



WRITTEN EXAM TEST
STUDY GUIDE
DETENTION SERVICE MANAGER
DALLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



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INTRODUCTION

Morris & McDaniel has assembled this electronic exam test study guide for the 2026 Dallas County Sheriff's Department Promotional Process. It is our hope that the information in this booklet will help candidates understand the written exam process and answer some of their questions about how to prepare for this assessment.

ADMINISTRATIVE LOGISTICS

The Examination Announcement sets out the date, time, and location for the examination. Candidates should ensure that they arrive at the test site on the correct day and time. Candidates are advised to arrive prior to the scheduled time to ensure that all necessary administrative procedures can be conducted prior to the scheduled start time. Candidates are required to bring a photo ID. **NO ONE ARRIVING LATE WILL BE ADMITTED.** The test date and time will be provided to candidates on the test announcement (TBA at 9:00 a.m.).

On the day the Written Examination is administered, the test will be preceded by a set of instructions. Remember that this is an electronic, web-based test. Candidates will not be permitted to bring reading list reference materials to the test site. In addition, candidates will not be allowed, under any circumstances, to make or receive telephone calls.

DO NOT BRING THESE ITEMS INTO THE TESTING CENTER.

The Written Examination will be administered and a minimum of 2 hours will be allowed to complete it. Candidates who complete the examination before the time period has elapsed will be permitted to leave the testing center. Upon completion of the Written Examination, candidates will return all test materials to the test administrator and leave the test site.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

A. Overview

The written knowledge test will consist of 100 multiple choice questions. These questions will be based solely on the source material specified on the candidate study list posted by the Department. Questions will assess a range of knowledges expected to be known by a Detention Service Manager and will vary in difficulty level based on Bloom's Levels of Taxonomy (i.e. knowledge, comprehension, application). All job knowledge multiple-choice questions will have four (4) possible answer choices. The candidate will be asked to choose the BEST response among the alternatives. Credit will be given only for the best response.



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B. Typical Exam Instructions

These are typical instructions. The actual instructions will be provided to you on test day.

The questions on this test are multiple-choice in format. For each question, you must decide which **one** of the choices is the **best** answer. Even though some answers may be somewhat correct, one of the choices represents a **best** answer. You must decide which one of the choices is the **best** answer. We recommend that you read the entire question and all of the response choices before making your decision.

You will indicate which answer you have selected by clicking on the appropriate bubble on the computer screen which corresponds to the **one** answer that you think is **best**.

Example:

In your jurisdiction, the law states that a minor is anyone under the age of:

- a. 5.
- b. 10.
- c. 15.
- * d. 18.

In the item above, all answers are correct, but “D” is the most correct answer. We recommend that you read the entire question and all response choices before making your decision.

Click on only one bubble for each question. If you click on more than one bubble per question, you will receive no credit for that question.

This test has a total of 100 questions. Your score on the test will be the number of correct answers; no points will be deducted for guessing.

You will be allowed a minimum of two (2) hours for this examination.



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C. Post Written Exam Appeal and Rebuttal Process

Certain candidates who have taken the written promotional examination may review their examination results and then file an appeal and/or rebuttal of any question(s) on the test. More information about this will be provided on the day of the exam.

D. Source Material List for Exam

1. **Dallas County Sheriff's Department 2026 General Orders**

Test items will only be taken from the following Chapters and Sections:

- 3.3 Public Information
- 3.5 Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation
- 3.7 Drugs and Alcohol
- 3.11 TLETS Terminal, MDT, and CJIS Security

- 4.6 Employee Associations
- 4.9 Discipline
- 4.10 Employee Grievances

- 7.2 Defensive Chemical Agents

- 9.2 Body Worn Digital Camera

- 11.1 Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003

2. **Sheriff's Department Civil Service Rules and Regulations**

Test items will only be taken from the following Chapters and Sections:

Chapter II. Employment

- Definitions
 - 2.00 through 2.10
- Employment Procedures
 - 2.11 through 2.23
- Nepotism
 - 2.24 through 2.27
- Equal Employment Opportunity
 - 2.28 through 2.29
- Lateral Transfers
 - 2.30 through 2.33
- Resignations



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- Termination
 - 2.60 through 2.64
- Leave
 - 2.68 Employee return to work after an illness/injury

Chapter III. Personal Conduct and Affairs

- 3.00 Compliance with code of conduct and general orders
- Prohibition Against Unlawful Harassment
 - 3.02 through 3.04

Chapter IV. Grievance System Procedures

- Part I. Purpose 4.00 through 4.02
 - 4.03 Eligibility
- Scope of Grievance Appeal Procedures
- Part II. Time Limits for Filing and Response
 - 4.05 through 4.15
- Part III. Informal Resolution Procedures
 - 4.16 through 4.33
- Part IV. Order of Appeals
 - 4.34 through 4.35

Chapter V. Discipline/Disciplinary Action

- 5.00 through 5.04

Complaints Against Law Enforcement or Detention Service Officers

- 5.05 through 5.07

3. Dallas County Administrative Code Chapters 82 and 86

Test items will only be taken from the following Articles and Sections:

Chapter 82

- Article III. Emergency and Inclement Weather Conditions
 - Sec 82-61; Sec 82-62
- Article IV. Overtime/Compensatory Time
 - Sec. 82-81 through Sec. 82-85
- Division 2. Nonexempt Employees
 - Sec. 82-111 through 82-113
- Article V. Automated Time and Attendance Entry System
 - Sec. 82-171 through Sec. 82-178
- Subdivision I. In General
 - Sec. 82-311 through Sec. 82-313
- Subdivision V. Sick Leave
 - Sec. 82-490 through 82-499
- Subdivision VI. Vacation Leave
 - Sec. 82-500 through Sec. 82-507



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- Subdivision VII. Military Leave
 - Sec. 82-510 through Sec. 82-513
- Subdivision VIII. Other Leave (Approved Time Off)
 - Sec. 82-515 through Sec. 82-519
- Division 2. Holidays
 - Sec. 82-741 through Sec. 82-746
- Division 3. Personal Day
 - Sec. 82-771
- Division 3. Law Enforcement and Detention Officers Salary Plan
 - Sec. 82-980 through Sec. 82-981

Chapter 86

- Division 4. Nepotism
 - Sec. 86-161 through Sec. 86-168
- Division 7. Probationary Period
 - Sec. 86-241 through Sec. 86-242
- Division 3. Attendance Requirements
 - Sec. 86-391 through Sec. 86-400
- Division 8. Separation from Employment
- Subdivision II Resignation
 - Sec. 86-571 through Sec. 86-572
- Subdivision III. Dismissal
 - Sec. 86-591 through Sec. 86-595
- Article VI. Employee Standards of Conduct
 - Sec. 86-751 through Sec. 86-759
- Division 2. Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy
 - Sec. 86-781 through Sec.86-788
- Division 3. Whistleblower Policy
 - Sec. 86-811. Compliance.
- Division 4. Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Subdivision I. In General
 - Sec. 86-831 through Sec.86-843
- Subdivision II. Safety-Sensitive Positions
 - Sec. 86-861 through Sec. 86-876
- Division 7. Romantic/Sexual Relationships
 - Sec. 86-941 through Sec. 86-944
- Division 9. Employee Associations, Labor Unions, and Other Bona Fide Organizations
 - Sec. 86-956 through Sec. 86-957
- Citizens Complaints Against Law Enforcement Officers.
 - Sec. 86-979 through Sec. 86-983
- Employee Investigations.
 - Sec. 86-984



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- Article VIII. Grievance Procedures
 - Sec. 86-1001 through Sec. 86-1007
- 4. **Correctional Administration and Change Management.** Martha Henderson Hurley and Dena Hanley.
- 5. **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change,** Special Edition. Stephen R. Covey.



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E. Sample Test Questions

*****Please note- All exam items on the test will be in the same format, regardless of source. Test questions will be organized under the source from which the answer can be found. *****

Questions 1—2 were taken from the Dallas County Sheriff's Department's General Orders.

1. Should the Sheriff become incapacitated through illness, death, or for any reason, or be absent from the County, an order of succession shall be adhered to, per the General Orders. Who is first in that order of succession?
 - a. Chief Deputy, Office of General Services
 - * b. Executive Chief Deputy, Office of Administration
 - c. Chief Deputy, Office of Detentions Services
 - d. Assistant Chief Deputy, Enforcement Operations Bureau
(Chapter 1.4, X., page 18)

2. An employee whose performance is below an acceptable standard may be placed on performance probation at any time by his/her Division Commander, with prior approval. Such probations will be for:
 - a. sixty (60) day periods, and not to exceed one hundred twenty (120) days.
 - b. six (6) months, and not to exceed nine (9) months.
 - c. three (3) months, and not to exceed six (6) months.
 - * d. thirty (30) day periods, and not to exceed ninety (90) days.
(Chapter 4.9, XXVIII, page 169)

Questions 3—4 was taken from the Dallas County Administrative Code.

3. Nonexempt employees are strictly prohibited from working more than 40 hours per week, without prior approval from:
 - a. the Chief of Police.
 - * b. their supervisor.
 - c. the Human Resources/Civil Service Department.
 - d. the Executive Chief Deputy, Office of Administration.
(Chapter 82, 82-172, page 25)

4. Regarding levels of corrective action, which of the following should take place between supervisors and employees when less serious and/or recently identified performance problems are observed?
 - * a. Level One: Performance Coaching
 - b. Level Two: Record of Counseling
 - c. Level Three: Written Warning
 - d. Level Four: Suspension without Pay
(Chapter 86, 86-975, page 149)



PREPARATION STRATEGIES FOR THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

The exam will be a multiple-choice test and will be based on external sources and internal sources. The exact study material can be found on the test announcement and on pages 4 - 7 of this guide. The texts on the reading list promulgated for this test are important in your acquiring the knowledge that will be assessed. Candidates may improve their performance on multiple-choice tests in three different ways. The first and most obvious way is to have a solid knowledge of the relevant material that will be covered on the test. The second is to know and understand the test situation to avoid making mistakes caused by a failure to understand the meaning of the test questions, the test format, or the test procedures. Finally, candidates can try to gain an understanding of their own test-taking behavior. If candidates become aware of the kinds of errors they commit on multiple-choice exams, they can try to avoid them in the future. This guide provides suggestions for improving candidate performance in each of these areas:

A. How to Study: Understanding the Material Covered on the Test

This section provides some strategies to assist candidates in preparing for the test. A method for studying, based on well-established learning principles, is included. Many of the suggestions are directed toward enhancing candidates' ability to recall information by requiring they do more than simply read the material. Some suggested strategies include: (a) surveying the material to be read in order to break it down into reasonable study "chunks," (b) formulating questions to be answered after each section has been read, and (c) reciting and reviewing the main points of each section.

B. General Multiple-Choice Test-Taking Strategies: Understanding the Test Situation

This section provides some strategies that candidates can apply when taking the test. These strategies are of relevance when taking any multiple-choice examination. They include such suggestions as marking questions in a way that will make them easier to understand and answering easier sets of questions first.

C. Error Analysis: Understanding Your Own Test-Taking Behavior

This section provides candidates with some information about common test-taking errors, as well as strategies for avoiding such errors. Candidates are encouraged to identify the kinds of errors they tend to make when taking multiple-choice examinations. In this way, candidates will be more aware of the tendency toward these errors when they actually take the examination and can determine what steps they can take to avoid these errors.

* These are suggestions for your consideration only - **you** are responsible for determining whether they are appropriate for **you** and ultimately **you** must decide which way is best for you.

1. How to Study

To the extent that the material on the reading list will help you in taking the test, the following suggestions may help you in studying this material.



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The study strategies provided here are provided for candidates' consideration and should be helpful in preparing for the Written Multiple-Choice Test. They may be applied to any material on the reading list. Of course, in the final analysis, each candidate should decide which study method is best for them.

a. Focus Your Attention

Candidates must focus their attention on the material they are studying if they expect to remember it. There are three things candidates can do that will help them focus their attention on the material they read.

First, since you tend to pay closer attention to things that interest you rather than to things that don't, you can try to make the material more meaningful or interesting. One way to do this is to apply it to yourself. Try to think of examples of the material that can be tied to your work.

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

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

b. A Method for Studying

SURVEY

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

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



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

QUESTION

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

Before beginning each study session, look over the material you intend to cover. Develop some questions that you expect to be answered in the material. There are several ways to develop these questions. One way is to begin with the list of headings from the chapter or document outline. Write a question for each major and minor heading. Developing questions can provide a reason for reading the material and can help the information become more meaningful to you. For most people, reading means the same thing as studying. When they say that they have studied material, they often mean that they have read it through several times. Reading is important, but it will be done more effectively when the *survey* and *question* steps have been completed.

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

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

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



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In marking or underlining the text, you should actually go through the text and underline key words and concepts that are important in understanding the material in the chunk you are reading. You might also make notes to yourself right on the text page. If you choose to use the underlining and marking method, here are a few guidelines:

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

RECITE

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

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

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

REVIEW

Reviewing the material to be covered in the test will help you to understand and organize the material better. Your review should also cover your outline of how the material is organized, and where certain topics can be found.

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

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



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

- SURVEY** skim the reading material and create manageable chunks to study
- QUESTION** develop a purpose for reading by asking questions that expect to have answered in the reading material
- READ** read and re-read the material until you understand it thoroughly
- RECITE** write down or talk about what you just learned to improve retention and integrate new information into your knowledge base
- REVIEW** look over highlighted text and notes and integrate new information with old information



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2. General Multiple-Choice Test-Taking Strategies

The purpose of the Written Multiple-Choice Test is to assess your knowledge of the specified areas contained in the "Evaluation". At times, factors other than your knowledge of the tested material can influence your performance. The following suggestions may help you to reduce these extraneous influences and do your best on the multiple-choice examination.

Make sure the test format and requirements are understood.

Read, and/or listen to, all of the directions carefully.

Make sure the answer sheet is correctly marked. Erase completely, any answers you wish to change.

Do not cross out.

Be aware of how much time has been allotted to complete the test. Candidates should check their watches periodically to keep track of the amount of time remaining in the examination period.

Read each question carefully and make sure it is understood.

Try to answer the question before looking at the choices. If the answer is known, compare it to the available choices and pick the closest alternative. A thorough understanding of the knowledge areas will allow questions to be answered without looking at the answer choices.

Since writing in test booklets is allowed, it might be helpful to mark the exam questions in a way that makes them easier to read.

Use slash marks to break down sentences into small segments. This will make the candidate more attentive to each separate idea in a long sentence.

Underline key words that tell what a sentence or passage is about. If a question has been skipped, the markings can make it easier to remember what the question was about when revisiting it, without reading the full question or passage again.

Find and circle words that "harden" or "soften" statements

AND means that one element of the alternative must be present or true in addition to another element for the alternative to be correct.

OR means that there is a choice of situations. Only one of the elements of the alternative must be present or true for it to be a correct alternative.



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Proceed through the questions strategically

Skim through all materials pertaining to each scenario at least once before starting to respond to the multiple-choice items.

Read each scenario and examine each diagram pertaining to the scenario for a general understanding. Next, read each of the items associated with that scenario and return to the scenario and diagrams to check the details.

Answer items in a set at the same time.

The multiple-choice exam items will be organized around scenarios and diagrams. As a rule, all test items associated with a set of materials (scenario, diagrams) should be answered at the same time. It is very time-consuming to re-familiarize one's self with all of the materials for an item left unanswered in a set. If the set of items looks difficult in general, it would be more time efficient to skip the entire set of items and then come back to them later. Whenever a set of items is skipped, be sure to mark them as skipped in the test booklet so they can easily be identified.

Tackle difficult questions methodically

Do not let unfamiliar vocabulary slow your progress. The main idea can be grasped without knowing the individual word or fully understanding an individual sentence.

Do not be afraid to go with the first answer that comes to mind. It can be changed later but, often, first guesses are correct.

Use process of elimination. If the answer to a question is not known, first eliminate those choices that seem completely wrong. Then, put a mark next to each remaining choice to indicate its status (e.g., bad, good, or possible). This will save time by reducing the number of choices needed to be re-read and re-evaluated before selecting your final choice.

Guess

No more credit will be lost for an incorrect response than for leaving it blank, so it is to each candidate's advantage to respond to every question even if guessing is required. If the examination period is about to end and there will be a substantial number of questions (e.g., more than 5 or 10) that will not be completed, reserve some time (e.g., 60 seconds) toward the very end of the examination period to respond to these questions, even if guessing is the only option. While these guesses may not be correct, the alternative is to leave these questions blank and be assured of getting them wrong.



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Use extra time wisely

If a candidate finishes the examination before the test time expires, he/she should go back and review the responses. Make any changes that are necessary. Ensure that the answers have been placed on the answer sheet opposite the question being answered and that answer sheet bubbles are filled in completely.

Finally, remember that exam monitors will be there to help candidates with testing procedures. If there are any questions about the testing procedures, ask for assistance before the test begins.

Error Analysis

There are several possible reasons for choosing an incorrect response to a question. Six of these reasons are presented below along with suggestions for avoiding such errors. Consider past tests that have been taken and identify the errors (from among the six provided here) that tend to characterize previous test-taking behavior. Once the reasons for these errors have been identified, steps can be taken to avoid repeating such errors when answering questions on this, and future examinations. As previously mentioned, the suggestions laid out below are geared towards selecting the one best alternative. Listed below are various reasons incorrect answers might be selected:

Marking the wrong space on the answer sheet

Since there are a limited number of questions on each examination, careless errors such as these are costly. Check as each answer choice is marked on the answer sheet to ensure that the answer chosen is the one being marked. As an additional check, after the exam is complete, go back over every question and answer it again.

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

As mentioned earlier, the solution to this problem is UNDERLINING. Underlining makes key words and phrases stand out when choosing an answer. Once key words and phrases have been underlined, check the details of the possible answers with the details underlined, one by one. If the details do not match, consider that answer suspect and try another, always keeping in mind that a candidate should be looking for the **BEST** possible answer.

Not knowing the meaning of one or more key terms

When taking the test, if difficulty with a term is encountered, re-read the sentence to determine its meaning without worrying about the meaning of a particular word. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word could become clearer once you understand the general context within which it has been placed.



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Difficulty understanding complex or difficult questions

Divide and conquer! As mentioned earlier, use slash marks to break up the material into small segments, and then concentrate on one segment at a time. One approach to difficult questions is to read the possible answers first, and then re-read the question. This tells the candidate what to concentrate on while reading the question. Concentrate on the parts of the question directly related to the possible answers even if the entire question is not understood. The entire question need not be understood to find the correct answer. Also, focus on the topic sentences that are usually the first and last sentences of a question. Read the difficult questions twice. The first time, read for the general meaning and do not let words or phrases that are not understood slow or discourage you. The second time, read for understanding that is more precise. The first reading will provide the context so that the second reading is more meaningful.

Comparing combinations of information

This is a problem of rearranging information in the correct way so that it makes sense. Underline critical pieces of information in the test question and then compare the information with the possible answers, point by point.

The alternative chosen looked correct

Several factors can cause incorrect alternatives to be selected:

- An incorrect alternative may contain an exact phrase from the relevant material (i.e., from the test question itself or the study material).
- An incorrect alternative may contain a phrase or sentence that is used out of context. For example, an idea that is expressed but then rejected in the relevant material may be presented as an idea that was supported.

Some strategies for avoiding the tendency to fall for incorrect alternatives include:

- Have an answer in mind before looking over the alternatives. This will decrease the possibility of choosing an incorrect alternative merely because it looks good.
- Use the method of marking each alternative to indicate its status (e.g., bad, good, or possible) before choosing one.
- Stick strictly to the facts or rules of the relevant material. Do not fall for alternatives that stretch or exaggerate the facts or rules described in the relevant material.
- Be wary of alternatives with words or phrases taken exactly from the relevant material. Do not simply assume that such alternatives are correct.
- Prepare a defense for the answer selected. Find something in the relevant material that will give a strong, direct defense for this answer.



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CONCLUSION

This preparation guide represents an attempt to familiarize candidates with all aspects of the Written Exam Process. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive — we encourage candidates to engage in whatever preparation strategies they believe will enhance their chances of performing effectively on the exam and on the job.

