assessment time to complete the Work Styles Questionnaire. No preparation is necessary (or expected) for the Work Styles Questionnaire component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. However, this component will be scored, and your score will be combined with your scores on the Life Experience Survey and Ability Test to determine your continued eligibility in the selection process. The examples in the boxed area below are presented ONLY for illustrative purposes and do not actually appear on the Work Styles Question component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

The Work Styles Questionnaire contains a series of 135 short statements. You will read each statement (see examples below) and then decide the degree to which you agree with each statement as it applies to you.

In this component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam you will be instructed to:

- Consider a number of statements and for each statement rate yourself on a scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree based on how it applies to you.
- Choose “Unsure” ONLY when you are truly not sure how to rate yourself.
- Work quickly through the component, provide honest responses, and avoid spending too much time thinking about how to respond to any single statement.
- Respond to every statement, even if no single point on the rating scale describes you or the way you feel perfectly, since candidates who do not respond to all statements on the Work Styles Questionnaire may be disqualified from the selection process.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
------------------------------	-----------------	---------------	--------------	---------------------------

The following examples are presented ONLY for illustrative purposes and do not actually appear on the Work Styles Questionnaire component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

1. I set goals and strive to achieve them.
2. I prefer to work alone.
3. I take time to think about why people do things.
4. I find myself taking control in group situations.
5. I find that it is not necessary to have all of the facts before making a decision.
6. Insults don't bother me.

PART IV: LIFE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

The Life Experience Survey is designed to assess characteristics related to each candidate's past history and experience. In this survey you will be presented with 75 questions that pertain to you and your personal experiences and will cover many different topics. Each question will be followed by five response alternatives (A through E). For each question you will be asked to select the response alternatives that best describes your past experience and to record the response you choose (see the examples in the boxed area below).

You should work at a steady pace through this survey, provide honest responses, and avoid spending too much time thinking about how to respond to any single question. You should answer every question by selecting the response that best fits you and your personal experiences, even if no single response perfectly describes your personal experiences. You should respond to every question since candidates who do not respond to all questions on the Life Experience Survey may be disqualified from the selection process.

You should use approximately 35 minutes of the total Correction Officer Head Cook Exam assessment time to complete the Life Experience Survey. Although no extended preparation is necessary (or expected) for the Life Experience Survey component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, **we strongly recommend that you review your previous school and/or work-related documents (e.g., school transcripts, resume, evaluations from previous supervisors and/or instructors) to ensure that you are able to answer the Life Experience Survey questions regarding your past experiences as accurately as possible.** The Life Experience Survey will be scored, and your score will be combined with your scores on the Work Styles Questionnaire and Ability Test to determine your continued eligibility in the selection process.

The examples in the boxed area below are presented ONLY for illustrative purposes and do not actually appear on the Life Experience component of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

1. Your previous supervisor/instructor would describe you as someone who usually does:
 - A. more than your fair share of the work that must be done.
 - B. more work than most of your coworkers/classmates.
 - C. about as much work as most of your coworkers/classmates.
 - D. almost as much work as most of your coworkers/classmates.
 - E. less work than most of your coworkers/classmates.
2. Within the past two years, how many times have you taken a day off because you did not feel like going to work/school?
 - A. never.
 - B. once.
 - C. twice.
 - D. three times.
 - E. more than three times.
3. Since completing your high school education, how many days a month do you take part in some form of community-based activity (e.g., community service, athletics, clubs, drama, etc.) outside of work or school?
 - A. 0.
 - B. 1 - 2.
 - C. 3 - 5.
 - D. 6 - 8.
 - E. 9 or more.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING RESPONSES

Instructions for Recording Responses Online

The Correction Officer Head Cook Exam testing session will begin once arrival procedures such as establishing your identity are completed.

After accessing the test session, you will first be shown a page with general assessment information including instructions describing the process, timing and number of questions for the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam components, and test session procedures. Information will be presented on a computing device (e.g., desktop, laptop, or tablet). You will record all of your responses on this device. You will only use a mouse or a pointer or your finger if the device is touch-based to navigate and respond to questions or statements.

Participating in the test session requires that you read and agree to the terms of the online testing session. You may not continue with the online test session unless you agree to the terms listed below. Please review them now. This page or a similar one will be shown before the exam questions are administered.

Important Notes:

- Applicants may request the Chief Human Resources Officer (Personnel Administrator) to conduct a multiple-choice item review and/or a review of whether this examination was a fair test of the applicants' fitness to perform the primary or dominant duties of the position. Each request must be filed with the Personnel Administrator no later than February 22, 2025, and must state in detail the allegations on which it is based. The request must also include specific references to books or other publications relied upon to support the allegations. See M.G.L. Chapter 31, Section 22 for the specific requirements for filing such a request.
- You may not talk to anyone other than the Test Administrator, if one is present, while taking the exam or while exiting the examination site.
- The copying of test questions or answers from the room will result in the cancellation of your examination results. In addition, communication of the test questions or answers to anyone, whether verbally or in writing, regardless of receipt of monetary or other compensation, will result in the cancellation of your examination results.

Please note that by agreeing that you understand and will comply with the instructions of this examination, you have agreed not to discuss the contents of the examination with anyone, including other examination applicants, during and after the examination is administered. To do so may violate M.G.L. Chapter 31, Section 74.

☐ I Agree.

After agreeing to the terms above, the instructions for the “Technical Knowledge Test” will be presented and timing will begin. The timer will appear at the top right-hand corner of the instruction page and begin to count down. The timer will appear in the same location on every subsequent page until the assessment is complete or time expires.

Below are specific instructions for providing your responses to the Technical Knowledge Test, Ability Test, Work Styles Questionnaire, and Life Experience Survey components of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

Technical Knowledge Test

A sample layout of how the Technical Knowledge Test questions will be presented is shown below. Questions will be presented four per page and each question is numbered and has four response alternatives/options.

For each question, choose the single best answer by clicking the small circle to the left of your selected response alternative. When you click or press on one of the response alternatives/options, the circle will be filled in next to the response to indicate which response you have selected. You can change your response for a question by clicking on one of the other three response alternatives.

1) The question is asked here.

- ☐ A) Response option A.
- ☐ B) Response option B.
- ☐ C) Response option C.
- ☐ D) Response option D.

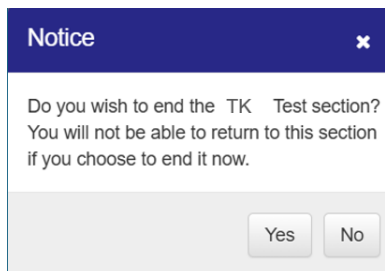
The footer of each Technical Knowledge Test page will include the following buttons:

« Previous Page

Next Page »

You can use the Previous Page or Next Page buttons to move between questions. For the Technical Knowledge Test section of the exam, you may skip a question and come back to it later if you wish using the Next Page and Previous Page buttons to navigate across questions. Keep in mind that you do NOT lose any points for a wrong answer, so it is always in your best interest to answer every question before you leave the Technical Knowledge Test section.

Once you complete your responses to the Technical Knowledge Test and click “Next Page,” a pop-up dialog box will appear as shown below to alert you that you are about to end the Technical Knowledge Test section. If you click “Yes” to indicate that you wish to end the Technical Knowledge Test section, you will not be able to return to this section later. If you are not certain you have answered all questions in this section, or if you simply wish to review your responses, click “No” on this dialog box and then use the Previous Page and Next Page buttons to navigate through the questions and add or change any responses. When you are certain you are ready to end the Technical Knowledge Test section and move to the next section, click the Next Page button until you reach the last question in this section and see the below dialog box again. Then click Yes to indicate that you do wish to end the Technical Knowledge Test section.



Ability Test

A sample layout of how the Ability Test questions will be presented is shown below. Questions will be presented one or two per page and each question is numbered and has four response alternatives/options.

The sample question layout below includes a passage with background information to be used in responding to the question. If a passage is not needed for the question, then the passage area will not be included. For each question, choose the single best answer by clicking the small circle to the left of your selected response alternative. When you click or press on one of the response alternatives/options, the circle will be filled in next to the response to indicate which response you have selected. You can change your response for a question by clicking on one of the other three response alternatives.

Use the information in the passage below to answer the following question.

Passage text if a passage is present for the question.

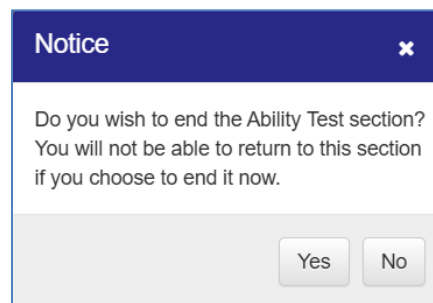
- 1) The question is asked here.
- ☐ A) Response option A.
- ☐ B) Response option B.
- ☐ C) Response option C.
- ☐ D) Response option D.

The footer of each Ability Test page will include the following buttons:



You can use the Previous Page or Next Page buttons to move between questions. For the Ability Test section of the exam ONLY, you may skip a question and come back to it later if you wish using the Next Page and Previous Page buttons to navigate across questions. Keep in mind that you do NOT lose any points for a wrong answer, so it is always in your best interest to answer every question before you leave the Ability Test section.

Once you complete your responses to the Ability Test and click “Next Page,” a pop-up dialog box will appear as shown below to alert you that you are about to end the Ability Test section. If you click “Yes” to indicate that you wish to end the Ability Test section, you will not be able to return to this section later. If you are not certain you have answered all questions in this section, or if you simply wish to review your responses, click “No” on this dialog box and then use the Previous Page and Next Page buttons to navigate through the questions and add or change any responses. When you are certain you are ready to end the Ability Test section and move to the next section, click the Next Page button until you reach the last question in this section and see the below dialog box again. Then click Yes to indicate that you do wish to end the Ability Test section.



Work Styles Questionnaire

A sample layout of how the Work Styles Questionnaire statements will be presented is shown below. Up to 8 statements will be presented per page and the scale that you will use to select your level of agreement for each statement will be presented as the header of each page.

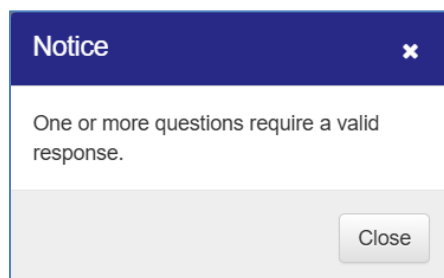
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) Statement 1	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
2) Statement 2	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

The example above shows two statements and the agreement response scale column headings. The statements to which you are to respond appear on the left-side in alternately colored rows. To the right of each statement there are five circles aligning under five column headings (i.e., Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Unsure, Agree and Strongly Agree).

You should click on the small circle that corresponds to your level of agreement with each statement. When a circle is clicked, a solid blue disc appears inside the white circle as shown in the example above. In the example above, the candidate selected "Agree" for statement 1 and "Disagree" for statement 2.

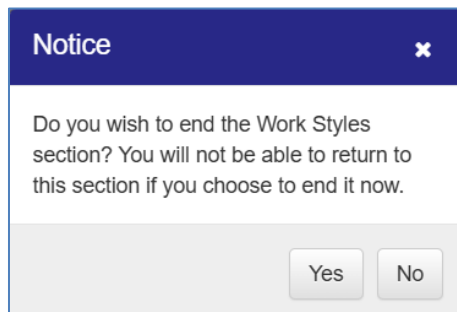
You can change your response by clicking any other circle under a different column in the same row. Upon selecting a different response for the statement, the previous response is unselected.

The footer of each Work Styles Questionnaire page will include ONLY the Next Page button, because you must respond to every statement on the page before moving to the next page. If you click Next Page before you have responded to every statement, the following pop-up dialog box will appear.



When you click Close on the dialog box, any statements to which you have not responded will appear outlined in dark red. Respond to any unanswered statements and then click Next Page to proceed.

Once you complete your responses to the Work Styles Questionnaire and click "Next Page," a pop-up dialog box will appear as shown below to alert you that you are about to end the Work Styles section. If you click "Yes" to indicate that you wish to end the Work Styles section, you will not be able to return to this section later. If you wish to review your responses to the last page of the Work Styles section, click "No" on this dialog box to review the last page and change any responses on that page if you wish (remember, you will not be able to navigate to any previous pages). When you are certain you are ready to end the Work Styles section and move to the next section, click the Next Page button and then click Yes on the dialog box to indicate that you do wish to end the Work Styles section.



Life Experience Survey

A sample layout of how the Life Experience Survey questions will be presented is shown below. Two questions will be presented on each page and each question is numbered and has five response alternatives/options.

1) In the past two years, how many times have you been recognized at work/school for outstanding performance (e.g., honor roll, formal letter of recommendation, commendation)?

☐ A) 0 times.

☐ B) 1 time.

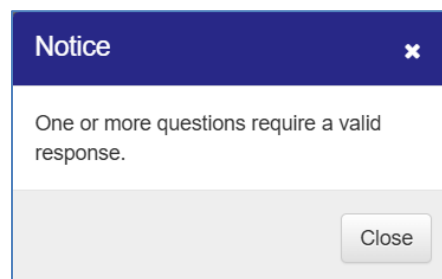
☐ C) 2 times

☐ D) 3 times.

☐ E) 4 or more times.

For each question, choose the answer that best represents you, your experience, your behavior, or your attitudes by clicking the small circle to the left of your selected response alternative. When you click or press on one of the response alternatives/options, the circle will be filled in next to the response to indicate which response you have selected. You can change your response for a question by clicking on one of the other response alternatives.

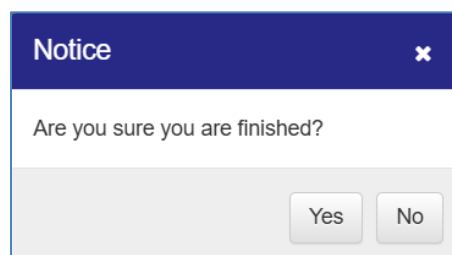
The footer of each Life Experience Survey page will include ONLY the Next Page button, because you must respond to every statement on the page before moving to the next page. If you click Next Page before you have responded to every statement, the following pop-up dialog box will appear.



A pop-up dialog box with a dark blue header containing the word "Notice" and a close button (X). The main area is white and contains the text "One or more questions require a valid response." At the bottom right, there is a grey button labeled "Close".

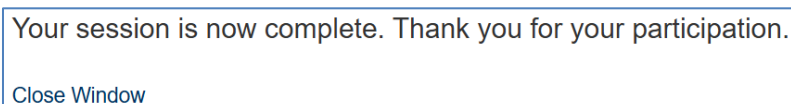
When you click Close on the dialog box, any questions to which you have not responded will appear outlined in dark red. Respond to any unanswered questions and then click Next Page to proceed.

Once you complete your response to the final question of the Life Experience Survey and click "Finish," a pop-up dialog box will appear as shown below to ask if you are sure you are finished with this section, as this is the last section of the exam. If you click "Yes" to indicate you are finished, you will not be able to return to this section later. If you wish to review your responses to the last page of the Life Experience Survey section, click "No" on this dialog box to review the last page and change any responses on that page if you wish (remember, you will not be able to navigate to any previous pages). When you are certain you are ready to end the Life Experience Survey section, and therefore end the exam, click the Finish button and then click Yes on the dialog box to indicate that you are sure you are finished.



A pop-up dialog box with a dark blue header containing the word "Notice" and a close button (X). The main area is white and contains the text "Are you sure you are finished?". At the bottom right, there are two grey buttons labeled "Yes" and "No".

This will end your exam, and you will see the following information. You may simply leave the exam on this screen, or you may click Close Window. Either way, your exam will be complete, and your responses will be saved and submitted.



A white rectangular box with a thin blue border. It contains the text "Your session is now complete. Thank you for your participation." and a blue underlined link "Close Window" at the bottom left.

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE (TK) TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES

The TK Test is designed to assess job-related knowledge in particular topic areas drawn from the published reading list. The reading list for the 2026 Correction Officer Head Cook Exam can be found by visiting <https://www.mass.gov/guides/examination-guides-and-reading-lists>.

All TK Test questions will be presented as multiple-choice questions supported directly by one or more reference sources found on the reading list. Each multiple-choice question will be followed by four possible response options, and candidates must choose the single correct answer from among the four choice. Test preparation and test-taking strategies are listed below.

I. **TK TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES**

Multiple-choice tests, such as the Technical Knowledge (TK) Test, are designed to test your knowledge of a particular subject area. You can improve your performance on the TK Test primarily by having a command over all of the relevant material that will be covered. This section of the guide provides some strategies to assist you in preparing for the exam.

1. *Focus Your Attention*

When studying any reference source material from the reading list, you must focus your attention on the material you are studying if you expect to remember it. There are three things you can do that will help you focus your attention on the material you read.

First, since you tend to pay closer attention to things that interest you than to things that do not, you can try to make the material more meaningful or interesting. One way to do this is to apply it to you. Try to think of examples of the material that can be tied to your work or to the work you hope to be doing one day.

The next thing you can do is to eliminate distractions from your environment. These distractions compete for your attention and affect your recall of the material that you study. It is difficult to pay attention to several things at the same time. Instead, people usually switch back and forth, paying attention first to one thing and then the other. Unfortunately, you will not remember any material that did not receive attention. This means that listening to the radio while you are studying, or studying in a noisy area, will leave gaps in your memory of the material you are trying to learn.

Third, take notes! Studies have consistently shown that you are significantly more likely to remember something if you write it down versus if you merely read it. In fact, some studies have shown that writing something down one time is roughly equivalent to reading it seven times – in other words, you are seven times more likely to remember it if you write it down.

Finally, you should avoid trying to learn or memorize material when you are tired. Fatigue reduces the amount of material that you can remember. This means that it might be better to get a good night's sleep and study in the morning rather than staying up a few hours extra and sleeping late. Surely, you must have noticed how your attention wanders if you go without sleep for long periods of time.

2. *A Method for Studying: SQ3R*

SQ3R stands for **survey, question, read, recite, and review**. These five elements make up a set of study habits that will help you perform well on the test.

SURVEY

"Survey" means to find the limits or borders of an area. Survey the material you have to study to get a rough idea of the content and organization of the material before beginning in-depth study efforts.

To survey a body of information, scan it from start to finish. By skimming over the pages, you will get an idea of what is to come. In most documents, this type of survey is made much easier through the use of headings. Bold, large, or major headings introduce big or important elements; smaller headings introduce subareas of these important elements. Another helpful overview of the material can be found in summaries such as chapter summaries, overviews, or statements of objectives. By looking over such summaries, you can get a quick view of the important parts or pieces of the material covered.

Surveying the study material gives you an idea of how long it will take to cover the material. This will help you to break the assignment down into reasonable time blocks. Material should be read in chunks of a reasonable size. You should carve out a specific section that you will try to understand before moving on. A chunk might be all of the material under a major heading. If the material under the heading runs for many pages, you might want to reduce the material to be understood to each of the minor headings, taking one at a time.

QUESTION

Most people need a reason to do things. In studying text material, a question becomes a reason. If you have some questions to begin with, the material that you are reading will take on more life and be more meaningful.

Before beginning each study session, look over the material you intend to cover. Develop some questions that you expect to be answered in the material. There are several ways to develop these questions. One way is to begin with the list of headings from the chapter or document outline. Write a question for each major and minor heading. Developing questions can provide a reason for reading the material and can help the information become more meaningful to you.

READ

For most people, reading means the same thing as studying. When they say that they have studied material, they often mean that they have read it through several times. Reading is important, but it will be done more effectively when the *survey* and *question* steps have been completed.

The most effective way to pace yourself is to decide on the number of chunks that will be read and understood in a given study session. You can use the questions you developed through the previous step as your definition of understanding. Once you can answer these questions, you can move on to the next section. A good time to take breaks is between these sections, not in the middle of them. This might be a way of rewarding yourself for successfully completing the reading of each section.

It is important to ensure that you understand the material you are reading. One way to do this is to look up the definitions of all new and unfamiliar terms. You should make a list of the words and phrases that you do not understand. If these terms are technical terms that you have not encountered before, the chances are that the answer is somewhere in the chapter or document that you are reading. Have a notebook available so that you can mark down each of these terms, leaving a space for their definition. The quicker you get to know the meaning of all the terms, the more effective your studying will be. If the term or word is not technical, but simply a large or uncommon word that you are not sure of, look it up in a dictionary. If you feel it would be helpful, record the definitions of these non-technical terms in your notebook, as well. You might want to use it to keep track of all important terms, even those you understand.

Another good way to make your reading time as useful as possible is to mark or underline the text while you are reading. This will make you a more active participant in the studying process. In addition, it will help you to focus on the major ideas and keep you from getting bogged down in details. Your underlining or highlighting can also make it easier for you to find relevant material later for review or to answer questions on the test.

In marking or underlining the text, you should actually go through the text and underline key words and concepts that are important in understanding the material in the chunk you are reading. You can also make notes to yourself right on the text page or in a separate notebook. The value of note-taking to aid memory was highlighted in the previous section.

If you choose to use the underlining and marking method, here are a few guidelines:

- 1) Read the whole section before doing any underlining or marking.
- 2) Do not mark or underline too much. The value of the technique lies in highlighting only the most important material.
- 3) Use ink if possible so that the underlining and notes do not disappear or become unclear in the course of studying.
- 4) Use symbols as much as possible. For example, use "?" as a symbol for questions you have; use "*" to stand for a particularly important idea.

RECITE

If you have the material practically memorized, and at the "tips of your fingers," you will be able to complete questions more quickly, and have more time to handle difficult questions and check your work. Do you remember a time when you went to the store to buy several items? You did not have time to write out a list, so you just repeated the items out loud several times on the way to the store. After several repetitions, you had memorized the list. If you had paid attention to what was happening, you would have realized that the act of reciting the list made the difference between remembering the list and forgetting it. This is just as true of study material as it is of shopping lists.

It is very helpful to recite with another individual. He or she can ask you questions about portions of the material, which will make you recite the relevant material in a formal way. It is not even necessary to choose someone who is familiar with the material. The person only has to be able to recognize that what you have said is what is written in the reference material or in your notes.

In order to be most effective, recitation should take place quite soon after you have first learned or read the material. This is important because the greatest amount of information is lost or forgotten within a short period of time after it is first learned.

Do not try to cover too much information at once. Depending on the number of pages covered, this might be all of the information in one major section or chapter.

REVIEW

Reviewing the material to be covered will help you to understand and organize the material better. Review any notes you have taken, questions you have asked or answered, and passages you have underlined or highlighted in the text.

Review is done just before beginning a new study session. In this form of review, you are actually preparing yourself for new learning by strengthening old learning. This helps to ensure that any old learning that is needed as a basis for new learning is correct and available.

Another form of review is done before the test itself. This review can be done quite effectively in a group with other test takers. This cuts down on some of the drudgery of pre-test studying and also increases the meaning of much of the information. That is, while you are taking the test, you can more easily remember the information if you think back to who said what and how the review conversation went.

In summary, the SQ3R method of study is based on sound learning principles and gives you a simple formula to follow:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>SURVEY</i> | Skim the reading material and create manageable chunks to study. |
| <i>QUESTION</i> | Develop a purpose for reading by asking questions that you expect to have answered in the reading material. |
| <i>READ</i> | Read and re-read the material until you understand it thoroughly. |

RECITE	Write down or talk about what you just learned to improve retention and integrate new information into your knowledge base.
REVIEW	Look over highlighted text and notes and integrate new information with old information.

3. *Practice, practice, practice.*

You are encouraged to create, have others create, or find (perhaps online) practice tests or quizzes to not only test your knowledge of the material but to help you get used to the multiple-choice test-taking experience as well. As you do so, you are encouraged to identify the kinds of errors you tend to make or patterns among your incorrect answers so you can focus any further studying.

II. TK TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

This section of the guide provides some strategies that may assist you on test day when you are actually taking the exam.

1. *Make sure you understand the test format and requirements.*

- Read and/or listen to all of the directions carefully.
- Make sure you know how to correctly mark your answer on each test component.
- Make sure you know how much time you have to complete each test component, as well as the overall testing process. Pay attention to any on-screen timers to make sure you know how much time is remaining in the test period.

2. *Read carefully and avoid rushing too much.*

- When there is an overall time limit to the test, it is tempting to rush through the reading of the questions and response options, and to answer too quickly. Note, you should have sufficient time to read carefully through all the TK questions and response options. Do not agonize for several minutes over one question but do take the time needed to carefully read and consider each response option.
- Be sure to read every alternative and decide what you think about each (e.g., bad, good, or possible) before choosing one. You may think the first choice is best, but then discover that the third choice is actually even better. Don't risk getting a question incorrect simply because you didn't read all of the answer choices.
- Read carefully, re-reading if there is time and paying close attention to key words or phrases that you must not overlook. Make note of key words or phrases that may impact your answer. Be sure not to overlook critical words such as "not" or "except" or qualifying words such as "always," "never," "some," "most," etc. Remember that "and" means that one element of the alternative must be present or true in addition to another element for the alternative to be correct. "Or" means that only one of the elements of the alternative must be present or true for it to be a correct alternative.
- Double-check to make sure you have marked the answer you intended to choose. When there are a limited number of questions on an exam, careless marking errors are costly. Check yourself as you go, but then also before you exit an exam portion, go back over every question and double-check your answers if you have time.

3. *Proceed through the questions strategically.*

- Try to answer the question before you look at the choices. If you know the answer, compare it to the available choices and pick the closest alternative. A thorough knowledge of the tested material will allow you to answer the questions without looking at the answer choices.
- Consider the rationale behind your answer. If someone were to ask you why you chose a particular answer, would you be able to provide support for it? If not, you may wish to re-think your answer.
- Use the process of elimination. If you do not know the answer to a question, first eliminate those choices which are clearly wrong. This will save you time by reducing the number of choices you have to re-read and re-evaluate before selecting your final choice.
- Answer easier questions first. This will save your time and focus for tackling more difficult questions during your remaining time on this test section.
- If you have difficulty understanding a specific term, re-read the sentence to determine its meaning without worrying about the meaning of a particular word. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word should become clearer once you understand the general context within which it has been placed.
- Tackle complex questions methodically. Divide and conquer! Break up the material into smaller segments in your mind, and then concentrate on one segment at a time. One approach is to first read the possible answers and then re-read the question. This tells you what to concentrate on while reading the question. Concentrate on the parts of the question directly related to the possible answers, even if you do not understand the entire question. You may not need to understand the entire question to find the correct answer. Also, focus on the topic sentences, which are usually the first and last sentences of a question. Read the difficult questions twice. The first time, read for the general meaning and do not get bogged down by individual words or phrases that you do not understand. The second time, read for more precise understanding. The first reading will provide the context so that the second reading is more meaningful.
- Be aware that an incorrect alternative may look attractive by containing an exact phrase from the relevant material. Or an incorrect alternative may contain a phrase or sentence that is used out of context. For example, an idea that is expressed but then rejected in the relevant material, may be presented as an idea that was supported. The trick here is to, once again, read very carefully.
- If all else fails, guess! You will not lose any more credit for an incorrect response than you will for no response, so even if you must guess, respond to every question. If the test period is about to end and you believe there will be a substantial number of questions (e.g., more than 5 or 10) that you will not be able to complete, reserve some time (e.g., a minute) toward the very end of the test period to respond to these questions, even if you must guess. While your guesses may not be correct, the alternative is to leave these questions blank and be assured of getting them wrong.

SECTION 5: ABILITY TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES

PART I: GENERAL TEST INFORMATION

A. OBJECTIVES

To Familiarize You with the Ability Areas Covered on the Ability Test

The ability areas that will be assessed on the Ability Test include Written Expression, Written Comprehension, Problem Sensitivity, Deductive Reasoning, and Inductive Reasoning. This guide will provide you with definitions of these ability areas and examples of how they apply to the job of a Correction Officer.

To Provide You with Test-Taking Strategies for Each of the Ability Areas

This part of the guide contains strategies to help you answer questions that test each of the ability areas.

To Provide You with Some General Test-Taking Strategies

This part of the guide suggests general strategies for taking multiple-choice tests, including identifying key words in questions and answering questions that you perceive as easier first.

To Familiarize You with the Procedures and Materials You Will Encounter During the Test

This part of the guide includes information about the procedures to be followed during the Ability Test. The sample questions provided in the Ability Areas section will give you a good idea of the kinds of questions to expect. Answering the sample questions will allow you to assess your own ability and identify those ability areas where you should focus your preparation efforts. Giving you this first-hand experience with the test-taking situation should help you to feel more confident and comfortable when you take the actual test.

Finally, these materials will show you that all information necessary to answer the questions is contained within the test itself. This test is designed to assess abilities, not specific knowledge about corrections or any other specific job. Any specialized terms or procedures that are included in the test will be defined or described so that all candidates have the same information on which to base their answers. Keep in mind that any policies and procedures described in the test are not intended to match the policies and procedures of any specific facility or location for which you may be seeking employment. Be sure to base your responses solely on the information presented for each question.

To Provide You with Information about Common Test-Taking Errors and Strategies for Avoiding Them

This part of the guide explains errors typically made in multiple-choice ability tests and includes steps for analyzing your own errors and strategies for avoiding the same errors in the future.

This guide contains a great deal of information. The last thing we want to do is to overwhelm you with too many strategies to think about for each type of question on the Ability Test. In order to avoid this, there are several points that you should keep in mind:

1. The more familiar you become with the strategies suggested in this guide, the more automatic they will become. **REPETITION** and **PRACTICE** are the keys. The more often you review this guide, the better prepared you will be.
2. Many of the strategies suggested for each of the ability areas apply only to questions testing those areas. For example, you'll see that the suggestions for dealing with Deductive Reasoning questions apply only to those types of questions. By becoming very familiar with the ability areas, you will be able to quickly and easily decide which strategies to apply to each type of question.
3. Some of the general test-taking techniques that are relevant to all questions are particularly useful when you cannot answer a question easily. If you are 100% sure of an answer, you should simply select the correct answer. However, there are some strategies, such as identifying key words and phrases, which do not take much time and are useful for questions testing almost all ability areas.

B. GENERAL MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

When completing the Ability Test, follow these general guidelines:

Make sure you understand the question.

1. Read each question carefully. Try to answer the question before you look at the choices. If you know the answer, compare it to the available choices and choose the closest alternative.
2. Break the test questions down in a way that makes them easier to read. Specifically:
 - a. Break down sentences into small segments. This will make you more attentive to separate ideas in a long sentence. Note the following example.

Example:

Before Test administrators will be available to help every candidate with testing procedures; however, administrators will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give, in any manner, information that may be of help in answering a question.

Below, slash marks are used to indicate how you can break up complex sentences. Note the statement just made.

After Test administrators \ will be available to help every candidate with testing procedures; \ however, administrators will not explain the meaning of any question, \ define words, \ or give, in any manner, information that may be of help in answering a question.

See how breaking the sentence down makes it easier to understand what the sentence is about by focusing your attention on the separate ideas presented.

- b. Identify key words that tell you what a sentence or passage is about. If you skip the question and come back to it later, identifying key words may make it easier to remember what the question was about, without reading the full question or passage again. Note the example below that illustrates how to identify key words.

Example:

Before Test administrators will be available to help every candidate with testing procedures; however, administrators will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give, in any manner, information that may be of help in answering a question.

Identify key words. Note the key words underlined in the statement just made.

After Test administrators will be available to help every candidate with testing procedures; however, administrators will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give, in any manner, information that may be of help in answering a question.

See how this helps you focus on the important parts of the sentence. This is particularly helpful when you are looking back and forth between two pieces of information (such as a test question and the answers to the question).

c. Find words that "harden" or "soften" statements. Note the double-underlined words below.

1. Words such as all, never, none, and every harden a sentence by indicating that there are no exceptions. As a rule, alternatives with these words have less chance of being correct.
2. Words such as sometimes, may, generally, and possibly soften a statement and leave more room for the alternative to be correct.
3. AND means that one element of the alternative must be present or true, in addition to another element for the alternative to be correct.
4. OR means there is a choice of situations. Only one of the elements of the alternative must be present or true for the alternative to be correct.

Proceed through the questions strategically.

1. Answer questions that you perceive as easier first.

When you go through each question on the Ability Test, answer the questions you feel are easier first and leave the ones you feel are more difficult until after you've answered all of the questions you feel are easier. This will prevent you from spending too much time on any one question and ensure that you have the time to respond to, and receive credit for, every question that you can answer correctly. If you are unsure of an answer, you can skip the question. Or you can record the answer that is most likely correct but return to it later. Don't be afraid to change this answer if, when you return to it, you realize you have misunderstood the question. If, after returning to and thinking about the question in more depth, you are still unsure of the answer, select your first answer.

2. Use the process of elimination.

If you don't know the answer to a question, first eliminate those choices that are clearly wrong. This will save you time by reducing the number of answers you have to re-read and re-evaluate before making your final choice, particularly if you skip the question and come back to it later.

3. Tackle difficult questions methodically.

Don't get bogged down if there is a word or sentence you do not understand. You may get the main idea from the rest of the question without knowing a specific word or understanding a specific sentence within the question.

4. Take a mental break when needed.

If you feel that your ability to concentrate is decreasing at any point during the testing period, take a brief mental break. Take a minute to clear your mind and relax. Of course, you must keep in mind the overall time limit for the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, but a brief mental break may well be worth the time it takes.

5. Answer every question.

You will not lose any more credit for an incorrect response than you will for no response, so even if you are not sure of the correct answer to a question, record a response. Although your response may not be correct, the alternative is to leave this question blank and be assured of getting it wrong.

Use extra time wisely.

If you have extra time, go back and review your responses. Make any changes that you feel are necessary. Also, make sure that you have recorded your responses correctly.

C. ERROR ANALYSIS

Strategies for Analyzing and Avoiding Errors

Each one of us has weak areas in our test-taking behavior. It is to your advantage to identify those weak areas before participating in the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam. The sample questions contained in the Ability Areas section within this guide are very similar to the questions that will appear on the Ability Test. After answering these questions and checking them against the answers and explanations, you should complete the Error Analysis Form contained later in this section of the guide. After completing the Error Analysis Form, focus on the questions you answered incorrectly. This will allow you to identify any major weak areas in your test-taking behavior. **This is called Error Analysis.**

There are several possible reasons for choosing an incorrect response. Seven of these reasons are presented below, along with suggestions for avoiding such errors. Once you've identified the reason for choosing an incorrect response, it will be easier to correct it, in turn making it easier to answer that type of question correctly in the future.

Reasons for Choosing Incorrect Responses

1. Errors made when recording responses/guessing errors.

Since there are a limited number of questions on the Ability Test, errors related to the improper recording of responses are costly. Check as you record each answer choice to ensure you are recording the answer you have chosen. As an additional check, if you have extra time, go back and double check your work.

You may miss questions because you failed to provide an answer or were forced to quickly record an answer. If either of these things happened, consider why. Possible reasons and suggestions include:

- a. You may have missed a question because you skipped it and failed to return to it later. Be sure to return to skipped questions.
- b. You may have lost track of the time. Be sure to pay close attention to the on-screen timer so that you have time to complete all three Correction Officer Head Cook Exam components.
- c. You may have been forced to quickly choose an answer because you spent too much time working on difficult questions, rather than skipping them and saving them for later. Or, if you did skip difficult questions, you may have failed to identify the various alternatives as not correct, possibly correct, and most likely correct. Thus, you did not reduce the number of alternatives you had to reconsider when you re-read the questions. Be sure that you evaluate any alternatives that you do review in order to save some time re-reading and re-evaluating.

2. Misreading a question or answer by overlooking a key word or phrase.

The solution to this problem is identifying key words. Once you have identified the key words and phrases in a question, check the details of the possible answers with the details you identified, one-by-one. If every detail doesn't match, consider that answer suspect and try another, always keeping in mind you're looking for the best possible answer.

3. Not knowing the meaning of one or more key terms.

This is a vocabulary problem. When you come to an unfamiliar word, re-read the sentence to determine its meaning without worrying about the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word should become clearer once you understand the phrases and ideas that surround it.

4. Having difficulty distinguishing between the important and unimportant parts of a question because it is complicated or difficult to understand.

These may be the types of questions you should skip until later. When you do go back to these difficult questions, first read the possible answers before reading the question. This tells you what to concentrate on while reading the question. Also, focus on the topic sentences, which are usually the first and last sentences in a question. Read these difficult questions twice. The first time read for the general idea. Do not get stuck on individual words or phrases you do not understand. The second time read for a more detailed understanding. The first reading will give you the general meaning, so that the second reading will be easier. Finally, picture in your mind what the question is asking.

5. Not being familiar with comparing combinations of information.

This is a problem of re-arranging information in the correct way to make it easier to understand. Identify important pieces of information in the question and then compare this information with the possible answers point-by-point. Also, concentrate on eliminating the wrong answers first.

6. Choosing an answer simply because it "looks" good.

Several factors may cause you to select incorrect answers that "look" good:

- a. An incorrect answer may contain an exact phrase from the original question.
- b. An incorrect answer may contain a phrase or sentence from the original question but be presented in a different way. For example, an idea that is rejected in the question may be presented in the answer as an idea that was supported.
- c. An incorrect answer may overstate what the question has stated. For example, if the question says, "Some incidents...", the incorrect answer may say, "All incidents..."

Strategies to avoid the tendency to select incorrect answers that "look" good include:

- a. Have an answer in mind before you look over the alternatives. This will make you less likely to choose an answer that just "looks" good.
- b. Beware of choosing answers based on common sense or previous knowledge and experience. Answer only on the basis of the material presented in the test question.
- c. Stick strictly to the facts or rules described in the test question. Don't select answers that stretch or exaggerate these facts or rules. Identify words such as only, never, always, whenever, all, etc. to help you pay close attention to words that "harden" or "soften" answers.
- d. Carefully review answers containing exact words or phrases from the test question. Don't simply assume that such answers are correct.
- e. Prepare a defense for your answer. Find something in the test question that will allow you to give a strong defense for your answer.

7. You may not know why you answered a question incorrectly.

Finally, if you are unsure as to why you answered a question incorrectly and don't know why an answer is correct, it would be a good idea to review this guide again. In addition, talk with someone else who may be taking the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam to compare answers and information or ask a tutor, friend, or family member for help.

Remember, as you review your answers to the sample questions contained in the Ability Areas section, use the Error Analysis Form to evaluate/diagnose your test-taking behavior.

Instructions for Using the Error Analysis Form

Use the form below to analyze sample questions you answer incorrectly in the Ability Areas part of this guide. As you work through the Ability Areas part, review each sample question as follows: If you answered the question correctly, place a check mark in the blank within the column labeled "CORRECT ANSWER." Then, for each incorrect answer, identify which of the seven reasons previously presented caused you to make the error and mark the appropriate box in the set of columns labeled "REASONS FOR INCORRECT ANSWERS." Total the number of marks in each column to identify the kinds of errors you are making most often. Examine the ability area listed for each incorrectly answered question to determine those abilities that are giving you the most difficulty. Once you have identified the troublesome ability areas and errors, go back and review the test-taking strategies for the ability areas and the strategies for avoiding errors. Focus on those ability areas and errors that are causing you to choose incorrect answers most often.

Error Analysis Form: For Use with Sample Questions

SAMPLE QUESTION NUMBER	ABILITY AREA	CORRECT ANSWER	REASONS FOR INCORRECT ANSWERS						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Written Expression								
2	Written Expression								
3	Written Comprehension								
4	Written Comprehension								
5	Problem Sensitivity								
6	Problem Sensitivity								
7	Deductive Reasoning								
8	Deductive Reasoning								
9	Inductive Reasoning								
10	Inductive Reasoning								
TOTAL QUESTIONS CORRECT									
TOTAL FOR EACH TYPE OF ERROR									

PART II: ABILITY AREAS

This part of the guide is designed to familiarize you with the nature of the questions you will encounter on the Ability Test, and to provide you with some useful strategies for responding to these types of questions. This portion of the guide is organized around the ability areas that will be tested. For each ability area, the following information is provided:

Definition: In this part, the ability area is defined, and you are provided with examples of how the ability applies to the job of a Correction Officer.

Techniques: This part describes the various types of questions that will be used to assess each of the ability areas. For each type of question, you will be given some strategies to assist you in responding to such questions. For most question types, an illustrative example and explanation is provided to give you a better understanding of the question descriptions and test-taking strategies.

Sample Test Questions: Two sample test questions are provided for each ability area to be tested. Answers and explanations to the sample questions have been provided on pages 35 through 37 after all ability types are presented. By answering the sample test questions you can assess your understanding of the information and test-taking strategies provided. Responding to the sample questions will also allow you to assess your current level of ability and to identify those ability areas upon which you should focus your preparation efforts. After responding to all 10 questions, use the Error Analysis Form on page 16 to evaluate your test-taking behavior.

In summary, the information in this portion of the guide is being presented to help you become familiar with the kinds of questions you will encounter on the Ability Test and to become comfortable with the kinds of strategies you should use when responding to these questions. This information should help you feel more comfortable when you take the Ability Test portion of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam.

A. ABILITY TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

1. WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Definition: This ability involves using language in writing to communicate information or ideas to other people. These other people might include supervisors, colleagues, visitors, the public, or any individuals with whom the individual might come in contact. This ability includes vocabulary, knowledge of distinctions among words, and knowledge of grammar and the way words are ordered.

Examples of this ability include:

- documenting the details of an incident in a report
- sharing information with visitors or other members of the public

Techniques: There are two types of Written Expression questions that you may encounter. The first type requires you to identify the most appropriate way to communicate a particular thought or idea to another individual. For these questions, it is important to ensure that the alternative chosen (a) accurately reflects the content of the original idea, and (b) expresses the original idea in the most clear and concise manner. Consider the example below.

Example 1:

As a Correction Officer arrived at the scene of a disturbance near the outer perimeter, the Officer noticed a van leaving the scene. Since the investigation revealed that the fencing on the outer perimeter had been tampered with, the Officer felt that the van leaving the scene should be included in the report. The most effective way for the Officer to report this is to say:

- A. "As I arrived at the outer perimeter, I saw a van driving away from the scene."
- B. "A van which should not have been there was near the outer perimeter."
- C. "The suspects escaped in a van."
- D. "I don't know if it's important but as I got there, I saw a vehicle leaving the scene."

Correct Response and Explanation:

A is the correct answer, because it correctly reflects the facts given in the question.

Answers B and C are incorrect, because they provide details that have not been established in the question (the van should not have been there AND the vandals escaped in the van). The Correction Officer was only able to state that the vehicle was leaving the scene as the Officer arrived.

Answer D is not the best answer because it leaves out the important fact that the vehicle was a van.

The second type of Written Expression question requires that you order your thoughts, or statements, in a logical sequence so that others will understand you. Such questions will start with a list of statements to be made by an individual. For example, the statements may represent sentences contained within a report describing the sequence of events that occurred at an incident. These statements will not be presented in the correct order. The response alternatives will present you with several possible ways to order the statements; however, only one correct possibility will be included among the alternatives provided.

Example 2:

Officer Wilkins is preparing a report on a hit-and-run accident that occurred in the parking lot of the correctional facility. The report will include the following sentences. (These sentences are NOT listed in the correct order.)

1. The Dodge struck the right rear fender of Officer Smith's Ford and continued on its way.
2. Officer Smith stated that she was walking to her vehicle that was parked on the north edge of the parking lot.
3. As the car passed, Officer Smith noticed the rear license plate #412AEJ.
4. Officer Smith returned to the facility to immediately record the plate number and work with Officer Wilkins to file a report.
5. A green Dodge traveling through the parking lot failed to slow down as it turned to drive across the north edge of the lot.

The most logical order for the above sentences to appear in the report is:

- A. 1, 3, 2, 5, 4.
- B. 2, 5, 1, 3, 4.
- C. 4, 5, 1, 2, 3.
- D. 5, 3, 1, 2, 4.

When responding to this type of question, look at the content of each sentence separately and determine whether it can stand alone, or whether it must precede or follow another sentence. If it can't stand alone, look for the sentence that contains the information you need. However, don't forget to evaluate that sentence in the same way as the first. Ask the questions, what happened first and what happened next? Similarly, consider whether there are sentences that the sentence under consideration cannot precede or follow. This also will help to narrow down the choices.

While we suggest that you identify the pairs of sentences that must (or cannot) go together, we'd like to discourage you from attempting to determine the correct order of all of the sentences before checking the response alternatives provided. The reason for this is that there may be several logical ways in which to order the sentences. However, only one correct possibility will be included among the alternatives provided. Instead, we suggest that you work through each of the alternatives presented one-by-one, keeping in mind the sentences that must (or cannot) appear together. Alternatives that are not feasible should be eliminated until you find the one alternative that places the sentences in an appropriate order.

If you're not sure which sentence should be first, you may find it easier to note which sentence should be last. This will help you considerably in eliminating obviously wrong choices. If you don't know which sentence should be first nor last, then go by what you know for sure. In other words, even if you do not know the proper order of all of the sentences, or which sentence should come first or last, you may know that one of the sentences should come after another. If so, you may be able to choose the correct answer by using just those two sentences to answer the question. ***The key thing to remember is that you practically never need to know the correct order of all of the sentences to answer these types of questions.***

Correct Response and Explanation:

The correct answer is B. To identify the correct order, the sentences for the report need to be placed into the proper time sequence. Sentences 1, 2, 3 and 5 describe the events of the accident. The proper sequence for these four events is 2, 5, 1, 3. (Officer Smith is approaching her vehicle on the north edge of the parking lot, a Dodge failed to slow down as it turned to drive along the north edge of the lot, struck her vehicle and continued on its way, and as it

passed she noticed its license plate number.) Answer B is the only alternative with this sequence.

Sample Test Questions:

Sample Question 1:

1. A Correction Officer is speaking to a local support group on the role of Correction Officers in responding to inmate mental health crises. During the presentation, the Officer explains that Correction Officers are often informed by other inmates when a fellow prisoner has changed behavioral patterns or made threats of self-harm. In addition, the Officer points out that many signs are often exhibited and reported prior to an inmate suicide. One of the objectives of Correction Officers is to prevent suicide or self-harm by inmates. The most effective way for the Officer to conclude the presentation is to say:
 - A. "Since frequently no suicide or self-harm actually takes place, the role of Correction Officers in responding to inmate reports is fairly limited."
 - B. "In responding to information from other inmates, the Officer's function is to protect inmates in a mental health crisis and prevent self-harm or suicide from occurring."
 - C. "The Officer's main goal in responding to inmate reports about another prisoner's mental health is to protect the reporting inmates."
 - D. "Many inmates providing information to Correction Officers are doing so with the hope of getting something out of it for themselves."

Sample Question 2:

2. Officer Turner is writing a report on an inmate homicide investigation. The report will include the following five sentences. (These sentences are NOT listed in the correct order.)
 1. Once the victim had been removed, Officers searched the cell and documented evidence.
 2. During rounds, Officer Turner noted that an inmate's cell door was open and the cell had been ransacked.
 3. Officers also interviewed inmates in the nearby cells to gather witness statements.
 4. Upon arrival of backup, Officer Turner and colleagues entered the cell and discovered the body of an inmate under the mattress, apparently dead from knife wounds to the chest.
 5. Officer Turner called the medical team to retrieve the victim.

The most logical order for the above sentences to appear in the report is:

- A. 2, 1, 4, 5, 3.
- B. 2, 4, 5, 1, 3.
- C. 2, 5, 1, 3, 4.
- D. 4, 5, 2, 3, 1.

2. WRITTEN COMPREHENSION

Definition: This is the ability to understand written language. This ability involves the understanding of individual words as well as patterns of words (sentences and phrases), so it is more than simply vocabulary. It is also the ability to read a sentence or series of sentences and understand the meaning. This involves receiving information, not giving it.

Examples of this ability include:

- reading narrative material, such as an incident report
- following written instructions

Techniques: Items designed to test Written Comprehension will include a passage describing an incident or set of operating procedures. These passages will be approximately one-half to a full page in length and will be followed by one or two test questions. These questions will test your understanding of the information presented in the passage.

For some candidates, these questions may prove to be difficult simply because of the initial amount of information you'll be given. Some of the techniques you can use on these questions have already been discussed as part of the general test-taking strategies.

- A. One of the most useful techniques involves reading the test questions and possible answers before reading the passage to help you identify and focus on the information that is being sought. You may find that you locate the answer to one of the questions related to a passage before you even finish reading the passage. If so, answer the question right away. As you go from one sentence or paragraph to the next in the passage, you may have to glance back at the questions to remind yourself of the specific details for which you are searching.
- B. Another extremely useful technique is to identify key words once you have read the questions related to a passage and know what to focus on. For example, if the questions related to the passage seek information about a particular person (e.g., Mr. Jones), then make note of Mr. Jones's name when you come to it in the passage, so that you don't waste time looking back through the passage later. Also, make the passage easier to understand by breaking sentences down into key phrases.
- C. These tend to be time consuming questions which you may not have the opportunity to read more than once. A third technique is to read for understanding the first time and avoid getting bogged down by individual words that you do not understand. Sometimes you can tell the meaning of a word from the context within which it has been placed, or you may not need to understand the word at all to understand the passage. We caution you, however, not to try to read faster than you can read with comprehension.
- D. Try to form a picture in your mind as you read. School books used to teach reading contain many pictures, since pictures aid in comprehension.
- E. Ask yourself questions as you read. When you finish reading a paragraph or a long sentence, ask yourself what the passage or sentence was about. What was the point of the paragraph or sentence?

It's important to note that most of the suggested strategies for Written Comprehension questions are designed to help candidates understand the relatively lengthy passage of information that precedes these questions. Thus, these strategies would be useful with any type of question that requires candidates to read and understand a large amount of information.

Sample Test Questions:

Use the information in the following passage to answer questions 3 and 4.

Four Correction Officers reported to the Health Services Unit the morning of June 12, at 6:47 a.m. The staff doctor reported that a theft occurred overnight while she and the nurse were off work. The doctor also stated that she had made sure the door to the Unit was firmly closed and locked when they left work the prior evening.

Upon arrival at the Unit, Officers Baker and Reigner began to question Dr. Corneal. In the meantime, Officers Lucas and Gentry conducted a preliminary investigation of the Unit to determine the activities of the suspects. The questioning revealed that Dr. Corneal had recently received an extensive shipment of narcotic medications. In addition, Nurse Campbell noted that the stock of narcotic medications on hand recently was larger than usual. When questioned as to who knew about the recent shipment, Dr. Corneal stated that only staff and two inmates who were in the Unit when the shipment arrived were aware of the stock of medications. She was further questioned to determine whether any unusual events had occurred recently that might be related to this incident. Dr. Corneal stated that they had some remodeling and repairs done to the Unit during the past three weeks by a few different contractors. Officer Reigner asked if they had reason to suspect any of the contractors. Dr. Corneal stated that some of the crew had commented that it looked like they had an entire pharmacy in there, but that it would be very difficult to determine which individuals, if any, may have been involved. Officer Reigner requested the names of the contractors and the services they performed.

After a few minutes, Officers Lucas and Gentry returned from their search of the Unit. They had determined that the suspects concentrated their efforts on the narcotics stock, since none of the other medications and no other areas of the unit appeared to have been disturbed. They concluded that the suspects must have been aware of the narcotics stock before entering the home.

Sample Question 3:

3. According to the preceding passage, when the doctor and nurse arrived to work on the morning of June 12, they discovered that the Health Services Unit had been:
- A. ransacked, but nothing was stolen.
 - B. entered, and a laptop and many sharp medical instruments had been stolen.
 - C. entered, and that items had been stolen while the medical staff were off work.
 - D. burglarized because the door had been left unlocked the night before.

Sample Question 4:

4. According to the preceding passage, considering the theft and subsequent investigation described above, the ONLY statement that accurately reflects the information gathered is:
- A. Officer Reigner requested the names of the contractors and the services they performed.
 - B. Nurse Campbell seemed to be the one to answer all of the Officers' questions.
 - C. Officer Baker helped with the search of the Unit.
 - D. The suspects had been present when the narcotics shipment arrived.

3. PROBLEM SENSITIVITY

Definition: This is the ability to recognize or identify the existence of problems. It involves both the recognition of the problem as a whole and the elements of the problem. This ability does not include the ability to solve the problem, only the ability to identify or recognize the problem.

Examples of this ability include recognizing when:

- an explanation that someone provides is farfetched and probably not truthful
- to stop and question a group of individuals

Techniques: There are two types of Problem Sensitivity questions that you may encounter. The first type of Problem Sensitivity question will consist of stories or descriptions by victims and witnesses. For these questions, a problem exists when a victim or witness gives information that is different from information supplied by other victims or witnesses. Consider the example below.

Example 1:

Officer Dunn interviewed four witnesses to a stabbing that took place in the yard. Each of the witnesses saw the suspect as he was fleeing the area. They described the suspect as follows:

Witness 1 - "He was a White male, about 25 to 30 years of age, with brown, shoulder-length hair. He was about 6'0" and weighed about 185 pounds. He wore a black bandana and a gold earring. He had a tattoo of a panther on his right arm."

Witness 2 - "He was a male, White or Hispanic, late twenties, around 5'10", about 190 pounds, with long, brown hair. He was stocky and wore a dark bandana and a shiny earring, and he had a tattoo on his forearm."

Witness 3 - "He was a light skinned male, possibly White or Hispanic, in his mid-twenties, about 6' weighing about 180 pounds. He had a small scar on the back of his neck. He had long hair and wore a black bandana."

Witness 4 - "He was a White male, around 25 years old, about 5'11" and weighing about 185 pounds. His hair was brown and down to his shoulders, fairly long. He had a tattoo of a panther, and he wore something dark around his head. I'm not sure what else he was wearing."

Given the above information, Officer Dunn should recognize that there is a problem with the description given by witness:

- A. 1.
- B. 2.
- C. 3.
- D. 4.

Correct Response and Explanation:

C is the correct answer. There is agreement that the suspect was a White or Hispanic male in his mid-to-late twenties with long, brown hair who was approximately 6' tall and 185 pounds. In addition, he wore a dark bandana. There were only two discrepancies across the descriptions. Witnesses 1, 2, and 4 reported that the suspect had a tattoo. Witness 3 reported a scar on the back of the suspect's neck. Of the two, it is much harder to explain how a tattoo on the suspects arm could have been overlooked AND how one witness could see a scar on the back of the suspect's neck when all four witnesses stated that the suspect had long hair. Thus, C is the best answer.

The second type of Problem Sensitivity question will often begin with the presentation of rules, procedures, or recommended practices followed by a description of an incident or situation in which these rules should be applied. Based on the applicable rules, you will be required to identify a problem (or the most serious of several problems) in the way the incident was handled. Because this type of Problem Sensitivity question typically involves the presentation of a large amount of initial information, many of the suggested strategies for Written Comprehension questions (e.g., identifying key information) will also assist you with these types of questions.

Example 2:

Use the information in the following passage to answer this question.

Department of Correction staff have standard procedures for handling bomb threats that include the following:

1. Trained staff and law enforcement personnel direct operations at the scene; fire personnel stand by and typically assist in rescue operations.
2. While radios may be left on at the scene of an unexploded device to receive instructions from the Communications Office, no radio transmissions are to be made from the scene, because radio signals can detonate an explosive device.
3. The decision to evacuate a building is to be made by the highest-ranking officer in the building, unless an explosive device has been found; in such an instance, law enforcement personnel in charge of the scene make the evacuation decision.
4. No public statements are to be made to the media by any personnel.
5. If one device detonates, there is always the possibility of a second or third device, so all personnel should stay clear of the area until it has been determined (usually by the Bomb Squad) to be safe.

According to the preceding passage, of the four actions described below, the potentially most serious error would occur if:

- A. immediately after a second bomb exploded in a facility, Firefighter Thomas entered the facility to conduct rescue operations.
- B. while standing by at the scene of a bomb threat, Police Lieutenant Caffey provided information regarding the incident to a reporter.
- C. while standing by at the scene of a bomb threat, Fire Lieutenant Griffin received instructions from the Communications Office via his radio.
- D. after an unexploded device was discovered in a visiting area, Assistant Superintendent Johnson ordered the visitors' building to be evacuated.

Correct Response and Explanation:

A is the correct answer. Answers A and B represent the only mistakes. With respect to answer A, Firefighter Thomas should have waited to enter the facility until the Bomb Squad Personnel determined that it was safe (according to procedure 5). With respect to answer B, no personnel should make a public statement to the media (according to procedure 4). Since the question asks for the "potentially most serious error," the best answer is A, since entering the facility without proper safety clearance is a direct risk to one's own life and to the life of anyone who follows.

C is incorrect, because it is acceptable to receive instructions via the radio as long as no transmissions are made (according to procedure 2).

D is incorrect, because the actions of Assistant Superintendent Johnson were appropriate (according to procedure 3).

Sample Test Questions:

Sample Question 5:

Use the information in the following passage to answer question 5.

Correction Officers should follow the guidelines presented below when dealing with visitors who arrive under the influence of alcohol:

1. The visitor should be escorted to a separate, private waiting room and informed that they will not be able to visit any of the inmates.
 2. If the visitor has driven to the facility, the Correction Officer should ask the visitor if there is someone they can call to come pick them up and give them a ride home.
 3. If the visitor is able to procure a ride home, the Correction Officer should ensure that the visitor's belongings are confiscated until a responsible individual is able to drive the visitor home.
 4. If the visitor has no way to procure a ride from the facility, police should be called in to conduct a blood alcohol test or field sobriety test and determine next steps.
5. Consider the following situation:

Officer Kelley notices a visitor in the security area who is stumbling and unsteady on her feet, with slurred speech and glassy eyes. Officer Kelley escorts the visitor to a private waiting room, suspecting that the visitor is under the influence of alcohol. Officer Kelley asks the visitor if there is someone she can call to get a ride home, explaining that he cannot allow her to drive under the influence. The visitor states that there is no one she can call. Officer Kelley contacts the police and confiscates the visitor's belongings until police arrive.

According to the preceding passage, Officer Kelley's actions were:

- A. appropriate, because they were consistent with the guidelines provided.
- B. problematic, because the visitor's belongings were confiscated.
- C. problematic, because Officer Kelley called the police.
- D. problematic, because Officer Kelley did not procure a ride home for the visitor.

Sample Question 6:

6. Officer Johnson interviewed four witnesses to a bank robbery. Each of the witnesses described the suspects as follows:

Witness 1 - "There were two of them. Both male, about 6'2" tall, with medium builds. One of them had dark hair and was wearing jeans, a leather jacket, and sunglasses. The other had short, blond hair and was wearing jeans and a red, light-weight jacket. Only the one with the sunglasses spoke, and he had a foreign accent."

Witness 2 - "Both of the men were about the same size. Maybe 6', about 180 pounds. One of them was wearing a leather jacket and the other one was wearing a light-weight, red jacket. I couldn't see their faces because one had on a ski mask and the other had on dark sunglasses. The one with the sunglasses had dark hair."

Witness 3 - "Both of the men were about 6'1" and 180 pounds. One had on a leather jacket, the other a red windbreaker. Both men were wearing jeans and tennis shoes. One had dark hair and sunglasses on. The other one was wearing some kind of stocking cap that was pulled down over his face."

Witness 4 - "Both men had on jeans, tennis shoes and jackets. One jacket was leather, the other was bright red. One of the men had dark hair, and I could not see the other one's face because of a ski mask. They both looked a little over 6' tall. Only the one with the dark hair spoke."

Given the above information, Officer Johnson should recognize that there is a problem with the description provided by witness:

- A. 1.
- B. 2.
- C. 3.
- D. 4.

4. DEDUCTIVE REASONING

Definition: This is the ability to apply general rules or regulations to specific cases or to proceed from stated principles to logical conclusions.

Examples of this ability include:

- determining the appropriate action to take given the circumstances at the time and the applicable rules, policies, or procedures
- determining which factors to take into account when using force

Techniques: There are four types of Deductive Reasoning questions that you may encounter: questions based on verbal rules and procedures, questions based on quantitative rules, questions based on the assignment of a specific situation to one of several given classifications, and law or rule interpretation questions.

For Questions Based on Verbal or Quantitative Rules and Procedures: The first and second types of questions will start with the presentation of general verbal or quantitative rules and procedures and require candidates to apply the general rules to specific cases. The general quantitative rules and procedures will be presented in a tabular fashion. Rules and procedures are intended to ensure that Correction Officers make correct decisions in a wide variety of situations. There are four factors to attend to when answering questions about rules and procedures:

1. **PAY ATTENTION TO THE DEFINITE ORDER IN WHICH STEPS ARE TAKEN:** Many rules and procedures require Officers to go through a series of actions. There is often a correct order for these actions. Make sure the correct answer has that same sequence of steps.
2. **PAY ATTENTION TO WHEN A RULE OR PROCEDURE IS IN EFFECT:** Some rules apply only to certain types of situations or certain periods of time. Make sure the correct answer applies to the situation and time in question.
3. **PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO EXCEPTIONS:** Pay particular attention to any exceptions given in the rule or procedure. Identify keywords such as except, unless, if, and only that "harden" or "soften" statements.
4. **PAY ATTENTION TO COMPLETENESS:** If a procedure requires Officers to do several things, make certain the correct answer allows that all those things can be done. However, if the question is just focusing on a few things, or on a series of many, make sure the correct answer doesn't eliminate the possibility of the events taking place.

For Questions Based on the Assignment of a Specific Situation to One of Several Given Classifications: The third type of question will start with the presentation of categories or classifications and require candidates to assign a specific situation or incident to one of the given categories or classifications. The following strategy may be helpful in responding to this type of Deductive Reasoning question.

1. Determine how the classifications or categories differ.
2. Review the particular incident presented in the question with regard to these differences.
3. Identify the classification or category that matches the particular incident with regard to these differences.

Example 1:

Use the information in the following passage to answer the next question.

Correction Officers categorize accidents into the four classes described below:

CLASS I - Any accident involving one vehicle but no injuries.

CLASS II - Any accident involving two vehicles but no injuries or one vehicle and at least one injury.

CLASS III - Any accident involving two or more vehicles and multiple injuries.

CLASS IV - Any accident involving a hazardous materials spill.

Consider the following situation:

A Correction Officer was dispatched to the scene of an accident just outside the perimeter of the facility. When the Officer arrived, the Officer found a nine-year-old girl wearing a pair of roller blades lying on the road. Witnesses stated that a Department of Correction transport vehicle swerved to avoid hitting the girl, but the vehicle's back bumper hit the girl as it passed. The driver stopped the vehicle but did not get out. According to the preceding passage, the accident could be categorized most accurately as Class:

- A. I.
- B. II.
- C. III.
- D. IV.

Correct Response and Explanation:

B is the correct answer. The accident involved one vehicle and one injury.

A is incorrect because Class I involves one vehicle and no injuries, but the situation presented involved one injury.

C is incorrect because Class III involves two vehicles with multiple injuries, but the situation presented involved only one vehicle and one injury.

D is incorrect because Class IV involves a hazardous materials spill, but the situation presented did not involve a spill.

For Law or Rule Interpretation Questions: The fourth type of Deductive Reasoning question will provide you with a definition of a term (often a crime) and ask you to interpret the term with respect to a specific situation. Like questions which list procedures, these questions require great attention to detail. You must carefully analyze the definition.

Analyzing the Definition: The definition usually has several parts. Each part is referred to as an element. The elements are like the pieces of a puzzle; all the elements must be present to make up the crime. If any one of the elements is missing, that particular crime has not been committed.

There are usually several elements in a legal definition. The definition must be broken down into these separate elements. Once the elements of the definition are separated, identify key words and take note of words that "harden" or "soften" statements in the definition. Then, check to see if the elements apply to the situation. The elements must be compared to the situation on an item-by-item basis. Specifically, watch out for the words **AND** and **OR**.

AND means that one element must be present in addition to another for the crime to be present.

OR means there is a choice of elements; only one of the choices must be present for the crime to be committed.

For example, consider the definition of **DISORDERLY CONDUCT**: When, with intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm or recklessly creating a risk thereof, a person engages in fighting or in violent, tumultuous, or threatening behavior.

The slash marks below indicate how you can separate the definition to make it easier to understand:

DISORDERLY CONDUCT: When, / with intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm / or recklessly creating a risk thereof, / a person engages in fighting / or in violent, tumultuous, or threatening behavior.

For the crime of **DISORDERLY CONDUCT**:

Is it necessary to intend public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm? No. The definition says "intent to cause... **OR** recklessly create a risk thereof..."

Is it necessary to be fighting? No. The definition says "engages in fighting **OR** in violent, tumultuous **OR** threatening behavior."

Practice using this strategy with the example below:

Example 2:

Criminal Mischief - The crime of criminal mischief is committed when:

1. A person intentionally damages property belonging to another, and the amount of the damage is 250 dollars or more; or
2. A person intentionally damages property, in any amount, by means of explosives.

According to the definition given, the following is the best example of criminal mischief:

- A. Frank is playing baseball with his friends when he hits a ball that breaks the 2,000-dollar window of Ford Motors.
- B. Tony is chopping down a tree in his backyard. The tree falls the wrong way and hits the neighbor's house, causing 3,500 dollars' worth of damage.
- C. Harold gets mad after an argument with his wife and throws his 600-dollar T.V. through the 200-dollar picture window of his house.
- D. Lloyd decides to get even with a neighbor and throws an M-80 firecracker onto his neighbor's porch on Halloween night. The only damage is to his neighbor's milk box, about 15 dollars.

Correct Response and Explanation:

D is the correct answer. Intentional damage using explosives fits part 2 of the Criminal Mischief definition.

A and B are incorrect because there was no intent in either case to damage property (the window or the house, respectively).

C is incorrect because, although there was intent, no explosives were used **AND** the damage to property belonging to another was not equal to or greater than 250 dollars, because Harold damaged his own property.

Sample Test Questions:

Sample Question 7:

Use the information in the following table to answer question 7.

Correction Officers are required to call for backup when responding to certain offenses. Examples of offenses requiring backup are listed below, along with the number of backup Officers needed:

<u>OFFENSES</u>	<u>NUMBER OF BACKUP OFFICERS</u>
Physical altercation between two inmates.	1
Theft where the Officer is notified within 30 minutes of the incident.	1
Fatal incident where two or fewer people are killed.	2
Any situation involving hostages.	3
Any situation where three or more people are killed.	3
Any situation where there are two or more suspects with weapons.	3

7. According to the preceding table, Officer Latimer should call for backup in the following situation:
- A. A staff member reported a robbery from the library that occurred more than 30 minutes ago after untying himself from a chair.
 - B. Two inmates are engaged in a verbal disagreement over which channel to watch on the TV.
 - C. An inmate armed with a homemade knife has been holding a nurse hostage in the Health Services Unit for 40 minutes.
 - D. Two people suffered broken bones in a workshop accident.

Sample Question 8:

Use the information in the following passage to answer question 8.

The following dress code guidelines apply to Correction Officers.

1. The Antron Jacket will be worn for outside duty during the months of November through February and whenever the temperature is below 55 degrees.
2. The Eisenhower Jacket shall be worn for outside duty during the months of March, April, May, September, and October, only if the temperature is below 65 degrees. Officers at the rank of Captain or above may wear the Double Breasted Blouse instead of the Eisenhower Jacket.
3. A navy blue, long sleeve uniform shirt shall be the standard shirt to be worn with all jackets. All individuals at the rank of Captain or above will substitute a white shirt.
4. The short sleeve shirt may be worn whenever the temperature is above 70 degrees during the months of May through September.
5. Officers assigned to indoor duty may also substitute the short sleeve shirt for the long sleeve shirt.
6. Regulation trousers shall be worn. The black trouser braid or stripe shall be worn by individuals at the rank of Lieutenant and above.

TYPICAL RANKS

(from highest rank to lowest rank):

1. Chief

2. Deputy Chief

3. Captain

4. Lieutenant

5. Sergeant

6. Correction Officer

8. Consider the following situation:

The temperature for the day is expected to stay right around 60 degrees. The date is September 15. According to the preceding passage, if Captain Cross were assigned to outside duty, she should wear a(n):

- A. Eisenhower Jacket, a white, long sleeve shirt and regulation trousers with a black stripe.
- B. Double Breasted Blouse, a navy blue, long sleeve shirt and regulation trousers.
- C. Antron Jacket, a white, long sleeve shirt and regulation trousers with a black braid.
- D. Double Breasted Blouse, a white, short sleeve shirt and regulation trousers with a black braid.

5. INDUCTIVE REASONING

Definition: This is the ability to find a rule or concept that fits the situation. This would include coming up with a logical explanation for a series of events that seem to be unrelated. In addition, this ability involves understanding how a string of objects or events might be connected.

Examples of this ability include:

- coming upon an incident scene and correctly guessing what must have happened from evidence and the state of the scene
- recognizing that the same pattern applies to a series of incidents
- examining a logbook for previous days in order to see if there is some pattern that can be found for a series of events

Techniques: Inductive Reasoning questions require that you notice something common among a series of events or objects. In order to do this, you have to be able to identify the details that are important to answering a question. The majority of questions for Inductive Reasoning will start with a passage which provides you with all the information you will need to answer the question. Scan the passage to get an idea of what it's about and then read the questions. The questions may ask you to identify which parts of the passage are similar or different. For example, there may be a description of four different incidents, and you may be asked which ones might have been committed by the same suspect. This will require you to compare the four descriptions, point-by-point and to note differences that would rule out the same suspect. For example, if a heavy, White male, committed one offense and a thin, Black male committed another offense, they could not have been committed by the same suspect. You might find it useful to compare objects or suspects by asking, "Are they the same or different?" The table below shows how you might compare four suspects to answer this question.

	Suspect Description					
	Height	Weight	Gender	Race	Age	Scars
Offense 1	5'10"	170 lbs	Male	White	30	No
Offense 2	5'3"	120 lbs	Male	White	16	Face
Offense 3	5'8"	155 lbs	Male	Black	26	No
Offense 4	5'9"	165 lbs	Male	White	35	No

From looking at this table, you can be fairly sure that the suspect in Offense 3 was not involved in Offenses 1, 2, or 4 since he was described as Black and the other suspects are White. Also, the suspect in Offense 2 was probably not involved in 1 or 4, because he is too short (5'3") and the other two suspects are described as average in height. On the other hand, the same suspect could have committed Offense 1 and Offense 4, since there are only slight differences in estimated height, weight and age.

Remember, when you are reading the question, identify the pieces of important information. This might include the physical characteristics of a suspect. When considering the example on the next page, compare the suspects in a similar way and ask if they are the same or different.

Example 1:

Correction Officer Crawford received a series of reports from kitchen staff who say they were entering the kitchen just before the morning prep and, each time, witnessed a suspect fleeing the kitchen with a stolen food item. The description of each suspect is as follows:

Report 1 (November 16) - male, White, early 30s, around 5'10", about 180 pounds, dark hair, mustache, one gold earring, black watch, running shoes.

Report 2 (November 20) - male, White, 25-30, about 5'6", around 120 pounds, dark hair, dark glasses, one gold earring, silver bracelet, running shoes.

Report 3 (November 21) - male, White, 40-45, almost 5'10", about 130-140 pounds, dark hair, mustache, one gold earring, black watch, running shoes.

On the morning of November 23rd, another theft occurred from the kitchen. However, in this incident the thief was apprehended by the kitchen staff. The description of the suspect is as follows:

Report 4 (November 23) - male, White, 25-30, 5'10", 175 pounds, dark hair, mustache, one silver earring, black watch, running shoes.

Based on the description given above of the suspects in the first three reports, the suspect in report 4 should also be considered a suspect in report(s):

- A. 1 only.
- B. 1 and 2 only.
- C. 2 and 3 only.
- D. 1, 2, and 3.

Correct Response and Explanation:

The important differences among the suspects in the four reports center around three characteristics -- age, height and weight. Report 4 does not match Report 2, because the suspects differ substantially with respect to height and weight. Report 4 does not match Report 3, because the suspects differ substantially with respect to age and weight. Report 4 does closely match Report 1. Comparing the suspects in the reports allow us to determine the correct answer, A.

Sample Test Questions:

Sample Question 9:

Use the information in the following passage to answer question 9.

Officer Thompson has noticed that in his experience, most of the assaults occur in Housing Units A and B eastern and northern sections, while most gang-related incidents occur in Housing Units C and D, and most drug-related incidents occur in Housing Unit D.

The majority of gang-related incidents take place between 3 a.m. and 7 a.m. Most of the drug-related incidents occur either between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. or between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. Most of the assaults occur between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. or between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.

In addition, the drug-related incidents commonly occur on Mondays and Fridays, the assaults occur on any day from Wednesday through Saturday, and gang-related incidents typically occur on weekday mornings.

9. According to the preceding passage, Officer Thompson most likely would be able to reduce the number of assaults by patrolling:
- A. Housing Unit A between 5 a.m. and 1 p.m.
 - B. Housing Unit A between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
 - C. Housing Unit D between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
 - D. Housing Unit B between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

Sample Question 10:

10. Officer Riggins received a series of reports from inmates who say they saw someone running out of their cell as they were returning from the afternoon movement. In each report, the inmates state that an item was missing from their cell after the incident. The description of each suspect is as follows:

Incident 1: (May 7) - male, Black, early 20s, almost 5'9", about 170 pounds, black hair, tattoo on his upper arm, blue pants and t-shirt.

Incident 2: (May 13) - male, Black, 20-26, about 5'10", around 175 pounds, black hair, tattoo on left hand, tank top, blue pants and sneakers.

Incident 3: (May 15) - male, Black, late teens, about 5'11", around 190 pounds, brown hair, snake tattoos on both forearms and white tank top.

Incident 4: (May 20) - male, Black, 17-21, 6'1"-6'2", about 210 pounds, brown hair, brown pants, a long-sleeve shirt, and no jewelry.

Incident 5: (May 21) - male, Black, 18-20, about 6'7", around 230 pounds, black hair, an earring in the left ear, blue pants and a tank top.

On June 3rd, a suspect was apprehended after being tackled by an inmate whose cell he was fleeing. The description of the suspect is as follows:

Incident 6: (June 3) – male, Black, 23, 5'10", 180 pounds, black hair, a tattoo of a cobra on his bicep, blue pants and a muscle shirt.

Based on the descriptions given above of the suspects in the first five incidents, the suspect in incident 6 should also be considered a suspect in incident:

- A. 1.
- B. 2.
- C. 3.
- D. 5.

B. SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS: ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

The answers to the sample test questions for the six ability areas are listed below. Explanations of the answers follow this list.

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. B | 5. B | 9. D |
| 2. B | 6. A | 10. A |
| 3. C | 7. C | |
| 4. A | 8. A | |

Written Expression questions - 1 and 2.

1. B is the correct answer. It correctly reflects the role of Correction Officers in responding to mental health crises as stated in the passage – to protect inmates in crisis and prevent self-harm or suicide.

Alternative A states that frequently no suicide or self-harm takes place, which is not something that is mentioned in the passage and is therefore incorrect. Alternative C states that the Officer's main goal is to protect the reporting inmates, which is incorrect as the main goal is to protect the inmate about whom the information is being reported. Alternative D states that inmates reporting information in hopes of getting something in return, which again is not something that is mentioned in the passage and is therefore incorrect.

2. The correct answer is B. To identify the correct order, the sentences to be included in the report need to be ordered into the proper time sequence. The clearest clues involve sentences 4 and 2.

Sentence 4 begins "Upon arrival of backup..." Therefore, sentence 4 must separate the actions that occurred prior to the arrival of other officers from those events occurring after backup arriving at the scene. Sentence 2 is the only statement regarding actions prior to backup arriving (i.e., conducting rounds). Thus, sentence 2 must occur first and be followed by sentence 4. Only answer B begins with the sequence 2, 4. In addition, the rest of the sequence (5, 1, 3) is also appropriate.

Written Comprehension questions - 3 and 4.

3. C is the correct answer. As stated in the passage, "The staff doctor reported that a theft occurred overnight while she and the nurse were off work."

Although the information in the passage does not indicate the exact number and type of items taken from the Health Services Unit, Officers Lucas and Gentry did determine that the suspects concentrated their efforts on the narcotics stock.

A- is incorrect, because it states that nothing was stolen. It also states that the Unit was ransacked, but the passage states that no other areas of the unit appeared disturbed.

B- is incorrect, because the wrong items are listed as being stolen.

D- is incorrect, because it states that the door had been left unlocked the night before, which is the opposite of what was reported by the doctor.

4. A is the correct answer. Officer Reigner was the officer who "requested the names of the contractors and the services they performed."

B- is incorrect, Dr. Corneal seemed to answer all of the officers' questions.

C- is incorrect, because Officers Lucas and Gentry searched the Unit. Officer Baker assisted with the questioning of Dr. Corneal.

D- is incorrect, because it is not necessarily true that the suspects were present when the shipment arrived. Other individuals besides the inmates who were present at the time of the shipment, such as other staff and the contractors, knew about the narcotics but may not have been present when the shipment arrived.

Problem Sensitivity questions - 5 and 6.

5. B is the correct answer. The visitor stated that she did NOT have anyone to call for a ride. According to guideline 4, "If the visitor has no way to procure a ride from the facility, police should be called in" According to guideline 3, "If the visitor is able to procure a ride home, the Correction Officer should ensure that the visitor's belongings are confiscated" Officer Kelley confiscated the visitor's belongings even though she did NOT have a way to procure a ride home.
- A- is incorrect, given the fact there was a problem with confiscating the belongings (response B).
- C- is incorrect, because guideline 4 indicated that the police should be called, so this action was NOT problematic.
- D- is incorrect, because nothing in the guidelines indicates that Officer Kelley is responsible for procuring a ride home for the visitor. Officer Kelley's failure to do so is therefore NOT problematic.
6. A is the correct answer, because the only inconsistency between the various descriptions was provided by witness 1. Specifically, witnesses 2, 3, and 4 stated that the second robber's face was hidden by a ski mask/stocking cap. Witness 1 not only failed to mention the mask, but also was the only witness who claimed that this suspect had blonde hair. All other details were confirmed by at least two of the four witnesses.

Deductive Reasoning questions - 7 and 8.

7. C is the correct answer. According to the fourth example listed under offenses, any situation involving hostages would require backup.
- A- does not require backup because the theft was not reported within 30 minutes as indicated by the second example listed under offenses.
- B- does not require backup because the disagreement was only verbal and there was no mention of a physical altercation.
- D- does not require backup because the accident was not fatal as indicated by the third example listed under offenses.
8. A is the correct answer. Based on the six guidelines, the Captain's work assignment, the date and temperature, Captain Cross may wear either the Eisenhower Jacket or the Double Breasted Blouse, a white, long sleeve shirt, and regulation trousers with either the black trouser braid or stripe.
- B- is incorrect, because according to guideline 3, a Captain "will substitute a white shirt" for the navy blue, long sleeve shirt and, according to the guideline 6, the black trouser braid or stripe shall be worn by individuals at the rank of Lieutenant and above.
- C- is incorrect, because according to guideline 1, it is too early in the year (September) and too warm (60 degrees) to wear the Antron Jacket.
- D- is incorrect, because according to guidelines 4 and 5, the Captain cannot wear the short sleeve shirt because the temperature is too cold (60 degrees) and the Captain is serving outside duty.

Inductive Reasoning questions - 9 and 10.

9. When examining the alternatives, they include the Housing Unit and time of day. There is no indication of the day of the week. Thus, the information provided in paragraph 3 is irrelevant in responding to this question. According to the first two paragraphs, assaults occur "in Housing Units A and B" and "between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. OR between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m."

D is the correct answer. It includes both an appropriate Housing Unit and time of day.

C- is incorrect, because it includes the wrong Housing Unit for assaults.

A and B- are incorrect, because they do NOT include any hours of the day when assaults typically occur.

10. A is the correct answer. To answer this question, it is helpful to compare the physical characteristics of the suspects in incidents 1, 2, 3, and 5 (4 is not one of the alternatives provided) and for the suspect in incident 6. Using this method, the other three answers can be eliminated.

B- is incorrect, because the suspect's only tattoo is on the left hand, not on the bicep. Since this suspect was wearing a tank top, a cobra tattoo on the arm would be hard to miss.

C- is incorrect, because the suspect's tattoos are on the forearms, not on the bicep.

D- is incorrect, because the suspect is too tall and heavy (6'7" and 230 pounds).

FINAL WORDS

This Assessment Preparation Guide represents an effort to familiarize you with all aspects of the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam, including the items and logistics, as well as to provide some suggestions for preparation. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive -- we encourage you to engage in whatever additional preparation strategies you believe will enhance your chances of performing effectively on the Correction Officer Head Cook Exam and on the job.