

# **Police Officer Examination Preparation Guide**

*The City of Columbus Police Officer Examination Preparation Guide is created and published by the City of Columbus. Any updates to the contents shall be made exclusively by the City. It is intended solely for use for test preparation for the City of Columbus Entry-Level Police Officer Examination. All versions of the manual, including previously created and those created in perpetuity, which shall also include any language, tables, and images contained therein, are created and provided by the City of Columbus and are protected by copyright. Any other publication, reproduction, electronic storage, transmission, or other use or alteration of the word descriptions, tables, or numbers in this manual without the express written consent of the City of Columbus and/or the Civil Service Commission, is prohibited.*

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Journey to City of Columbus Police Officer .....	5
Phase I: Multiple-Choice Test (MC).....	6
Overview.....	6
A. Contents & Features .....	7
B. Guidance .....	11
C. Study Materials .....	13
Phase II: Writing Sample Test (WS).....	26
Overview.....	26
A. Content & Features .....	27
B. Scoring Dimensions .....	34
C. Guidance.....	35
D. Study Materials .....	37
Phase III: Situational Response Assessment (SRA) .....	55
Overview.....	55
A. Contents & Features .....	56
B. Scored Competencies .....	59
C. Guidance.....	63
D. Study Materials .....	68
E. Earned Preference Points .....	70
General Testing Tips .....	71
Confidentiality.....	71
Final Police Officer Exam Results .....	72

## Introduction

The Columbus Civil Service Commission (CSC) designed this guide to assist you as you prepare to do your best on the *Columbus Police Officer Examination*. The exam is the second step in the overall *Journey to Becoming a City of Columbus Police Officer*.

The *Journey to a City of Columbus Police Officer* is summarized on the next page. The remainder of the guide focuses on the Police Officer Exam. In those sections you will find explanations of each test phase, and what to expect on test day; sample materials and detailed guidance regarding the right or best response; plus preparation advice and performance strategies related to each phase.



When used to the fullest extent, this prep guide will prepare you for the Police Officer exam. For optimal test results, read this guide thoroughly, and use the featured sample materials as recommended.

The Columbus Police Officer Exam consists of the following phases:

- I. Multiple-Choice Exam (MC)
- II. Writing Sample Exam (WS)
- III. Situational Response Assessment (SRA)

The MC and WS are graded on a *pass* or *fail* basis. If you pass the MC and WS, and complete the SRA, only your SRA score (which may include earned points) determines your final Police Officer Test score. Additionally, qualifying veterans' preference points are added to the scores of those who pass all three phases of the Police Officer Test.

### **Additional Materials**

Additional materials related to the information presented in this guide are available on the CSC's Police Officer webpage at <https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police-Officer/>.

## Questions?

Questions regarding information contained within this guide, or about the Police Officer selection process in general, can be directed to Commission staff at (614) 645-0800 or by email at [policefiretesting@columbus.gov](mailto:policefiretesting@columbus.gov).



# The Journey to Becoming a Columbus Police Officer

Complete the following milestones to become a City of Columbus Police Officer.

## 1. Application

- ✓ Apply to take the Police Officer with the City of Columbus.
- ✓ Meet the minimum qualifications and pass the abbreviated background review.

## 2. Police Officer Test

### *Today's Session*

- ✓ Take and pass all three entry-level Police Officer exam phases: 1) Multiple-Choice, 2) Writing Sample, 3) Situational Response Assessment.
- ✓ Submit your Personal History Summary (PHS) and relevant documents.

## 3. Eligible List

- ✓ Take and meet Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) entry physical fitness benchmarks.
- ✓ Participate in a Job Interview.
- ✓ Pass the background standards review: Pre-Employment Investigation, review of the PHS, criminal and court records, and other documentation.
- ✓ Participate in polygraph examination.
- ✓ Civil Service reviews background packet.

## 4. Referral List

- ✓ Chain of command reviews full packet.
- ✓ The Columbus Public Safety Director selects who receives a conditional offer of employment.

## 5. Conditional Offer

- ✓ Take and meet the standards for the medical exams, which consists of a medical exam and stress test.
- ✓ Take the psychological assessments and psychological interview. Pass the psychological exam.

## 6. Final Offer

- ✓ Complete the hiring paperwork and start the Columbus Police Academy.

## 7. Training Academy

- ✓ Complete Columbus Police Academy and meet all OPOTC & Columbus Division of Police (CPD) training standards.
- ✓ Pass OPOTC exit exam and meet OPOTC final physical fitness benchmarks.

## 8. Sworn In

- ✓ Swear in as a Law Enforcement Officer in the State of Ohio.
- ✓ Participate in field training and complete the one-year probationary period.

## Phase I: Multiple-Choice Test (MC)

### Overview

**Purpose.** The multiple-choice (MC) exam is designed to assess knowledge needed to be an effective Columbus police officer. The MC exam tests your ability to spell and properly use common words used in the English language, your ability to comprehend written text, and your ability to understand cardinal (north, south, east, and west) directions and read maps.



**Content.** The MC test consists of up to 100 test questions distributed across four main sections. Those sections are (1) Spelling, (2) Vocabulary, (3) Reading Comprehension, and (4) Map Reading.

**Test day.** On test day, you will receive a test booklet, a scannable answer sheet, scrap paper, pencils and a pen. You will have two hours to complete the exam.

**Scoring.** You will mark your answers on a scannable answer sheet. Each correct answer will be worth one point.

-----  
The remainder of this guide's Phase I section contains the following sub-sections:

- A. Content & Features
- B. Guidance
- C. Study Materials (includes the *List of Words*)

# A. Contents & Features

## On Test Day

On test day you will be seated at your own table, where you will be provided 1) one test booklet, 2) one scannable answer sheet, and 3) scrap paper, pencils, and a pen. You will have two hours to complete the MC exam.

## The Test Booklet

Each test booklet section contains 1) section headers, 2) instructions, 3) numbered test questions, and 4) lettered answer options. Each is illustrated in the example below.

The diagram shows a sample page from a test booklet titled "SPELLING—CORRECT". It includes the following elements:

- Section header:** SPELLING—CORRECT
- Instructions:** Instructions: Each sentence below has a word missing. For each sentence, only one of the words is correct. Read each sentence carefully and then select the choice that is spelled correctly and correctly in the sentence's context.
- Test questions and answer options:**
  - The uncooperative witness was served with a \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. subpeona
    - B. supeona
    - C. subpoena
  - There were five suspects in the line-up, the scar on the third suspect's nose \_\_\_\_\_ this suspect from the other suspects.
    - A. distinguished
    - B. distinwhished

## Scannable Answer Sheet

The MC exam contains up to 100 test questions.

On test day, you will record your answer to each question on the scannable answer sheet. You will be instructed on how to complete the top portion on test day.

Only responses that have been indicated on the scannable answer sheet will be scored.

The image shows a "Scannable Answer Sheet MC" for a "POLICE OFFICER EXAM". It includes a header with "Answer Selection" (Circles) and "Directions" (X's) icons, a "PRINT your EXAM Date and Test Time in the spaces below" instruction, and a "Candidate Name:" field. The main body of the sheet is a grid of 100 numbered circles (1-100) for recording answers. The grid is organized into four columns of 25 questions each.



## **Spelling Section**

The spelling section of the MC exam is designed to assess your ability to correctly spell specific words that are commonly used in the English language. This section contains two types of questions. The first involves identifying the word that is spelled *correctly*. The second involves identifying the word that is spelled *incorrectly*.

Each *correct spelling* MC question involves a sentence completion task. You will be presented with a sentence that is missing one word and asked to identify, amongst the answer options, the word that is spelled correctly *and* that completes the sentence. The *incorrect spelling* MC questions do not involve a sentence-completion task. Rather, you will be presented with a list of words, and asked to identify the word spelled incorrectly.

## **Vocabulary Section**

*Vocabulary* is “the body of words used in a particular language.” The vocabulary section of the MC exam assesses your knowledge of common words you need to know, understand, and use as a police officer.

The vocabulary section contains two types of questions: the first type involves identifying the word that is *most similar* in meaning to a given word, and the second type involves identifying the word that is *most opposite* in meaning to a given word.

## **Reading Comprehension Section**

*Reading comprehension* is “the ability to understand the meaning and application of specific words and statements.” This section assesses your ability to read, understand, and logically apply information presented in written passages. During Police Officer training and while on the job, you will need to be able to read and interpret a wide range of written materials used to help you serve the community to your greatest capacity.

This MC section contains three to eight written passages and one or more questions regarding each passage. Each passage ranges in length from approximately 40 to 1000 words and features people, places, and things familiar to the average person. For each Reading Comprehension question, you are to select the *best* answer based on the passage. During the exam, you may review each passage as often as you wish.

Some of the questions will present a list of statements and ask you to identify which of those is true (or false) based on the passage you just read. Other questions will present

a word or phrase with a list of definitions and ask you to select the definition that best matches how that particular word or phrase is used in the passage.

Some passages will include specific words or phrases less known by most test takers. Those are purposely included in order to assess your ability to figure out what a word or phrase is intended to mean, based on the context. Those words or phrases, even if not directly known, can be figured out using other information provided in the passage.

### **Reading Comprehension Concepts**

Reading comprehension involves *making inferences* and *applying definitions*.

*Inference* is “the ability to use previous knowledge, observation, and logic to reach a conclusion.” Inference questions assess your ability to read a written passage and reach *logical* conclusions about information presented in the passage. While a passage may not state every conclusion you are expected to reach, you can try to identify those conclusions yourself using information that is already in the passage.

Inference works the same way in our everyday lives; thus, you can use your everyday life to build your understanding of how to make sound inferences during this test. For example, when you see a stop sign, you *infer* (i.e., conclude) that you need to stop. You are led to that conclusion by *previous knowledge* (that stop signs indicate where one must stop), and *observation* (you see a stop sign).

*Application* is “the ability to put something into operation,” for example, by applying a general rule or definition to a specific situation. During the MC exam, application means figuring out what a specific word means and then putting that meaning to use in a different situation. Sometimes the *meaning* of a specific word used in a written passage is communicated through repeated use or reference to other persons, places, and things; thus, it may be helpful to reread the passage and search for those cues so you can understand the intended meaning of the word.

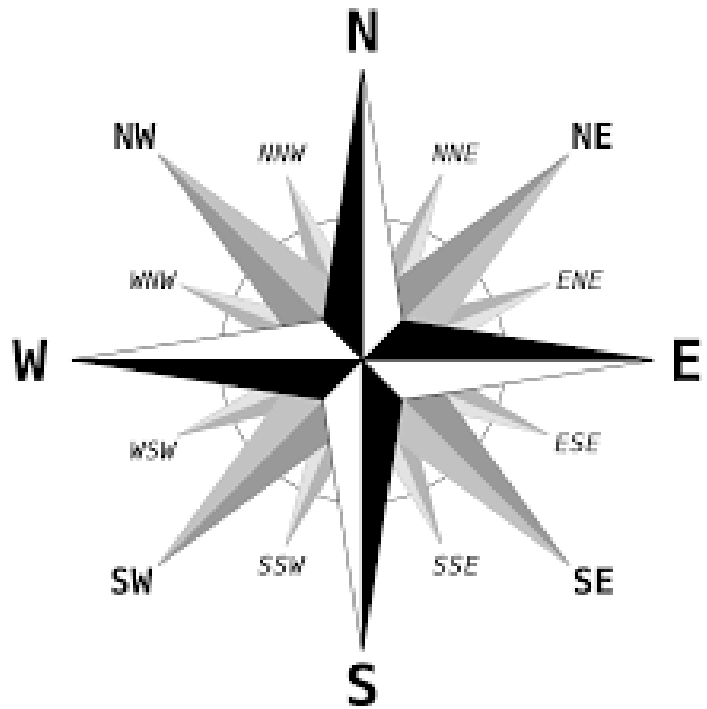
### **Map Reading Section**

This section assesses your knowledge of cardinal directions (north, south, east, and west) and your ability to follow directions and read maps. In this section of the MC test, you will be presented with several maps and one or more questions about each map.

You will need to know and understand the directions *north*, *east*, *south*, and *west*, and be able to locate each of those on a map.

You will also need to be able to understand and follow written instructions that reference north, south, east, and west as related to a particular map.

The *cardinal* directions are the four main points of a compass: north, south, east, and west, which are also known by their first letters: N, S, E, and W. Globally, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.



## B. Guidance

### BEFORE TEST DAY:

1. **Use the sample MC test questions provided in this guide.** Try answering the sample questions *before* you look at the answers. Then, review the answers to see how you did. Identify where you are strongest and where you may need to improve. Then, develop a plan for improving and stick to it.
2. **Study the list of words provided in this guide.** Each test question in the spelling section and in the vocabulary section of the MC exam contains a word from this list. The more words you know how to spell and use in context, the better prepared you will be on test day.

### ON TEST DAY:

1. **Use your MC Test Booklet properly.** Read the instructions, the entire question or prompt, and all answer options related to the question *before* you select an answer for the question. While you may write on your test booklet (e.g., to underline specific items, or mark questions you plan to return to later) you must record your actual answers on the answer sheet. Nothing written in the test booklet will be scored.
2. **Use your MC Answer Sheet properly.** Once you select an answer to a question, find the same question number on the answer sheet. Fill in that answer's lettered circle with a heavy pencil mark.
  - Do not cross out any answers on your answer sheet that you wish to change. Instead, erase the mark made in the lettered circle for that answer, and fill in the lettered circle for the new answer.
  - Do not make unnecessary marks on your answer sheet.
  - Mark just one answer for each question. If multiple answers have been filled in for a particular question, no points will be awarded for that question.
3. **Visualize each reading passage.** Do not try to memorize the reading passages. Instead, visualize the individual elements presented in the passage as you read the passage. Each passage will be about some person(s), place(s), or thing(s). Imagine yourself *in* that place, *with* or *as* those people, *seeing* and *doing* those things.

For example, suppose a reading passage describes a person named Eliza saying green is her favorite color and standing in a room described as blue. Imagine yourself as Eliza, saying the same thing, standing in the same room, seeing the same color. Then, suppose you are presented with the following test question:

Eliza is described as standing in a room. What color is that room?

- A. green
- B. brown
- C. blue

If you visualized each detail *while* you were reading the passage, the answer will likely come to mind more quickly. However, make sure you verify the answer by reviewing the passage again before you mark the answer on your answer sheet.

**4. Be strategic with your allotted time.** Pace yourself so you will have time to go back and check your work. There are no additional points for finishing early.

- Do not be discouraged if you cannot answer a question. Skip it and come back to it later. You may find clues to the answer in subsequent questions.
- If you are running out of time, you can always guess the answers; there is no penalty for guessing.

**TIP:** If you opt to temporarily skip one or more questions, you can mark them in your test booklet so you can quickly identify them when you return to them later—just make sure you skip the same questions on your answer sheet too!

- If time allows after you have answered all of the questions, double-check that the answers in your test booklet match the answers on your answer sheet.
- If you finish early, consider *waiting* to submit your materials until the test is over because if you raise your hand to indicate that you are ready to submit your materials and a monitor then collects those materials, you will not be permitted to view your test booklet or answer sheet again.

## **C. Study Materials**

The following items have been developed to help you prepare for the MC exam.

- List of words
- 20 sample questions
- Answers to sample questions

### **List of Words**

The list of words provides words that will be on the MC test. Each test question in the spelling section and in the vocabulary section contains at least one word from this list.

### **20 Sample Questions**

The series of 20 sample questions includes questions relevant to each section. The series is designed to look much like the test booklet in that it includes *section headers*, *instructions*, *numbered test questions*, and *lettered answer options*.

### **Answers to Sample Questions**

The answers to the sample questions, plus additional guidance, are provided after the sample questions.

### **How to Use the Materials**

Review the MC *Content & Features* and *Guidance* sections to become familiar with the test topics. Study the list of words on the next two pages. Upon completion of your review and study, try answering the sample MC questions. Review the answers to see how you did. Doing so will help establish a baseline you can use to measure your progress as you continue studying.

## List of Words

Some of the key words that you will encounter in the Spelling and Vocabulary sections of the MC test are provided below.

### TIPS

- ✓ *Research* how each is spelled, typically defined, and used in a sentence.
- ✓ *Make your own flash cards.* Search online for “How to study effectively with flash cards” for some useful tips.

abbreviate	conscience	for	moderation	sheer
abet	conscious	forcible	mutual	sight
abrasion	consistent	fore	necessary	since
absolve	conspicuous	four	negligent	site
accept	coroner	frequency	negotiable	situation
accomplice	coward	guilty	observe	sobriety
accordance	cowered	habitual	occasional	specimen
acquired	critical	hear	offender	spontaneous
against	cruiser	heard	omit	statute
aggravated	damaged	helicopter	opportunity	subpoena
aggressor	dangerous	herd	ordinance	substance
alcohol	decent	here	organized	suicide
alias	decision	heroin	parallel	summons
alibi	decrease	homicide	paramedic	surplus
alien	defendant	hospital	peace	surveillance
anonymous	defensive	illiterate	peak	sustain
answered	deliberate	immediate	perishable	synchronize
apparent	delinquent	imminent	personnel	tenants
appearance	derelict	impede	persuade	their
apprehension	descent	implicated	piece	there
argument	described	incident	pique	they're
arrangement	destination	incriminate	plain	thorough
assault	detain	indicator	plaintiff	threw
assure	diagnosed	individual	possess	through

attendant	diligent	inebriation	precinct	ticket
believe	discreet	innocence	prepared	to
biased	discrepancy	insufficient	prevalent	too
boarder	discrete	interfere	primary	trample
border	discrimination	internet	prisoner	transparent
bureau	dispatcher	interpreter	probation	transport
burglary	disregard	interrupted	professional	trivial
buy	dissent	intoxicated	proper	typical
by	distinguished	intravenous	property	undercover
bye	disturbance	investigation	prosecution	vague
cartridge	domestic	irrational	psychotic	vain
ceiling	dual	judgment	pursuit	vane
ceremony	duel	juvenile	quality	vehicle
challenge	ecstasy	knowledgeable	quantity	vein
charge	elusive	laceration	realized	vicinity
choose	embezzlement	larceny	relevant	visible
chose	eminent	latent	residence	warrant
circumstance	encounter	lenient	resident	wary
citation	enforcement	liaison	responsible	weapon
cite	ensure	location	restrained	wear
civilian	epileptic	maneuver	retard	weary
close	estranged	marijuana	right	were
clothes	evidence	market	rite	we're
cocaine	except	maximum	sale	where
collapse	execute	meant	seizure	witnessed
collision	exonerate	meddling	sell	write
committed	extremely	mediate	sense	your
compliant	familiar	merit	separate	you're
comply	fatal	minimum	severely	ze
concurrent	fatality	minority	severity	zir
confirmed	felony	misdemeanor	shear	



## Sample MC Questions

### SPELLING—CORRECT

Instructions: Each sentence below has a word missing. For each sentence, only one of the words is correct. Read each sentence carefully and then select the choice that is spelled correctly in the sentence's context.

1. The uncooperative witness was served with a \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. subpeona  
B. supeona  
C. subpoena
2. There were five suspects in the line-up. The scar on the third suspect's nose \_\_\_\_\_ this suspect from the other suspects.  
A. distinguished  
B. distinwhished  
C. destingished
3. After a stressful year, the teacher longed for a quiet summer \_\_\_\_\_ the pool.  
A. by  
B. bye  
C. buy

### SPELLING—INCORRECT

Instructions: Below, you are provided with three choices. One of the three words is incorrectly spelled. Read each word carefully and select the incorrectly spelled word.

4.  
A. concealed  
B. elliterate  
C. guarantee
5.  
A. straight  
B. pursute  
C. license
6.  
A. caliber  
B. jeopardize  
C. guilty

## VOCABULARY

Instructions: Depending on the requested response, choose the word with the same meaning (or closest to the same meaning) as the capitalized word in the question. Alternatively, choose the word opposite (or closest to the opposite) of the capitalized word.

7. Which word means the same as PERIMETER?

- A. trail
- B. tool
- C. edge

8. Which word means the opposite of CONTRADICT?

- A. agree
- B. oppose
- C. dictate

## READING COMPREHENSION

Instructions: Review each passage then answer each question that follows the passage, based on information that is presented in the passage.

### **“Life Without Parents” (Question 9)**

Juan was 22 years of age. He was going through the most challenging time of his life. Juan’s parents recently passed away as a result of a car accident. During the months that followed their deaths, Juan talked at length to his grandmother. He shared with his grandmother the grief he feels and the difficulty of adjusting to life without his parents. Juan received what he believed was excellent counsel. Juan asked his grandmother how she knew so much. The wise woman said that she suffered some of the same problems as Juan when she was young, and more, she had learned from them.

9. Which statement best fits the grandmother's philosophy?

- A. Stop and notice the simple things.
- B. Easy come, easy go.
- C. Never look for the flaws in a gift.
- D. Experience is the best teacher.

### “Coretta Scott King” (Questions 10 - 13)

In 1948, Coretta Scott King was a young woman hoping to begin a career as an opera singer. Her mentor, Dr. Anderson, encouraged Coretta to go to New York or Boston to study music. Even though she didn't have much money, Coretta applied to the New England Conservatory in Boston and to the Juilliard School in New York. She knew that her parents would help her, but she wanted to pay for her education herself. Coretta decided to move to Boston even though she didn't have the money for her tuition at the New England Conservatory. She hoped to find a job in Boston to pay some of her expenses. Coretta was determined to make it on her own. With the money she had, she bought a train ticket to Boston.

When the train stopped in New York, Coretta called home. Her parents had a surprise for her. They told her that she had received a letter from the Noyes Foundation giving her a six-hundred-and-fifty-dollar scholarship to help pay for her musical training. Finally, she was on her way to becoming an opera singer.

10. Which of the following statements is **not** true about Coretta Scott King's life?

- A. She was determined to study music.
- B. She was unable to pay for her studies with her savings.
- C. She was hopeful that her parents would pay her tuition.
- D. She was encouraged by her mentor, Dr. Anderson.

11. In this selection, the word "conservatory" means:

- A. very clear about one's direction in life
- B. a place for specialized study
- C. a place to build a career
- D. a student center in Boston

12. In this selection, "tuition" is similar to which of the following payments?

- A. buying a ticket to a movie
- B. repairing a friend's roof in exchange for their service of repairing your car
- C. paying a monthly fee to lease a car
- D. paying a skilled computer technician to show how to upgrade your computer

13. Which of the following statements best describes Coretta Scott King's viewpoint on the attainment of her goals?

- A. It is important to seek other people's advice but not their money.
- B. Never trust people who give you money.
- C. Accept advice and support as you pursue your dreams.
- D. Do not ask too much of others; they may disappoint you.

### **“Three Ohioans” (Questions 14 - 17)**

The three Ohioans were eager. It'll be a three-day trip after they get to their destination on the west coast. They know it's no fun if they forget a single essential item. The things they packed were largely determined by necessity. The more they brought, the more they would need to carry. Among the necessities or near-necessities that each of them packed were maps, a compass, permits, writing materials, a first aid kit, their wallets with state identification, credit cards, and emergency medical information, insulated 3-liter hydration bladders, water purification tablets, an 80-liter backpacks, a tent, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, reflective blankets, sunscreen, lip balm, hygiene products, sunglasses with straps, flashlights, storm-proof matches, Swiss Army Knives, duct tape, rope, safety pins, whistle, mirror, a hat, bandana, undergarments, base layer, middle layers, and waterproof outer layers, socks, hand and foot warmers, boots, cookware, and a supply of food. Together, these items weighed between 30 and 40 pounds.

Renaldo Bennett packed extra rations and planned to carry the cooking supplies and tent. He was especially fond of turkey jerky. Necessities for Renaldo included a camera in a waterproof bag with extra batteries and memory cards. Tyra Jackson, who wanted to be ready for anything, carried a bear bell and bear spray. She also packed a shovel and a hatchet. Every time food or drink is consumed and expelled, digging a hole and burying the bio is required. Everything they take on the hike, including trash, will need to come back with them. To safely dip her toes in a stream, she also decided to bring sandals. When it comes to hiking, Chris Costa is a dilettante. For Chris, an hour-long hike was the most time ze spent in the woods. Chris didn't know what to expect. From zir experience with picnics and short hikes, Chris packed extras in case of emergencies, such as aspirin, toilet paper, sanitizer, alcohol wipes, tweezers, gauze, cotton swabs, bug repellent, and anti-chafe balm. Chris couldn't resist leaving without bringing a novel to read. They each planned to bring their cell phones and extra chargers, but they couldn't rely on them.

14. If you were accompanying these people on their trip, and you had run out of your food, who would probably have extra food?

- A. Renaldo Bennett
- B. Chris Costa
- C. Tyra Jackson

15. Who most likely has the tools to assist in removing a splinter from a finger that gets infected?

- A. Renaldo Bennett
- B. Chris Costa
- C. Tyra Jackson

16. Which of the following is probably NOT true according to the passage?

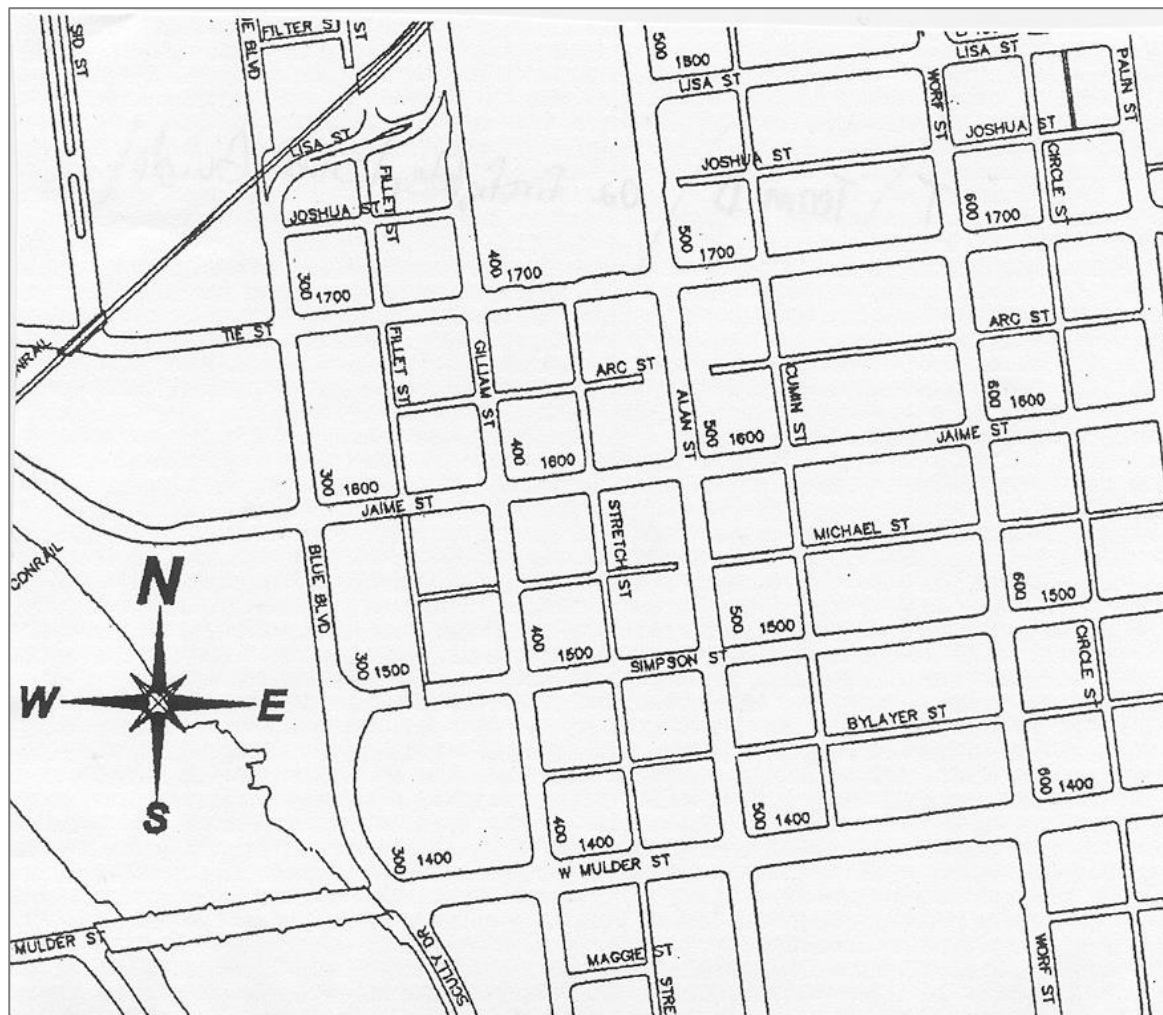
- A. It is important to carry along things that make life a little more comfortable.
- B. Each person must bring something that protects them from wild animals.
- C. The things a person carries can tell you something about who that person is.
- D. Each person has a different idea of what necessities are.

17. Based on this passage, the term dilettante most likely means?

- A. lacks expert skills
- B. is financially dependent
- C. prefers feminine attire
- D. flaunts successes

### MAP READING

Directions: Choose the best answer to each of the questions in this section based on the given map. You are permitted to write or mark on the map.



18. What direction is the intersection of Arc Street and Worf Street from the intersection of Alan Street and Lisa Street?
- A. northeast
  - B. northwest
  - C. southeast
  - D. southwest
19. Which of the following streets is the southernmost street on the map?
- A. Filter Street
  - B. Jamie Street
  - C. Maggie Street
  - D. Sid Street
20. You are traveling west on Simpson Street approaching Gilliam Street and need to take the shortest route to reach W. Mulder Street. Assuming all streets are two-way streets, what direction would you turn onto Gilliam Street?
- A. north
  - B. south
  - C. east
  - D. west

## D. Answers to Sample Questions

**TIP:** Try answering the questions above *before* you review the answers below.

### SPELLING—CORRECT

1. The answer is “C” because that word is spelled *correctly*.
2. The answer is “A” because that word is spelled *correctly*.
3. The answer is “A” because while all three options are spelled correctly, only the word “by” is the *correct* word for the context of this particular sentence.

### SPELLING—INCORRECT

4. The answer is “B” because that spelling is *incorrect*; the correct spelling is “illiterate.”
5. The answer is “B” because that spelling is *incorrect*; the correct spelling is “pursuit.”
6. The answer is “C” because that spelling is *incorrect*; the correct spelling is “guilty.”

### VOCABULARY

7. The answer is “C” because the meaning of “edge” is *most similar* to the meaning of “perimeter.” A *perimeter* is “a line that forms the boundary of an area or object.” A *trail* is a “path or line along the ground or surface or behind someone or something.” A *tool* is a “device used to carry out a particular function’. An *edge* is the ‘outside limit of an object, area, or surface.’
8. The answer is “A” because the meaning of “agree” is *most opposite* to the meaning of “contradict.” To *contradict* means “to assert the opposite of a statement or to be in conflict.” To *agree* means “to have the same opinion about something or to concur or consent.” To *oppose* means “to disapprove of or attempt to prevent or to compete against someone.” To *dictate* means “to lay down authoritatively, control decisively.”

### READING COMPREHENSION

9. The correct answer is “D,” Experience is the best teacher. The grandmother stated that her advice came from suffering some of the same problems and learning from

them. Statements “A,” “B,” and “C” offer specific solutions that Juan’s grandmother might tell her grandson; they do not relate to an overall philosophy that the grandmother may have. “A,” stop and notice the simple things, “B,” easy come, easy go, and “C,” never look for flaws in a gift are specific, and the text does not refer to nor infer these specific ideas.

**10.** The answer is “C.” The text states that Coretta did not want her parents to pay her tuition. It also states that she was so determined to study music that she traveled to Boston, even though she did not know how to pay for her schooling. We also know that she was going to have difficulty covering the cost of her schooling. Finally, the second sentence states that she had a mentor, Dr. Anderson, who encouraged her. Each of these statements can be verified as true or false, based on the text. They are part of the facts of the text.

**Note:** Sample question 10 assesses the ability to comprehend the intended meaning of specific statements.

**11.** The answer is “B.” The numerous references to school, tuition, and becoming an opera singer all suggest that “conservatory” refers to a place for studying something very specific, such as music. Thus answer “A” can be eliminated because a conservatory is a place, not an attitude or outlook. While her singing career may develop as a result of receiving specialized training, the purpose of a conservatory is not to build a career but to train people with musical talent. Alternative “D” may seem like it could be the answer, since it concerns a student structure; however, alternative “D” also indicates “Boston.” Since the word conservatory is used to refer to a type of place does not refer to thus “D” can be eliminated.

**Note:** Sample question 11 assesses the ability to comprehend the intended meaning of an uncommon word.

**12.** The answer is “D.” *Tuition* is “a sum of money charged for teaching or instruction.” All four answer options concern something of value being *given* in exchange for something to be *received*. However, “D” is the only option that presents instruction as the things that will be received.

**Note:** Sample question 12 assesses the ability to apply a definition.

**13.** The answer is “C.” Coretta Scott King had a mentor, and she took the mentor’s advice, so it is reasonable to conclude that she accepted advice. It is also reasonable to conclude that she accepted support because the text says she was on her way to becoming an opera singer right after it indicates that she received a scholarship; and it never says or suggests she did not

**Note:** Sample question 13 assesses the ability to form an inference.



accept the scholarship. Regarding the other answers: there is nothing in the text to suggest that she did not trust her parents or the Noyes Foundation. Nor does the text suggest that she was afraid of disappointment. We do not know why she did not ask her parents for money. There is not enough evidence to conclude that she was afraid that they would disappoint her—or that she would disappoint them.

**14.** The answer is “A.” The keyword in this question is “probably.” Although all three packed food rations, the best alternative is “A” because Renaldo packed extra rations, like turkey jerky. Chris Costa brought extra medical supplies eliminating “B.” In addition to food, Tyra Jackson carried extra supplies to deal with bears and bio waste, eliminating “C.”

**Note:** Sample question 14 assesses the ability to form an inference.

**15.** The best answer is “B.” The keywords in this question are “most likely.” Although all three will carry a first aid kit, it is unclear what is in the kits. Chris Costa will bring extras including aspirin, toilet paper, sanitizer, alcohol wipes, tweezers, gauze, and cotton swabs. The tweezers can be used to remove the splinter, while the other items can be used on the infection. Renaldo Bennet carries extra food and a camera, eliminating “A” as the best response. Tyra Jackson packed extra supplies to deal with bears and bio waste, eliminating “C.”

**16.** The answer is “B.” The fact that people packed comfort items (a camera, novel, and sandals) makes “A” true about the passage and therefore eliminates it as an answer. The things they all packed were not designed to protect from wild animals. Tyra brought something to protect against bears, but Chris and Renaldo did not—which supports “B” as the correct answer. It is true that we can tell something about the people from what they carry (answer “C”). We may conclude that Renaldo is a photographer, Chris likes to read, and Tyra enjoys the water. The fact that this statement is true eliminates it as an answer. Finally, “D” is also true. Each of the three had some necessities in common; however, each had unique items they considered necessities. The question is asking for what is **not** true, so this eliminates “D.”

**Tip:** The words “no”, “not”, “none” can easily change the meaning of a question or statement. If you see those in a question or answer:

*Look for patterns.* In question 16, options A, C, and D follow a pattern: all three are true. The remaining option (B) does not follow that pattern because it is false. The fact that B does not follow the pattern can serve as a clue that it is the correct answer.

*Look for other words that function as absolutes.* In question 16, the word “must” is used in option B to indicate that something is a *requirement*.

**17.** The best answer is “A.” The term dilettante is used to describe Chris Costa. The passage indicates that Chris has limited hiking experience. “For Chris, an hour-long hike was the most time ze spent in the woods. Chris didn’t know what to expect.” Financial difficulties and feminine attire were not discussed in the passage making “B,” and “C” wrong. Further, for “C,” the passage denotes pronouns for Chris as ze and zir, which are gender-neutral terms. “D” is also wrong. Nothing in the passage indicates this trait. Chris likes to read novels, which may mean Chris is introverted rather than a person who would flaunt.

### **MAP READING**

**18.** The answer is “C.” The intersection of Alan Street and Lisa Street is in the very top center portion of the map, while the intersection of Arc Street and Worf Street is toward the top right portion of the map (the northeast portion of the map). The intersection of Arc Street and Worf Street is further south and further east of the intersection at Alan Street and Lisa Street.

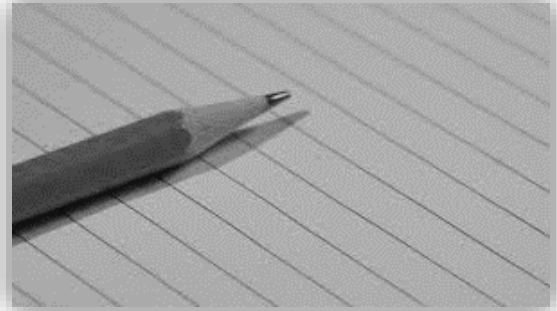
**19.** The answer is “C.” Maggie Street is a street that runs east to west, is located toward the very bottom of the map, and is the southernmost street of the four listed. Filter Street and Jamie Street both run east to west. Jamie Street is toward the center of the map. Filter Street and Sid Street are in the top left corner of the map. Sid street runs north to south but does not extend south past the center of the map.

**20.** The answer is “B.” Simpson Street runs east and west and is north of W. Mulder Street, which also runs east and west. Therefore, to take the shortest route from Simpson Street to W. Mulder Street, you would need to turn south onto Gilliam Street.

## Phase II: Writing Sample Test (WS)

### Overview

**Purpose.** The Writing Sample (WS) is designed to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities in the area of written expression. Police officers routinely document information collected through visual and verbal communication. The WS exam tests your ability to gather such information and communicate it in written form.



**Content.** The WS test consists of a single video-based scenario. The scenario involves an officer on the scene of an incident, collecting information for an incident report from one or more witnesses.

The WS test will involve just one incident; that incident will be revealed on test day. The five types of incidents that could be featured on test day include *assault, hit and run motor vehicle, missing person, property destruction, and shoplifting*.

**Test day.** On test day, you will receive an incident handout, an incident report test booklet, scrap paper, pencils, and a pen. Then you will watch an incident video; once the video is shown, you will have one hour to complete the incident report test booklet.

**Scoring.** Your response will be written in a test booklet, and scored by trained graders.

-----  
The remainder of this guide's Phase II section contains the following sub-sections:

- A. Content & Features
- B. Scoring Dimensions
- C. Guidance
- D. Study Materials

## A. Content & Features

### On Test Day

On test day you will be seated at your own table. You will be provided 1) one incident handout, 2) one incident report test booklet, and 3) scrap paper, pencils, and a pen.

First you will view an *incident video* and take notes. Once the video ends you will complete the *incident report test booklet*. You will be permitted to refer to the *incident handout* while watching the video, and while completing the incident report.

You will have one hour to complete the incident report test booklet.

### Incident Video

A sample incident video is posted to the CSC website. A visual snapshot of an early scene in the sample incident video is provided below for illustration purposes.

The incident video will portray a simulated interview with a caller or witness, conducted by a Columbus Police Officer. The video will portray the officer gathering information from the caller or witness for an incident report.

During the *actual* test incident video, the video narrator will describe *you* as the second officer on scene, responsible for writing the Incident Report.

Your task while watching the video will be to write down any details that are being provided by the witness(es) shown on screen.



## Incident Handout

A visual snapshot of the incident handout is provided below for illustration purposes. A full-sized sample incident handout is in the *Study Materials* section.

The incident handout contains the following sections:

1. Incident type
2. Scenario Summary
3. Relevant Information

Additional information about the sections is provided on the following pages.

**SAMPLE Incident Handout**

**Incident Type**  
Missing Person

**Scenario Summary**  
You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.

The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.

**Relevant Information**  
A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be, and their absence may have been involuntary or there is the possibility of danger.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for caller and witness/family member, if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Caller's relation to missing person
- Location where missing person was last seen
- Missing person's place of employment or schooling
- Date and time where missing person was last seen or range of time, if exact is not available
- Sequence of events
- Description of missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, sex, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, and clothing)
- Does missing person normally stay in contact with parties involved?
- Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved

## **Scenario Summary Section**

The Scenario Summary section provides specific details regarding the actual incident being reported in the incident video. Below is an example of what you might find in the Scenario Summary section if the incident concerned a Missing Person—a full sample of a *Missing Person* incident is provided in the *Study Materials* section.

*You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.*

*The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.*

## **Relevant Information Section**

The Relevant Information section indicates the specific information that needs to be included in the incident report; thus the content in the Relevant Information section will depend on the type of incident being featured in the incident video.

The five types of incidents that could be featured in the incident video are:

- Assault
- Hit and Run Motor Vehicle
- Missing Person
- Property Destruction
- Shoplifting

Below is what you would find in the Relevant Information section for each type of incident.

### **“Assault” Relevant Information Section**

An Assault Incident Report is filed when someone causes or attempts to cause physical harm to another person.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for the caller, witness, and victim (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Address of occurrence
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Description of suspect(s) if known (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color and, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Description of physical evidence (marks or bruises, weapons, video)
- Sequence of events
- Can the caller, victim, or witness(es) identify suspect(s)?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

### **“Hit and Run Motor Vehicle” Relevant Information Section**

A Hit and Run Motor Vehicle Incident Report is filed regarding anyone who causes an accident and leaves before help arrives; this is usually a vehicle driver who flees from the scene of an accident in which they are involved.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if the exact time is not available
- Road conditions at the time of the accident
- The posted speed limits
- Relevant information for the caller, victim, and witness(es) (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- License plate(s) of vehicle(s) involved in the incident
- Description(s) of the vehicle(s) involved (year, make, model, color, and license plate #)
- Description of suspect(s) (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color and, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Sequence of events
- Witness description of incident and driver of hit-skip vehicle
- Can the caller, victim, or witness(es) identify the suspect(s)?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

### **“Missing Person” Relevant Information Section**

A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be. Their absence may have been involuntary, or there is the possibility of danger.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for the caller, witness, family member (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security numbers)
- Caller's relation to the missing person
- Location where the missing person was last seen
- Missing person's place of employment or schooling
- Date and time where the missing person was last seen or range of time, if the exact time is not available
- Sequence of events
- Description of the missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color, and clothing)
- Does the missing person usually stay in contact with the parties involved?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

### **“Property Destruction” Relevant Information**

A Property Destruction Report is filed when damage to property, in any degree, results in loss of its value or interferes with its use or enjoyment. This does not include wear and tear by regular use.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Known information for the victim and witness(es) (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- If a vehicle is involved, the description of the vehicle (year, make, model, color, and license plate #)
- Determine if the property is insured
- Specific damage to property and value of the damage
- Sequence of events
- Information provided by the witness(es)
- Description of suspect(s) (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Does the victim wish to prosecute?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties



## **“Shoplifting” Relevant Information Section**

A Shoplifting Incident Report is filed regarding any unlawful taking of property from a retail establishment.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Address of occurrence
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Relevant information for caller, victim, and witness(es) if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Description of how suspect entered and/or exited the building (points of entry/exit and any evidence of each)
- Description of any stolen property (estimated value of stolen property including prices and serial numbers if available)
- Description of suspect(s) if known (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Description of any evidence at scene
- Sequence of events
- Can the caller/victim/witness(es) identify suspect(s)?
- Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved

## Incident Report Test Booklet

The Incident Report contains a *Form* section, and a *Narrative* section. A visual snapshot of each is below. Full-sized copies are in the *Study Materials* section.

### Form Section

The Form section of the Incident Report contains four sections and several underlined blank spaces per section.

In each blank space, you are to write the specific information that was provided during the video.

If a piece of requested information is not known or was never provided in the video, **you must write “unknown” in that space to receive credit for that answer.**

Incident Report – Form Section

Provide an answer in each blank space shown below. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write “unknown” in that space.

**INCIDENT INFORMATION**

INCIDENT # _____	DATE OF DISPATCH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/28/05)</small>	TIME OF DISPATCH _____ <small>(ex. 9:00 AM)</small>
OFFICER BADGE # _____	PARTNER BADGE # _____	PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT _____
STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____

**CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION**

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/05)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
PRIMARY PHONE _____	OTHER PHONE _____	

**WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION**

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/05)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
PRIMARY PHONE _____	OTHER PHONE _____	

**MISSING PERSON INFORMATION**

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
AGE _____	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____	
STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
GENDER _____	RACE _____	HEIGHT _____ <small>(ex. 5'8" in)</small>
WEIGHT _____ <small>(Pounds)</small>	EYE _____ <small>(Color - ex. brown, blue)</small>	HAIR _____ <small>(Color - ex. black, brown)</small>
PRIMARY PHONE _____	OTHER PHONE _____	
OTHER DESCRIPTION _____		

### Narrative Section

The Narrative section contains three lined pages. Your Narrative must be written on the lines provided across those pages. Nothing written outside those lines will be scored.

You are not required to fill all three pages. As shown in the Samples section, it is possible for a Narrative response to be highly effective and not use all three pages.

Incident Report – Narrative Section

Your response should be accurate, complete, concise, and well-organized, and provide proper grammar, spelling, word usage, and sentence structure. Specific information that you write in the Form above (e.g., date of birth, SSN #, address, phone number, race, etc.) does not need to be repeated below, unless it is needed for individual names. Refer to the incident handout to ensure you include all information in your response.

Narrative (continued)

Incident Report – Narrative Section

Narrative (continued)

Incident Report – Narrative Section

Narrative (continued)

2

3

4

## **B. Scoring Dimensions**

Your response will be scored in two dimensions: 1) information gathering, and 2) writing skill. Your response will be scored by trained graders.

For *information gathering*, graders will use a checklist to assess the completeness and accuracy of your report. For *writing skill*, graders will use a scale to assess your organization, spelling, grammar, word choice/usage, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization. Below are key questions the graders must consider as they score.

### **Information Gathering (relevant to the Form section)**

Completeness:

- What quantity of relevant information provided in the video is in the report?
- Is the Form section complete? If the report calls for information that was never provided in the video, is the word “unknown” written in those Form fields?
- Is the Narrative section complete? Has all information relevant to the incident, yet not called for in the Form section, been included in the Narrative section?

Accuracy:

- Is each item filled in and written correctly?
- Is the information accurate and specific?

### **Writing Skill (relevant to the Narrative section)**

Organization and Clarity:

- How well are the facts organized into a logical or meaningful order?
- Is the Narrative organized in a way that makes it easy to understand?
- Is the word choice descriptive, specific, and clear?
- Are the appropriate words used?

Writing Mechanics:

- Are sentences complete and adequately constructed?
- Are sentences punctuated appropriately (no run-on sentences, comma splices, or fragments)?
- Are words spelled correctly?
- Is correct grammar used?
- Are words in the correct tense?
- Are words capitalized correctly?

## C. Guidance

### BEFORE TEST DAY:

1. **Study the five incident types explained in this guide.** CSC will provide you an Incident Handout on test day. Studying the different types before test day may help you on test day to reduce anxiety and be more attentive to key information presented during the video.
2. **Study the two WS scoring dimensions explained in this guide.** Review and familiarize yourself with each dimension so you can understand what the graders will be looking for when they grade your response.
3. **Study the list of words in this guide.** Some of the words on that list will be highly relevant in your narrative response. The more words you know how to spell and use in context, before test day, the fewer words you will need to look up on test day while you are writing your response.
4. **Utilize the sample materials provided in this guide.** The best way to utilize the sample materials is to (1) review the *sample materials checklist*, review the *sample handout*, (2) watch the *sample video*, (3) complete the *sample incident report*, and then (4) use the *example of a passing report*, *example of a failing report*, and other information provided in this guide to assess your response.

A checklist that covers the details involved in using the sample materials is provided in the *Study Materials* section. Use that checklist to ensure that you are making the most of the time you have to prepare for this exam.

5. **Turn your weaknesses into strengths.** Identify where you need to improve: When you watched the sample incident video, did you miss anything when you took notes? Did you lose focus during the video? Did you miss any instructions?

Look for news and videos that feature someone explaining a past event. Listen, take notes regarding the details, and develop a summary with those details.

Ask someone with excellent writing skills to review your response for spelling and grammar, or type your response and use an online grammar and spelling checker.

## ON TEST DAY:

1. **Bring a non-electronic dictionary and/or thesaurus.** You will be permitted to refer to a non-electronic dictionary and thesaurus while you complete the incident report—but those will not be provided, so it is up to you to bring them to the test.
2. **While you watch the video:** Listen for answers to “who, what, when, where, why, how” questions since a good incident report will generally cover all six:
  - Who (witnesses, victims, suspects, etc.) is directly involved in the incident?
  - What happened? What instructions did the officer give the involved persons?
  - When did it happen? When did the officer (you) take the report?
  - Where did it happen? Where did the officer (you) take the report?
  - Why did it happen?
  - How did it happen?

Note any conflicting or inconsistent information provided. If conflicting information is given, include all accounts of the incident and indicate who provided each one.

3. **While you fill out the incident report’s Form section:**
  - Refer to the incident handout to ensure you include all necessary details.
  - Complete the entire form section neatly, accurately, and legibly. If the graders cannot read your handwriting, you will not get credit.
  - Provide an answer in each blank space provided. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write “unknown” in that space.
4. **While you fill out the incident report’s Narrative section:**
  - Develop a brief outline on the notepaper first so you can see how the information looks in terms of organization *before* you write in the test booklet.
  - Refer to the incident handout to ensure you include all necessary details.
  - You may bring and use a non-electronic dictionary and/or thesaurus. However, you may not write in them, nor share them with other candidates.
  - What you write must fit onto the three lined pages provided in that section.
  - Include any relevant information that you did not include on the form.
  - Use paragraphs and complete sentences, not outlines or bulleted points.
  - Check for accuracy, completeness, and organization.
  - Check for proper spelling and grammar.
  - Check for appropriate word choice and usage.
  - Check for proper capitalization, sentence structure, and punctuation.

## D. Study Materials

This section contains the following materials. They have been developed to help you prepare and practice for the WS exam. The sample materials and both examples involve a *missing person* incident.

- Practice checklist
- A sample incident video
- A sample incident handout
- A sample blank incident report test booklet
- An example of a “passing” incident report + feedback
- An example of a “failing” incident report + feedback

The table below shows where each item can be found. Items noted as available in this prep guide begin on the following page.

The items noted as available on the CSC webpage can be found at:

<https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police-Officer/>.

Item	In this guide	On CSC webpage
Practice checklist	✓	
Sample incident video		✓
Sample incident handout	✓	✓
Sample blank incident report	✓	✓
Example of “passing” incident report	✓	
Example of “failing” incident report	✓	

### **How to Use the Materials**

First, review and use the Practice Checklist provided on the next page so you can be sure that you are using each item to your best advantage.

Then, review the sample incident handout, view the sample incident video, and complete the sample incident *before* you review the examples of passing and failing incident reports. Doing so will help you establish a baseline that you can use to measure your progress as you continue practicing.

## WS Practice Checklist

### Before you watch the sample video:

- Review the “Guidance” section above to ensure that you are familiar with the test features and the scoring dimensions beforehand.
- Assemble (1) a copy of the sample *incident handout*, (2) a blank copy of the sample *incident report* i.e. test booklet, (3) several blank note pages, (4) a pen or pencil, (5) a clock or timer, and (6) a *non-electronic* dictionary and thesaurus.
- Prepare a clock or timer to count down for one hour, or use a clock for reference: write down the time you started and then be sure to stop an hour later.

### While you watch the sample video:

- Listen for answers to “who, what, when, where, why, how” questions.
- Take notes; note any conflicting or inconsistent information, and who provided it.

### When you complete the sample incident report Form section:

- Refer to the incident handout and your notes to ensure that you include all necessary details.
- Provide an answer in each blank space provided. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write “unknown” in that space.
- Complete the entire form section neatly, accurately, and legibly.

### When you complete the sample incident report Narrative section:

- Develop a brief outline on the notepaper first, to ensure good organization.
- Refer to the incident handout and your notes to ensure that you include all necessary details.
- Reference the non-electronic dictionary and thesaurus as needed.
- Only write on the three lined-pages provided in the Narrative section.
- Include any relevant information that you did not include in the Form section.
- Use paragraph form and complete sentences, not outlines or bulleted points.
- Check for accuracy, completeness, and organization.
- Check for proper spelling and grammar, and appropriate word choice and usage.
- Check for proper capitalization, sentence structure, and punctuation.

### Evaluate your written response:

- Replay the sample video after you complete the report to identify missed details.
- Compare your report to the examples—which does yours most match?
- Review the feedback regarding each example; take note of items that apply to your own response, so you can identify what may need to be improved.
- Use the questions in the *Scoring Dimensions* section to evaluate what you wrote.

# **SAMPLE Incident Handout**

## **Incident Type**

Missing Person

## **Scenario Summary**

You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.

The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.

## **Relevant Information**

A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be and their absence may have been involuntary or there is the possibility of danger.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for caller and witness/family member, if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Caller's relation to missing person
- Location where missing person was last seen
- Missing person's place of employment or schooling
- Date and time where missing person was last seen or range of time, if exact time is not available
- Sequence of events
- Description of missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, and clothing)
- Does missing person normally stay in contact with parties involved?
- Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved



## SAMPLE Incident Report – Form Section – *Missing Person*

Provide an answer in each blank space shown below. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write “unknown” in that space.

### INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT # _____	DATE OF DISPATCH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	TIME OF DISPATCH _____ <small>(ex. 9:00 AM)</small>
OFFICER BADGE # _____	PARTNER BADGE # _____	PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT _____
STREET ADDRESS _____		CRUISER# _____
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____

### CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS _____		GENDER _____
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
PRIMARY PHONE _____		OTHER PHONE _____

### WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS _____		GENDER _____
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
PRIMARY PHONE _____		OTHER PHONE _____

### MISSING PERSON INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____	FIRST NAME _____	
AGE _____	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____	
STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP CODE _____
GENDER _____	RACE _____	HEIGHT _____ <small>(ex. 5 ft 8 in)</small>
WEIGHT _____ <small>(Pounds)</small>	EYE _____ <small>(Color - ex. brown, blue)</small>	HAIR _____ <small>(Color - ex. black, brown)</small>
PRIMARY PHONE _____		OTHER PHONE _____
OTHER DESCRIPTION _____ _____		







## Example of a "Passing" Report

Feedback regarding the example below is provided after the example.

INCIDENT INFORMATION	
INCIDENT # <u>143</u>	DATE OF DISPATCH <u>10/31/22</u> TIME OF DISPATCH <u>6:00 PM</u> <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small> <small>(ex. 9:00 AM)</small>
OFFICER BADGE # <u>214</u>	PARTNER BADGE # <u>324</u> PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT <u>5B6</u>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Drive</u>	CRUISER# <u>50</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u> ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION	
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Mary</u>
DATE OF BIRTH <u>unknown</u>	SOCIAL SECURITY # <u>unknown</u> <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small> <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Drive</u>	GENDER <u>F</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u> ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE <del>277-0020</del> <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>595-33025</u>

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION	
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Hailey</u>
DATE OF BIRTH <u>unknown</u>	SOCIAL SECURITY # <u>unknown</u> <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small> <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Drive</u>	GENDER <u>F</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u> ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>unknown</u>

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION	
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Hannah</u>
AGE <u>17</u>	SOCIAL SECURITY # <u>331-25-9941</u>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Drive</u>	
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u> ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
GENDER <u>F</u>	RACE <u>W</u> HEIGHT <u>5ft 5in.</u> <small>(ex. 5 ft 8 in)</small>
WEIGHT <u>125</u>	EYE <u>brown</u> HAIR <u>long brown</u> <small>(Pounds)</small> <small>(Color - ex. brown, blue)</small> <small>(Color - ex. black, brown)</small>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>595-2424</u>
OTHER DESCRIPTION <u>last seen wearing blue jeans, a pink t-shirt, purple tennis shoes, a gray coat and red glasses.</u>	

**NOTE:** The Narrative example shown below was purposefully designed to be two pages long, thus the last *blank* page of the test booklet is not included below.

On October 31, 2022, my partner and I arrived at the residence at 6:11 PM. We responded to a missing persons call. We interviewed Mrs. Mary Russell and her daughter, Hailey Russell.

Mrs. Russell told us she was worried because her daughter Hannah did not return home from school today. She was expected to be home by 4:30 PM. Hannah was last seen at home around 7:00 AM this morning. Hannah is a senior at Central High School. Mrs. Russell called the school and was told Hannah attended all of her classes today.

Hannah rode to school with her twin sister, Hailey. Hailey said she came home at 2:30 PM, but Hannah stayed after school to help another band student. Hannah should have been done by 3:30 PM. Hannah was supposed to call Hailey when she was ready to be picked up. When ~~Hannah~~ ~~Hannah~~ Hannah didn't call by the time Mrs. Russell got home, Hailey drove to the school. Hannah was not there. ~~November~~ (continued)

Hannah is not answering her cell phone.  
~~Hailey~~ Mrs. Russell and Hailey stated that Hannah is very responsible. It is uncharacteristic of Hannah not to contact either of them. Mrs. Russell provided a current photograph of Hannah. Mrs. Russell agreed to a search of her home, in case Hannah came home without their knowledge. Hannah was not found in the home.

We told Mrs. Russell that we would enter Hannah's information into our system, air her physical description, and follow-up with the high school. We gave Mrs. Russell our business cards. We asked her to contact us if she heard from Hannah or had any questions.

## **General Feedback Regarding “Passing” Example**

### **Regarding the Form section:**

- The form is complete—meaning all 50 spaces are filled in with an answer.
- The form follows instructions—the word “unknown” is written to indicate that that information was never provided in the video.
- The information is accurate—meaning every answer (aside from those that say *unknown*) matches what was stated by the witness in the video.
- Each answer is properly spelled and capitalized.
- Each answer is legible, and any answer that has been corrected has been *legibly* marked out and over-written.

### **Regarding the Narrative section:**

- The response is divided into meaningful paragraphs.
- The response displays proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and appropriate word choice/usage.
- The provided information is accurate and well-organized.
- Each item of information included in the Form section that is also repeated in the Narrative section clearly contributes to the clarity of the Narrative response. For instance, in the example above, the names of the caller, witnesses, and missing person are indicated; those details help graders know who is being referenced.
- The author used last and first names, and did so for each person; this helped clarify who the author was discussing. In addition, when the author used pronouns (she, her), it was clear to whom the author was referring.

### **In summary:**

A passing Incident Report includes all of the relevant information. The narrative is organized and written so that a reader who did not watch the video can understand what happened. The report answers who, what, when, where, why, and how the incident occurred.

**NOTE:** You will not lose points for scratched-out words, over-written information, or other marks, so long as answers are still legible.



## Example of a "Failing" Report

Feedback regarding the example below is provided after the example.

INCIDENT INFORMATION		
INCIDENT # <u>143</u>	DATE OF DISPATCH <u>10/31/22</u> <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	TIME OF DISPATCH <u>0:00</u> <small>(ex. 9:00 AM)</small>
OFFICER BADGE # <u>214</u>	PARTNER BADGE # <u>324</u>	PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT <u>5130</u>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Road</u>		CRUISER# <u>50</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION		
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Mary</u>	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS <u>same</u>	GENDER <u>F</u>	
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>595-3352</u>	

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION		
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Hannah</u>	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS <u>same</u>	GENDER <u>F</u>	
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE _____	

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION		
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Hailey</u>	
AGE <u>17</u>	SOCIAL SECURITY # <u>331-25-9941</u>	
STREET ADDRESS <u>same</u>		
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
GENDER <u>F</u>	RACE <u>white</u>	HEIGHT <u>5ft 5in</u> <small>(ex. 5 ft 8 in)</small>
WEIGHT <u>around 120</u> <small>(Pounds)</small>	EYE <u>brown</u> <small>(Color - ex. brown, blue)</small>	HAIR <u>brown</u> <small>(Color - ex. black, brown)</small>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>595-2424</u>	
OTHER DESCRIPTION <u>jeans, t-shirt, tennis shoes, coat and sunglasses</u>		

**NOTE:** The Narrative example shown below was purposefully designed to be just one page long, thus the last two *blank* pages are not included below.

My partner and myself met the Russell's about a missing person. Mrs. Russell last seen Hailey this morning when she wasn't home after school they called the police. The other daughter said she was supposed to pick up her sister after she was done with school stuff. When the mom got home she tells her that the sister never called for a ride, the mom was worried. When Hailey went to school she was wearing jeans, a t-shirt, tennis shoes, and red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next day she's probably studying with friends. In case the girl was home we looked around the residents but she was gone. Me and my partner gave them our bussiness cards and enter Hailey's information into system. We told the Russel's we would follow up. Mrs. Russell contacted the school and was told Hailey attended classes today.

**Failing Example - Top Half of Form, with Feedback**

"P.M." is missing

"Road" is incorrect  
Should be "Drive"

All spaces must be filled in

INCIDENT INFORMATION		
INCIDENT # <u>143</u>	DATE OF DISPATCH <u>10/31/22</u> <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	TIME OF DISPATCH <u>6:00</u> <small>(ex. 9:00 AM)</small>
OFFICER BADGE # <u>214</u>	PARTNER BADGE # <u>324</u>	PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT <u>5130</u>
STREET ADDRESS <u>3146 Mayfair Road</u>		CRUISER# <u>50</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION		
LAST NAME <u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME <u>Mary</u>	
DATE OF BIRTH _____ <small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>	SOCIAL SECURITY # _____ <small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>	
STREET ADDRESS <u>same</u>		GENDER <u>F</u>
CITY <u>Columbus</u>	STATE <u>OH</u>	ZIP CODE <u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE <u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE <u>595-3352</u>	

Actual address must be filled in

Incorrect phone number  
Should be 595-3325

**Failing Example - Bottom Half of Form, with Feedback**

Actual address must be filled in

All spaces must be filled in

"Hannah" is incorrect  
Should be "Hailey"

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION			
LAST NAME	<u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME	<u>Hannah</u>
DATE OF BIRTH	_____	SOCIAL SECURITY #	_____
	<small>(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)</small>		<small>(ex. 123-45-6789)</small>
STREET ADDRESS	<u>same</u>	GENDER	<u>F</u>
CITY	<u>Columbus</u>	STATE	<u>OH</u>
		ZIP CODE	<u>43221</u>
PRIMARY PHONE	<u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE	_____

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION			
LAST NAME	<u>Russell</u>	FIRST NAME	<u>Hailey</u>
AGE	<u>17</u>	SOCIAL SECURITY #	<u>331-25-9941</u>
STREET ADDRESS	<u>same</u>		
CITY	<u>Columbus</u>	STATE	<u>OH</u>
		ZIP CODE	<u>43221</u>
GENDER	<u>F</u>	RACE	<u>white</u>
		HEIGHT	<u>5ft 5in</u>
			<small>(ex. 5 ft 8 in)</small>
WEIGHT	<u>around 120</u>	EYE	<u>brown</u>
	<small>(Pounds)</small>		<small>(Color - ex. brown, blue)</small>
		HAIR	<u>brown</u>
			<small>(Color - ex. black, brown)</small>
PRIMARY PHONE	<u>277-0020</u>	OTHER PHONE	<u>595-2424</u>
OTHER DESCRIPTION	<u>jeans, t-shirt, tennis shoes, coat</u>		
	<u>and sunglasses</u>		

Incorrect

Actual address must be filled in

"Hailey" is incorrect  
Should be "Hannah"

Inaccurate or too vague  
Vague: "blue jeans" would be better  
Inaccurate: Red glasses is correct

## Failing Example - Top Half of Narrative, with Feedback

Wrong pronoun  
Should be "I"

"Seen" here is incorrect grammar  
Should be "saw"

Second sentence is a run on sentence  
A period should go after "school"

"Hailey" is incorrect  
Should be "Hannah"

My partner and myself met the Russel's about a missing person. Mrs. Russell last seen Hailey this morning when she wasn't home after school they called the police. The other daughter said she was supposed to pick up her sister after she was done with school stuff. When the mom got home she tells her that the sister never called for a ride, the mom was worried. When Hailey went to school she was wearing jeans, a t-shirt, tennis shoes, and red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next

"She" is not specific enough here  
Actual name would be better

Wrong verb tense  
Should be "told"

"Stuff" is too vague  
The actions need to be specified

This is a comma splice  
The comma can be replaced with a period

Missing comma

## Failing Example - Bottom Half of Form, with Feedback

Missing period; a period should be placed after "day"

"Red sunglasses" is incorrect; should be "red glasses"

The witness never reported that she had observed her studying with friends, thus the statement "She's probably studying with friends" is a speculation, not an observation. An incident report must detail what was actually observed or reported.

Incorrect; should be "residence"

red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next day she's probably studying with friends. In case the girl was home we looked around the residents but she was gone. Me and my partner gave them our bussiness cards and enter Hailey's information into system. We told the Russel's we would follow up. Mrs. Russell contacted the school and was told Hailey attended classes today.

"Me" is the incorrect pronoun here  
Correct would be "my partner and I"

Incorrect spelling  
Should be spelled "business"

The information in the last sentence could be placed earlier in the narrative for more effective organization

Incorrect spelling and punctuation  
Apostrophe not needed  
Should be spelled "Russells"

## **General Feedback Regarding “Failing” Example**

### **Regarding the Form section:**

- Certain answers are inaccurate or insufficient, and many fields are left blank. For instance, the time of dispatch is missing the “p.m.”
- Some of the required form information was given on the Scenario Summary and Relevant Information sheet. The candidate could have improved their score by using the Scenario Summary information in the handout.
- Several fields are left blank. In some cases, the video did not include the information; the candidate could have improved their score by following instructions and writing “unknown” on those blank lines.
- The candidate mixed up the names of the two daughters on the form and then failed to indicate the daughters’ names in the narrative. The fabrication, speculation, erroneous information, and lack of information suggest the author did not stay focused while watching the video. Improved focus, listening skills, and notetaking during the video may have significantly improved this response.

### **Regarding the Narrative section:**

- It is not divided into paragraphs.
- It displays incorrect spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization; and inappropriate word choice/usage.
- It contains inaccurate information.
- It is vague and lacks relevant details.
- It contains fabricated information.
- Some of the required form information was provided in the Scenario Summary section of the Incident handout. The candidate could have improved their score by using that information.

### **In summary:**

The lack of paragraphs, poor word choice, and lack of proper punctuation contributed to a confusing narrative. The author could have created an outline before drafting the narrative to organize their thoughts and create meaningful paragraphs. After writing the draft, the author could have improved their score by reviewing their narrative and making corrections before submitting the report.

## Phase III: Situational Response Assessment (SRA)

### Overview

**Purpose.** The Situational Response Assessment (SRA) is designed to assess skills, knowledge, and abilities that police officers need in situations that require interacting with other people such as citizens, supervisors, subordinates, co-workers, etc.

The SRA is not designed to assess your knowledge of Columbus Division of Police (CPD) practices, policies, or procedures. That knowledge is learned on the job, during training. Thus you do not need to know CPD practices, policies, or procedures to do well on the SRA, as that kind of knowledge is not in the SRA scoring key.



**Content.** The SRA is a video-based exam. The SRA consists of six test scenarios. Each scenario features a situation commonly encountered by police officers. The entire SRA will be presented as a single pre-recorded video.

**Test day.** On test day you will take the SRA in an individual test room. Your response will be video-recorded so it can be scored at a later date by trained raters.

**Scoring.** Your response to each scenario will be scored on three competencies: situational awareness, social intelligence, and problem resolution.

**Earned preference points.** Additional credit on the SRA may be available for proficiency in one or more pre-designated languages.

---

The remainder of this Phase III section contains the following sub-sections:

- A. Content & Features
- B. Scored Competencies
- C. Guidance
- D. Study Materials
- E. Earned Preference Points

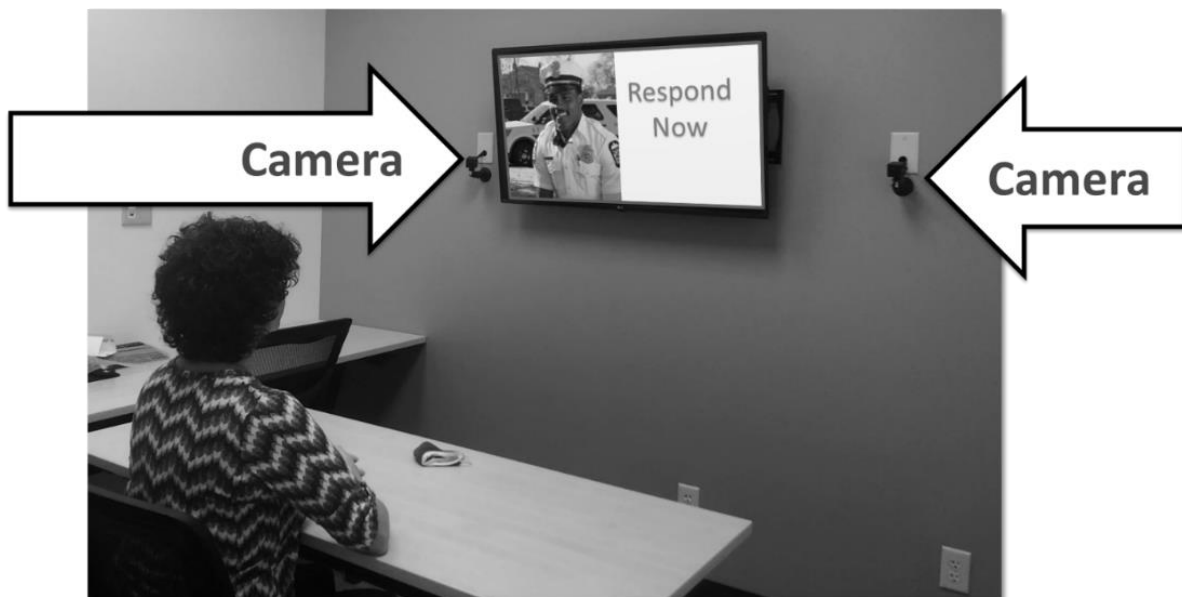


## A. Contents & Features

### On Test Day

On test day, when it is time for your SRA test to begin, a CSC monitor will escort you to an individual test room and place you at a table that faces a television monitor. You will be in the individual test room for about 30 minutes.

Once seated, you will see one or more cameras pointed toward you. Those cameras will record your performance so that it can be scored at a later date. An example of where the cameras may be placed is shown below.



An additional camera may be placed in the room and used to verify any technical issues that may occur.

The CSC monitor will ask if you have any questions before the test begins. The monitor will then start the video cameras, confirm your personal identification number (PID), start the test video, and leave the room.

You are to remain seated for the entire assessment.

At the end of the video, the narrator will explain that you are to stand up, open the door to your room, and wait for a monitor to assist you. A monitor will enter the room, stop the cameras, and escort you out of the room.

## **SRA Contents**

The SRA consists of six test scenarios. Each scenario features a situation commonly encountered by police officers. You will be expected to respond, when prompted, as if you are a CPD Police Officer, and as if you are *in* each situation.

The entire SRA will be presented as *a single pre-recorded video*. Each segment will consist of a series of still images used to depict the persons, places, and things involved in each scenario; plus assorted audio clips that deliver contextual noises, the speech of characters portrayed as talking, and assorted guidance and prompts presented by the narrator. The video's contents and features are described below.

## **Test Video Segments**

The main segments are as follows.

1. General Instructions
2. Practice Scenario + Practice Response Period
3. Test Scenario 1 + Response Period(s)
4. Test Scenario 2 + Response Period(s)
5. Test Scenario 3 + Response Period(s)
6. Test Scenario 4 + Response Period(s)
7. Test Scenario 5 + Response Period(s)
8. Test Scenario 6 + Response Period(s)
9. Exit Instructions

**General instructions segment.** This part of the video provides general information regarding the content of the video and what you are to do during specific segments.

**Practice scenario segment.** This part of the video contains a practice scenario that features a situation that could be encountered by a CPD police officer while on the job, plus one or more characters shown on screen.

**Test scenario segments.** The test scenarios feature situations commonly encountered by CPD police officers while on the job, plus one or more characters shown on screen.

**Response periods.** A specific amount of time has been allotted for each response period. Each response period ranges from 45 seconds to one minute.

At the start of each response period, you will hear the narrator state to whom you are to respond, the length of time allotted for the response, and when to begin your response. When the narrator states “respond now,” you will see the words “Respond Now” and a countdown timer on screen. The character(s) to whom you are responding will also remain visible on screen.

At the end of each response period, you will hear the narrator say “stop,” and you will see the countdown timer end at zero, plus the word “STOP” on screen.

### **Test Video Features**

**Narration.** A video narrator will provide guidance throughout the video. The narrator will begin each segment with a brief explanation of the content you are about to see and what you are expected to do. At the beginning of each scenario, the narrator may provide a basic explanation of the scenario that you are about to see and provide specific details. The narrator will also indicate how much time is allotted for each response period and when to begin and end each response.

**Still images.** Each scenario will be presented as a series of still images with audio.

**Characters.** During each scenario, you will see and hear one or more individuals who are involved in the scenario. When you are required to respond to a specific individual, the narrator will prompt you to respond after the individual is done speaking.

**Countdown timers.** At the start of each response period, a countdown timer will appear on screen and begin counting down; the timer will remain on screen until the end of the response period, when it reaches zero.

**Captions.** Key lines stated by on-screen characters may also be shown on screen as text and may remain on screen until the end of the response period.

## B. Scored Competencies

Your performance during each test scenario response period will be scored in three different dimensions—here those are called *competencies*. The three scored SRA competencies are as follows. Each competency is described in this section.

- Situational awareness
- Social intelligence
- Problem resolution

In short, *situational awareness* concerns identifying the facts of a situation, while the other two competencies concern what you do with those facts in terms of the people involved (*social intelligence*) and each problem observed (*problem resolution*).

Your performance in each competency area will be scored using customized rating scales for each scenario. The rating scales are designed to recognize the fact that there are several ways to appropriately address the situation(s) presented in each scenario.

Your performance will be video-recorded throughout the entire test so your responses can be observed and evaluated at a later date by a panel of trained assessors. Your response to the practice scenario will not be scored, and it will not be shown to raters.

### **Why These Competencies**

*Situational awareness* involves whether, how, and to what degree you notice and assess the physical, mental, emotional, and interpersonal details in a situation so you can make accurate inferences about what is happening and what could happen next. It concerns how you tune into other's emotions and interpret subtle behavioral cues.

Police officers need to be able to be alert to their surroundings at all times and be able to anticipate what's ahead, so they can quickly think and react as needed. While you can never know for certain what is going to happen in a situation, as a police officer you will need to be able to make quick and effective predictions about what could happen next. In life-threatening situations, you may only have seconds to react. Being able to quickly gauge the details of a situation is key to reducing harm and saving lives.

*Social intelligence* involves how you understand and act on the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of other people, how you understand and manage interactions with other people, and how you describe and characterize other people.

Police officers need to be able to listen closely and pay attention to what others are saying so they can interpret others' needs and beliefs so they can resolve interpersonal conflicts, provide meaningful guidance, and maintain peace through intervention, de-escalation, and mediation. They also need to be able to accurately and fairly describe the diverse people and groups who may be involved in or affected by a situation.

*Problem resolution* involves how you resolve problems, disputes, or conflicts, and whether you can make firm decisions to do or not do something. Police officers need to be able to resolve problems, whether a problem relates to an investigation, a dispute, or some other situation. They need to be able to identify and implement solutions that will address both the short-term and long-term needs of those involved; and identify what needs to be done, who needs to do it, and how to get those individuals or organizations involved. It is not enough to develop an effective solution, the solution must also be ethical, as unethical solutions are liable to backfire and erode the public's trust.

While much of law enforcement training is designed to enhance effectiveness in these and other competencies, building your ability to demonstrate each competency before entering the training academy can not only enhance your ability to succeed on the SRA exam, it can also enhance your ability to succeed during training and on the job.

### **Situational Awareness**

As an SRA competency, *situational awareness* measures whether, how, and to what degree you notice and accurately identify the physical, mental, emotional, and interpersonal details involved in a particular situation so you can understand what is going on, and usefully predict what may happen next.

#### Examples of effective behavior

- Identifies diverse factors that may have contributed to a particular situation
- Specifies the nature of each main problem or issue observed in a specific situation (e.g., "This is a resources issue")
- Gathers information through vision and hearing
- Answers questions completely and precisely
- Provides an accurate assessment of a situation
- Identifies objects and behaviors that do not fit the expected context of the situation
- Predicts what could happen based on what has been observed
- Explains what is being observed
- Thinks ahead by asking "What if...?"
- Explains what could happen as a result of what is happening in a situation

- Asks questions that aim to collect additional details about what is happening
- Asks questions that aim to clarify or confirm what is being observed
- Distinguishes between what is known, unclear, and presumed in a situation
- Identifies gaps in information

#### Examples of ineffective behavior

- Fixates on one feature of a situation at the expense of noticing other features
- Misses critical clues that indicate something is dangerous or may go wrong
- Mischaracterizes (i.e. falsely describes) what is seen and heard
- Overlooks each person's role in the situation
- Omits important information that was stated by persons in the situation
- Confuses cause and effect (i.e., claims X caused Y, when in reality Y caused X)
- Describes a problem inaccurately
- Makes erroneous assumptions about a situation using stereotypes
- Misidentifies the emotional or mental state of persons in the situation
- Gets distracted by irrelevant features of the situation

### **Social Intelligence**

As an SRA competency, *social intelligence* measures how you respond (emotionally, physically, etc.) to the feelings, emotions, statements, and behaviors of other people; how you manage interactions with other people, including how you de-escalate and manage volatile situations; and how you describe and characterize others when communicating about them.

#### Examples of effective behavior

- De-escalates volatile situations by re-directing focus
- Sets boundaries (e.g., "It's important for you to slow down for us to be able to talk. How can that be accomplished?")
- Negotiates (e.g., by providing options, remaining flexible, etc.)
- Uses supportive language (e.g., "That must be frustrating")
- Tailors what is said and how it is said to the current audience
- Uses correct terms and grammar when speaking with or to others
- Presents information in an organized manner (e.g., by time or date)
- Repeats what was said or asked to ensure understanding
- Describes others accurately when speaking about them
- Speaks positively about others
- Uses humor if and when appropriate to de-escalate tense situations

### Examples of ineffective behavior

- Uses intimidation to control others
- Uses threatening language (e.g., “You’re going to be sorry you didn’t listen”)
- Interrupts others when they are speaking
- Speaks so quickly that others miss pieces of what was said
- Rambles, speaks in monologues, or fails to get to the point
- Habitually repeats things already said (e.g., “Like I said...”)
- Responds to only part of a question
- Shouts orders
- Escalates voice and body language to same level of volatility being shown by others
- Stereotypes other individuals or groups

### **Problem Resolution**

As an SRA competency, *problem resolution* measures how you identify and distinguish between alternatives for a solution, select the solution, detail how the solution can or will be implemented, and detail any follow up that may need to occur.

### Examples of effective behavior

- Identifies viable alternatives for resolving the problem
- Distinguishes between ethical and unethical alternatives
- Specifies who may be helped and who may be harmed by a proposed solution
- Specifies the pros and cons of a proposed solution
- Explains why something is important—or not—for resolving the problem
- Specifies how the solution will be implemented

### Examples of ineffective behavior

- Jumps to a solution without considering alternatives
- Merely appeals to tradition when defending a solution (e.g., “That’s how we’ve always done it”)
- Considers the benefits of a proposed solution but not the harms
- Resolution makes situation worse or inflames the situation
- Resolution solves minor aspect(s) of the problem, but fails to solve safety-related or critical aspects of the problem
- Solutions are non-responsive to the problems presented

## C. Guidance

### BEFORE TEST DAY:

1. **Review the sample scenarios posted on the Commission’s Police Officer web page.** See the *Study Materials* section for details.
2. **Practice noticing similar situations in your everyday life.** Notice situations in your life that involve interacting with others and a problem to be resolved. Consider past verbal conflicts with family, friends, and co-workers, past customer relations experiences, or situations you have seen on television or the internet.

Notice how each individual responds. Notice what each person says and does.

3. **Practice analyzing similar situations in your everyday life.** Break each situation down so you can better organize the information and better understand what should and should not be counted as important for resolving the issue.

Organize the details in a way that makes it easier to understand. For example, you could use a “people/places/things” approach with questions like these:

- ✓ People: Who is involved? What are they saying? What are they doing?
- ✓ Places: What is the setting? What is its nature—public or private, etc.?
- ✓ Things: What objects do you see; what is the significance of each object?

Or a “who/what/where/why” approach with questions like these:

- ✓ Who is involved?
- ✓ What is each person observably saying and doing?
- ✓ Where is the interaction taking place? What is the nature of the setting?
- ✓ Why is the interaction taking place?

Closely examine the different pieces of information. Do you notice any patterns or trends? If yes, what inferences can be made from that information?

4. **Practice responding.** Practicing can help you understand how it feels to respond to video-based characters and respond within a 45-60 second time frame. Use the Practice Checklist provided in the *Study Materials* section to ensure that you are using the practice/sample materials to your best advantage.



5. **Evaluate your practice responses.** Use the Practice Checklist provided in the *Study Materials* section to ensure that you are appropriately evaluating your practice performances.

The SRA is not scored like a multiple-choice exam in which there is a single correct response. Rather, on the SRA, there are many different ways to respond effectively, so long as you demonstrate the scored competencies as described in this guide.

If you partner with someone else as you practice and have reviewed the competencies as those are explained in this guide, they may be able to provide useful feedback regarding how well you did throughout your practice response.

6. **Research related topics.** Enhance your ability to understand the competencies by researching topics that are closely related to the competencies, such as these:

- Conflict resolution techniques
- Basic principles of human behavior
- Mental health issues
- De-escalation strategies and techniques for self, others, and crowds

#### **ON TEST DAY:**

**During the practice scenario:** Watch carefully, and respond when prompted. Your response to the practice scenario will not be scored, and it will not be shown to raters.

#### **During each test scenario:**

- Look for visual cues as each situation unfolds. Pay close attention to what is shown in each image and how those objects may relate to the situation.
- Observe the body language of each character. Each character has been designed to provide specific information through their body language.
- Listen carefully to anything that is said or asked. The narrator, and the dispatcher if relevant, will often provide important information you need to solve the problem.
- Listen to how things are said. An intonation or emphasis on certain words may provide clues about what a character believes is important. The volume and pitch of their voice may provide cues about their feelings and their focus.

- Ask yourself, “How should I approach the individual(s)?” The situation may call for a stern response, a gentle and comforting response, a confident and self-assured response, or something else.
- Begin to consider and develop *several* different courses of action that could best resolve the issue at hand.
- Begin to identify the main issues involved in the situation.
- Begin organizing your thoughts so you can express them in a logical manner.

**During each response period:**

- Begin your response any time after the narrator says, “Respond now.”
- Use the countdown timer to track the remaining time in each response period.
- Think about what you want to say before you begin to speak. There is no penalty for waiting a few seconds to compose your thoughts.
- Speak to the individual(s) shown on screen, not to the cameras.
- Speak as if you are a CPD Police Officer. Remember though, you do not need to know or speak to CPD practices, policies, or procedures to do well on this test.
- Do not think of your performance as “acting.” Instead pay careful attention to the situation as it is presented on video and respond appropriately.
- Be mindful of your body language as you respond, as it could impact your score. For example, although not directly scored, chewing gum or resting your head in the palm of your hand could be misinterpreted. Use facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language that are appropriate for each situation and that communicate what you are trying to communicate.
- Speak slowly and distinctly. Sometimes we speak quickly when we are nervous, so make a conscious effort to slow down. Do not mumble or speak so softly that you are difficult to understand. Know your tendencies and adjust accordingly.

- Respond to the individual(s) on screen as if you are speaking *with* them in person—not as if you are speaking *about* them and not as if you are being interviewed about your SRA performance.

For example, suppose a scenario portrays a shoplifting incident to which you respond and then portrays a supervisor directing you to explain how you responded to the shoplifting incident:

DO tell the supervisor how you responded to the incident:

“I spoke to the store manager, and then I arrested the suspect”

Do NOT respond as if being interviewed about what you would do:

“I would speak to the store manager, then I would arrest the suspect”

“I would have spoken to the store manager, then arrested the suspect”

- Avoid jargon. Avoid unnecessary, unrelated, or trivial information.
- Identify and address the main issues involved in the situation.
- You may direct the person on the scene to do something.
- Present a plan, solution(s), or suggestion(s) for resolving each main issue.
- You may ask questions if warranted. For example, if you conclude that additional information is needed to resolve the situation, you can seek that information by asking a question or two, since what you ask can help communicate to the raters what you consider most important for resolving the situation. If you do ask questions, ask them as part of your response and not as your entire response; then quickly continue to the remainder of your response so you can demonstrate all of the competencies. Also remember, the characters will not be able to respond since the video is pre-recorded.
- Answer as completely as possible in the time allotted. If you complete your answer before that time has expired, sit quietly and wait for the next prompt.
- You are not required to use the entire time allotted for each response. If you finish before the time limit expires, please sit quietly and wait for the next prompt.
- If you think of something that you wish to add while waiting for the next prompt AND there is time remaining in the response period, simply begin speaking. Just

make sure there is time left, as anything you say or do outside of any response period will not be scored.

**During each video segment transition:**

- After you complete each response, wait for the next video segment to begin.
- If you complete a response prior to the end of the allotted time, simply wait for the next segment to begin. Continue paying attention to the screen so that you do not miss anything, such as the start of the next scenario.

**After the final test scenario:**

- Get up, open the door, and then return to your seat. Once the final response period ends, the video narrator will indicate that the test is over and direct you to open the door and return to your seat. Then, the video will shift to playing music. The open door and the music playing alerts the test monitors that you have completed the exam.

## D. Study Materials

The following items are designed to help you prepare and practice for the SRA exam.

- Three non-test scenarios
- Practice checklist

### **Three Non-Test Scenarios**

Three non-test scenarios have been developed to help you prepare to do your best during the SRA exam.

A video that contains two sample scenarios is posted to the CSC's Police Officer webpage at <https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police-Officer/>. You can use those scenarios, plus the Practice Checklist provided in this section, to prepare and practice for the SRA.

A *third* non-test scenario—called the Practice Scenario--will play at the start of the SRA video on test day. You will not have access to that practice scenario before test day.

### **Practice Checklist**

A checklist is provided on the following page. Use it to help ensure that you are making the most of the sample scenarios so you can feel confident and prepared on test day.

### **How to Use the Materials**

To get the most out of the sample scenarios, prepare to respond—and also prepare to record yourself responding—the *first time* that you watch them.

Use the practice activities checklist to ensure you are getting the most out of your practice activities. Using the materials in this manner can help you develop an accurate picture of your current skill set that you can use as a baseline for additional practice.

## SRA Practice Checklist

### Before you begin practicing:

- Review the SRA sections of this preparation guide to ensure that you are familiar with the SRA and all practice materials.
- Troubleshoot the scenario: If using the sample scenarios posted online, play the first several seconds of the video to make sure it plays. If using a found or self-developed scenario, ensure it involves at least one person to whom you can respond and a problem or issue that needs resolved.
- Prepare a recording device. Set it up to capture your face and torso so you can clearly view your own body language when you play the video back.
- Press “Record” on the recording device right before you begin.

### Right after you finish responding:

- Press “Stop” on the recording device.

### To evaluate your response:

- First, watch the recording while listing each thing you said and did. Then, organize those individual behaviors by competency.
- Evaluate each observable behavior grouped with each competency. Is the behavior more similar to those listed under “Examples of effective behavior” or to those listed under “Examples of ineffective behavior”?
- Evaluate your performance in each competency. From 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, what score would you give your performance in each competency?
- Evaluate your overall performance. In which competency were you strongest? In which do you need to improve?

## E. Earned Preference Points

There will be opportunities to have additional earned points added to your final SRA score. You can earn up to 10 points for qualifying language.

**Language Fluency Points.** The City of Columbus contracts with language testing specialists to assess language fluency in identified languages other than English. When you apply to take the Police Officer exam, you will be asked if you have fluency in the identified languages. If you responded affirmatively to specific languages, the CSC will email you after you pass Phases I and II of the Police Officer Exam and have taken the SRA. The email notice will alert you to opportunities to test in one of your selected languages. The City of Columbus will pay for the language assessment.

The qualifying languages are based on the demographics within the City of Columbus and the language test vendor's portfolio of tests. Since the city's demographics and the vendor's portfolio may change over time, the languages that qualify are subject to change. Visit the CSC website for a current list of qualifying languages. If you would like to take a language fluency exam but did not indicate this on your application, contact the Civil Service Commission at 614.645.0800 or [policefiretesting@columbus.gov](mailto:policefiretesting@columbus.gov).

The current language test vendor reports test results from *novice* to *superior*. Thus CSC will add points to your SRA result as follows:

Qualifying Language Proficiency Level	Available Points
Novice Low, Mid, High, or Intermediate Low	0
Intermediate Mid	2.5
Intermediate High or Advanced Low	5
Advanced Mid	7.5
Advanced High or Superior	10

## General Testing Tips

1. **Rest:** Try to get a good night's sleep before the test so that you are well rested and can do your best.
2. **Eat:** Eat appropriately before the test. Too little or too much food can hurt, rather than help.
3. **Dress comfortably:** Business attire is not required. We recommend bringing a sweater and dressing in layers so you can adjust your comfort to fit the temperature of the test room. Select clothing without large lettering, graphics, or logos. If you select such articles to wear, choose items that cannot be construed as offensive. While what you wear is not graded, it is important to present yourself positively.
4. **Location:** Be sure you know where the test center is located. Refer to your admission notice for the exact location, date, and time.
5. **Arrive early:** Arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time. Allow extra time for traffic problems on test day.
6. **Relax:** When you arrive at the testing room, you will be assigned a seat. Try to relax and get comfortably settled as quickly as possible.
7. **Follow directions:** Be sure to listen to and follow all directions. If you have any questions, make sure you ask them before the test starts.

## Confidentiality

All Police Officer Examination content is confidential. Do not share what you see and hear during each phase of the exam with any other person including other candidates or others who will or may be considering taking the exam. Sharing confidential test content with other candidates may give those individuals an advantage—but it could also lower *your* position on the eligible list since your position will be based on your score relative to the scores of all other candidates taking the test.

Additionally, sharing confidential information with any other person including other candidates may be grounds for disciplinary action, disqualification from the testing process, loss of your right to the examination or to certification or appointment, and may result in prosecution.



## Final Police Officer Exam Results

To update exams, CSC rotates out frequently used exam questions. To rotate in new questions, the CSC includes some questions on the exam that are not scored. CSC staff collects and analyzes data on these questions to determine if they should be scored on future exams. These questions are not graded and do not play any role in determining a candidate's final score. Each section of the multiple-choice exam may randomly contain a few of these new unscored questions.

For example, you may answer 100 questions on Phase I, but only 80 of the questions count towards your score. When you receive your test results, the results notice may state you received a score of 70. That score would be out of 80, not 100. Thus, in this example, you missed only 10 scored questions.

To be scored on the SRA, candidates must first pass phases I and II. For candidates who pass *all three phases* of the examination, the scores from the SRA will be used to band candidates into the top (band 1), middle (band 2), or lower (band 3) bands. Veteran's preference points will be added to passing SRA scores of qualifying candidates before being placed within the respective bands. The list of eligible candidates in band 1, band 2, and band 3 form what is called an "Eligible List."

As the City considers eligible candidates for hire, the City will consider those in band 1 first and then those in band 2. After the City considers both band 1 and band 2, and if Training Academy spots are still available for new recruits, the City will consider band 3. Police Officer Eligible Lists are usually viable for one year. If an eligible candidate has not been hired within that year and still wants to be considered or reconsidered for the job, they should reapply during the next application period.

*The City of Columbus Police Officer Examination Preparation Guide is created and published by the City of Columbus. Any updates to the contents shall be made exclusively by the City. It is intended solely for use for test preparation for the City of Columbus Entry-Level Police Officer Examination. All versions of the manual, including previously created and those created in perpetuity, which shall also include any language, tables, and images contained therein, are created and provided by the City of Columbus and are protected by copyright. Any other publication, reproduction, electronic storage, transmission, or other use or alteration of the word descriptions, tables, or numbers in this manual without the express written consent of the City of Columbus and/or the Civil Service Commission, is prohibited.*