

Tasks embedded in items requiring performances (analytical, creative, practical) are structured at five different levels:

*Analytical.*

*Level 1.* Most of the tasks at this level require the student to grasp the central idea of presented material or to locate information that is identical or synonymous with the information given in the question.

*Level 2.* Tasks at this level require the student to integrate two or more pieces of information or to compare or contrast easily available details or data.

*Level 3.* Tasks at this level require readers to encode, compare, or contrast information that is readily available. Students are required to make low-level inferences and provide basic explanations of their conclusions.

*Level 4.* Tasks at this level require students to encode, compare, and contrast on a number of levels. Students are expected to extract the meaning from the material and to carry out higher-level inference.

*Level 5.* Tasks at this level call for high-level inferences and the use of specialized background knowledge. Students are expected to carry out complex analyses of the material based on multi-level encoding, contrasting, and comparing of various pieces of information. Students must then judge the presented data and, finally, infer and justify their conclusions.

*Creative.*

*Level 1.* Tasks at this level ask the student to elaborate on the details presented in the material; the student is expected to come up with concepts or ideas that are slight modifications of those used in the material.

*Level 2.* Tasks at this level require the student to provide a novel variation of the usage of a concept or idea presented in the item by either changing the concepts or ideas or the context in which they are presented.

*Level 3.* These tasks require the student to suppose that some aspects of the situation presented in the item change; the student, then, is expected to construct a meaningful modification of the situation.

*Level 4.* This level of tasks introduces a significant amount of ambiguity by asking the student to come up with missing pieces of information or extend the ideas in the item creatively.

*Level 5.* These tasks ask the student to devise, create, or originate novel situations (character developments, plot lines) going beyond what is read.

*Practical.*

*Level 1.* Tasks at this level require the student to grasp the main message of the material with regard to his or her own life—that is, to identify a possible application of what is read to the students' activities and actions.

*Level 2.* These tasks require the student to incorporate new knowledge while taking context into account (i.e., "if-then" reasoning is evoked).

*Level 3.* These tasks require finding an optimal solution to a situation (that might originate in the student's personal experience), assuming that all necessary data are available in the item administered. In addition, students are expected to transfer the knowledge to new contexts.

*Level 4.* Tasks at this level require the student to process the information, to take a position, and to formulate a convincing explanation of why the information obtained has (or does not have) a practical value.

*Level 5.* Tasks at this level assume assimilation of information and its transformation so that the student can clearly express his or her position and advise someone else in a situation resembling (but not identical to) the one in the item.