

Agricultural Communications

Study Guide

Assessments:
6904 Communications in Agriculture

Endorsed by
Agricultural Education,
Communications and
Leadership Department of
Oklahoma State University



Overview

This study guide is designed to help students prepare for the Communications in Agriculture assessment. It not only includes information about the assessments, but also the skills standards upon which the assessments are based and test taking strategies. The assessments measure a student's ability to apply knowledge of the skills necessary for success in the Agricultural Communications field.

Each of the four sections in this guide provides useful information for students preparing the Agricultural Communications assessment.

- CareerTech and Competency-Based Education: A Winning Combination
- Communications in Agriculture Assessment
 - ▶ Assessment Information
 - ▶ Standards and Test Content
 - ▶ Sample Questions
 - ▶ Abbreviations, Symbols and Acronyms
- Strategies for Test Taking Success
- Notes

The Communications in Agriculture assessment is endorsed by the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership (AECL) of Oklahoma State University. The AECL is committed to preparing agricultural leaders all over of the nation in the areas of education, leadership, and communications.

For more information about the AECL go to <http://aged.okstate.edu/>

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CareerTech and Competency-Based Education: A Winning Combination

Competency-based education uses learning outcomes that emphasize both the application and creation of knowledge and the mastery of skills critical for success. In a competency-based education system, students advance upon mastery of competencies, which are measurable, transferable outcomes that empower students.

Career and technology education uses industry professionals and certification standards to identify the knowledge and skills needed to master an occupation. This input provides the foundation for development of curriculum, assessments and other instructional materials needed to prepare students for wealth-generating occupations and produce comprehensively trained, highly skilled employees demanded by the workforce.

Tools for Success

CareerTech education relies on three basic instructional components to deliver competency-based instruction: skills standards, curriculum materials, and competency assessments.

Skills standards provide the foundation for competency-based instruction and outline the knowledge and skills that must be mastered in order to perform related jobs within an industry. Skills standards are aligned with national skills standards and/or industry certification requirements; therefore, a student trained to the skills standards is equally employable in local, state and national job markets.

Curriculum materials and textbooks contain information and activities that teach students the knowledge and skills outlined in the skills standards. In addition to complementing classroom instruction, curriculum resources include supplemental activities that enhance learning by providing opportunities to apply knowledge and demonstrate skills.

Competency assessments test the student over material outlined in the skills standards and taught using the curriculum materials and textbooks. When used with classroom performance evaluations, written competency assessments provide a means of measuring occupational readiness.

Each of these components satisfies a unique purpose in competency-based education and reinforces the knowledge and skills students need to gain employment and succeed on the job.

Measuring Success

Evaluation is an important component of competency-based education. Pre-training assessments measure the student's existing knowledge prior to receiving instruction and ensure the student's training builds upon this knowledge base. Formative assessments administered throughout the training process provide a means of continuously monitoring the student's progress towards mastery.

Written competency assessments provide a means of evaluating the student's mastery of knowledge and skills. Coaching reports communicate competency assessment scores to students and provide a breakdown of assessment results by standard area. The coaching report also shows how well the student has mastered skills needed to perform major job functions and identifies areas of job responsibility that may require additional instruction and/or training.

Agricultural Communications Assessment Information

What is the Agricultural Communications assessment?

The Communications in Agriculture assessment is an end-of-course assessment for students in Agricultural Communication programs. The assessments provide an indication of student mastery of basic knowledge and concepts necessary for success in careers in this area.

How was the assessment developed?

The assessment was developed by the CareerTech Testing Center. The assessment is endorsed by the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership (AECL) at Oklahoma State University. Items were developed and reviewed by a committee of subject matter experts.

The committee assigned frequency and criticality ratings to each skill, which determines the significance of each task for test development:

Frequency: represents how often the task is performed on the job. Frequency rating scales vary for different occupations. The rating scale used in this publication is presented below:

1 = less than once a week 2 = at least once a week 3 = once or more a day

Criticality: denotes the level of consequence associated with performing a task incorrectly. The rating scale used in this publication is presented below:

1 = slight 2 = moderate 3 = extreme

What does the assessment cover?

Specifically, the tests includes multiple-choice test items over the following areas:

Communications in Agriculture: EOI (65 questions)	
Communications Theory	10%
Photographic Journalism	12%
Business Writing and Resumes	10%
Journalistic Writing	12%
Broadcasting Media	11%
New Media	8%
Graphic Design	11%
Creating Presentations	15%
Delivering Presentations	11%

What is the benefit of using this assessment?

Students receive a certificate for each assessment that he/she passes. This certificate may be included in his/her portfolio and used to communicate the student's mastery of the subject matter to potential employers.

When should the assessment be taken?

The CareerTech Testing Center recommends that students take the assessments as soon as possible after receiving all standards-related instruction, rather than waiting until the end of the school year.

Is the assessment timed?

No. However, most students finish the assessment within one hour.

What resources can students use on these assessments?

Students are allowed to use calculators and scratch paper on CTTC assessments; however, these items must be provided by the testing proctor and returned to the proctor before the student's exam is submitted for scoring. Calculator apps on cell phones and other devices may not be used on these assessments.

What accommodations can be made for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)?

Accommodations are allowed for students with an Individualized Education Plan. Examples of allowable accommodations include:

- **Extended time** — This assessment is not timed; therefore, students may take as much time as needed to finish. The assessment must be completed in one testing session.
- **Readers** — A reader may be used to read the assessment to a student who has been identified as needing this accommodation.
- **Enlarged text** — Students needing this accommodation can activate this feature by clicking the  icon in the upper right corner of the screen.

What can students expect on Test Day?

All CTTC assessments are web-based and delivered exclusively by a proctor in the school's assessment center. The proctor **cannot** be an instructor or anyone who was involved with the student during instruction.

Assessments are delivered in a question-by-question format. When a question is presented, the student can select a response or leave the question unanswered and advance to the next question. Students may also flag questions to revisit before the test is scored. All questions must be answered before the test can be submitted for scoring.

After the assessment is scored, the student will receive a score report that not only shows the student's score on the assessment, but also how the student performed in each standard area.

Can students retake the test?

Students may retake the test unless their school or state testing policies prohibit retesting. Students who can retest must wait at least three days between test attempts.

Communications in Agriculture Skills Standards

Duty A: Communications Theory (6 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
A.01	Describe the listening process	3	3
A.02	Discuss listening skills and the roll of feedback	3	3
A.03	Distinguish between verbal and non-verbal communications	3	3
A.04	Discuss factors that determine the audience	2	2
A.05	Define fact, inference and opinion	3	3
A.06	Discuss ethics in communication	3	3

Duty B: Photographic Journalism (8 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
B.01	Define digital camera terminology	3	3
B.02	Determine the elements of good photographs	3	3
B.03	Explain the types of photographs	3	3
B.04	Demonstrate how to crop a photo	3	3
B.05	Recall characteristics of photo captions	3	3
B.06	Describe how audience affects photojournalism and how photography affects the agricultural industry	2	2
B.07	Explain the uses and characteristics of photography in ag communications	3	3
B.08	Discuss guidelines for legal and ethical practices in photojournalism	3	3

Duty C: Business Writing and Résumés (6 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
C.01	Identify the elements of a business letter	3	3
C.02	Identify the elements of a thank you letter	3	3
C.03	Determine the elements of professional e-mail writing	3	3
C.04	Determine the elements that make a good resume	2	3

Duty D: Journalistic Writing (8 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
D.01	Discuss the importance and use of written communication in the agriculture industry	2	2
D.02	Compare the purposes of writing and how audience affects written communication	2	3
D.03	Discuss the ABC's of journalistic writing	3	3
D.04	Identify elements of a press release	3	3
D.05	Examine Associated Press (AP) writing style	3	3
D.06	Apply AP editing marks	3	3

Duty E: Broadcasting Media (8 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
E.01	Discuss the forms of broadcast stories	3	3
E.02	Determine the role of audio and video in society	2	2
E.03	Explain the broadcast production process	3	3
E.04	Determine writing style used for radio and television	3	3
E.05	Identify video production equipment	3	3
E.06	Determine proper video production storyboards	2	2
E.07	Discuss radio and video scriptwriting basics	3	3
E.08	Discuss the ethics and standards for broadcasting	3	3

Duty F: New Media (5 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
F.01	Discuss how media convergence is changing communication	2	3
F.02	Identify various social media tools	3	3
F.03	Review the more popular social media outlets	3	3
F.04	Discuss the history of social media	1	3
F.05	Outline the basic ways to use social media effectively	3	3
F.06	Relate the importance of safety in social media	3	3
F.07	Describe the use of a social media plan	2	2
F.08	Explain the concept of a social media audit	2	2

Duty G: Graphic Design (7 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
G.01	Determine principles of design	3	3
G.02	Discuss rules for effective design	3	3
G.03	Examine the functions and elements of various design layouts	3	3



Duty H: Creating Presentations (10 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
H.01	Discuss the value of speaking skill development	3	3
H.02	Differentiate between formal and conversational speaking	3	3
H.03	Discuss factors affecting presentation topic selection	2	3
H.04	Distinguish between informative and persuasive presentations	3	3
H.05	Determine how to develop a message	3	3
H.06	Examine the parts of a speech or presentation	3	3
H.07	Examine the use of an outline for presentation development	2	3
H.08	Use basic researching methods, including internet research	2	3
H.09	Discuss the importance of citations and a bibliography	3	3
H.10	Analyze the use of visual aids to support a presentation	2	3
H.11	Discuss tips for preparing effective electronic visual aids	2	3
H.12	Determine when memorization of a presentation is needed	2	2

Duty I: Delivering Presentations (7 questions)

CODE	TASK	F	C
I.01	Identify guidelines for presenting speeches	2	3
I.02	Determine the difference between paralanguage and body language	3	3
I.03	Deliver a tool-based presentation	3	3
I.04	Discuss elements of extemporaneous speaking	2	3
I.05	Determine the best method for preparing for extemporaneous speaking	2	3
I.06	Discuss how to prepare for questions and answers	3	3
I.07	Discuss techniques for answering questions	3	3



Sample Questions

1. Which of the following statements is an example of nonverbal communication?
 - a. Kyle begged his mom to let him go swimming.
 - b. Kyle called his friend to let him know he could not go swimming.
 - c. Kyle crossed his arms and pouted because he could not go swimming.
 - d. Kyle looked at his mom and asked to go swimming.
2. "Corn prices fell \$1.25/bushel last month." This statement is an example of a/an:
 - a. fact
 - b. inference
 - c. opinion
 - d. thought
3. When referring to ethical journalism, which statement is correct?
 - a. A journalist is not required to check for accuracy before submitting a news story.
 - b. A journalist should balance a news story by presenting two points of view.
 - c. It is important for a journalist to use his/her personal feelings when writing a news story.
 - d. It is a journalist's duty to help readers make decisions about a news story.
4. What type of photograph is most frequently used for a student's school picture?
 - a. action photo
 - b. candid photo
 - c. formal portrait
 - d. still-life image
5. A news reporter is taking photographs at a local sporting event of individuals that he does not know. What type of photographs is the reporter taking?
 - a. candid
 - b. formal
 - c. landscape
 - d. portrait
6. Which of the following statements is an appropriate last sentence of a thank you letter?
 - a. "We appreciate your continued support."
 - b. "We appreciate your support, even though we fell a little short of our goal."
 - c. "We will be contacting you for future donations."
 - d. "We would like for you to donate to us again."

7. Which type of field-of-view shot allows for a standing figure?
 - a. close-up
 - b. extreme long
 - c. long
 - d. medium

8. Which federal agency has licensing and regulatory authority over radio and television broadcasts?
 - a. Federal Audio Commission
 - b. Federal Censoring Commission
 - c. Federal Communications Commission
 - d. Federal Copyright Commission

9. What is the opening page of a website called?
 - a. advertisement page
 - b. front page
 - c. home page
 - d. sub page

10. What is the number one fear among people in the United States?
 - a. death
 - b. heights
 - c. public speaking
 - d. spiders

Sample Questions — Key

1. Which of the following statements is an example of nonverbal communication?
 - a. Kyle begged his mom to let him go swimming. Incorrect
 - b. Kyle called his friend to let him know he could not go swimming. Incorrect
 - c. Kyle crossed his arms and pouted because he could not go swimming. Correct
 - d. Kyle looked at his mom and asked to go swimming. Incorrect

2. “Corn prices fell \$1.25/bushel last month.” This statement is an example of a/an:
 - a. fact Correct
 - b. inference Incorrect
 - c. opinion Incorrect
 - d. thought Incorrect

3. When referring to ethical journalism, which statement is correct?
 - a. A journalist is not required to check for accuracy before submitting a news story. Incorrect
 - b. A journalist should balance a news story by presenting two points of view. Correct
 - c. It is important for a journalist to use his/her personal feelings when writing a news story. Incorrect
 - d. It is a journalist’s duty to help readers make decisions about a news story. Incorrect

4. What type of photograph is most frequently used for a student’s school picture?
 - a. action photo Incorrect
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5. A news reporter is taking photographs at a local sporting event of individuals that he does not know. What type of photographs is the reporter taking?
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- a. "We appreciate your continued support." Correct
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- a. death Incorrect
 - b. heights Incorrect
 - c. public speaking Correct
 - d. spiders Incorrect

Abbreviations, Symbols and Acronyms

The following is a list of abbreviations, symbols, and acronyms used in the Agricultural Communications study guide and on the Communication in Agriculture assessment.

°	Degree
\$	Dollar
%	Percent
/	Slash
AP	Associated Press
Ave.	Avenue
Bld.	Boulevard
IEP	Individualized Education Plan

Test Taking Strategies

This section of the study guide contains valuable information for testing success and provides a common-sense approach for preparing for and performing well on any test.

General Testing Advice

1. Get a good night's rest the night before the test – eight hours of sleep is recommended.
2. Avoid junk food and “eat right” several days before the test.
3. Do not drink a lot or eat a large meal prior to testing.
4. Be confident in your knowledge and skills!
5. Relax and try to ignore distractions during the test.
6. Focus on the task at hand — taking the test and doing your best!
7. Listen carefully to the instructions provided by the exam proctor. If the instructions are not clear, ask for clarification.

Testing Tips

1. Read the entire question before attempting to answer it.
2. Try to answer the question before reading the choices. Then, read the choices to determine if one matches, or is similar to your answer.
3. Do not change your answer unless you misread the question or are certain that your first answer is incorrect.
4. Answer questions you know first, so you can spend additional time on the more difficult questions.
5. Check to make sure you have answered every question before you submit the assessment for scoring — unanswered questions are marked incorrect.



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