

**PREPARING TO TAKE A WRITTEN TEST FOR POLICE  
OFFICER THAT INCLUDES:**

**SITUATIONAL AND JUDGMENT TYPES  
OF QUESTIONS**

**HELPFUL HINTS**



**TEST PREPARATION EXERCISES: SITUATION AND JUDGMENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS**

POLICE OFFICER – Situational and Judgment Questions are often found in a test for police officer. You are to assume that YOU are the police officer in the situations posed. You will be asked to take some sort of action. The situations presented do not require any previous police training. You are being evaluated on your use of judgment, logic, reasoning and common sense.

The following information has been developed as a guide to assist in preparing for exercises involving situations and judgment questions.

The ability to respond to a situation or circumstance involving an incident is commonly done by police officers in the performance of their duties. As a public service worker, officers find themselves called upon to intervene in people-related issues that require split-second decisions. Sound reasoning and the ability to use common sense are required.

WHAT THESE TYPES OF QUESTIONS MEASURE:

1. Thought processes used by a person to size-up and evaluate a situation.
  - a) size-up depends upon a person's analytical skill to break down a problem into its parts; and,
  - b) to determine levels of a response and a strategy that will provide a person who is making a decision with the most appropriate response.

POLICE OFFICERS MUST RELY UPON COMMON SENSE:

2. Knowing WHY a person reacts to a situation is just as important as knowing HOW they react. Situational types of questions are problems that are presented in the form of a STORY. You will be provided with FACTS surrounding a particular case, or incident. These stories are usually taken from everyday experiences a police officer may encounter while performing their duties.
3. Always remember that the story, or scenario is intended to be accepted at face value. DO NOT "read into," or "infer" anything but what is being stated. This is a mistake much too often made. Too frequently test takers try to rely upon what they believe a situational question should say, rather than what it actually states. Go with the printed explanation. It represents the facts.

HERE'S HOW TO APPROACH READING SITUATIONAL TYPES OF QUESTIONS:

4. Situational types of questions will rely upon a story that begins by asking you to assume the part of someone, usually a police officer. Next, action *words* will fill the story with a thought provoking predicament that requires some sort of immediate action. Read over the words and understand what they mean.
5. Be able to identify the FACTS in a story, Do this first. Pause for a moment. Ask yourself the question: "*Just what is actually happening here?*" Next, ask yourself, "*Do I have my facts straight? Can I identify who is involved in this situation?*"

6. Next, fully understand what a question is asking YOU (the police officer) TO DO. You may be asked to size-up a situation by taking any of the following actions:
- \* What should you do next?
  - \* What is the first action that you should take under these circumstances?
  - \* Which of the following should you FIRST do?
  - \* Which of the following should you NOT DO?
  - \* Which of the following actions is the BEST action to take?
  - \* Which of the following actions should you NEVER take?

**HERE'S HOW TO APPROACH ANSWERING A SITUATIONAL QUESTION:**

7. A situational question is written with information that usually consists of no more than 3 or 4 sentences. The last sentence asks you (as the police officer) in the question) to take an action. You will be given 3 or 4. The action that you choose MUST answer the instructions, that are given to you in the question. Test takers who overlook this simple point, often claim that they "misread", or "misunderstood" the question. Avoid this claim by understanding WHAT action the question is asking you to take.
8. Finally, read over each of the possible choices that are found in selections "a", "b", "c", or "d". Ask yourself if the action that is "spelled out" would be the most appropriate for the police officer to take, under these circumstances. The "front page newspaper test" is a good tool to use when choosing a possible answer. Ask yourself the question: *"If I were the police officer in the situation and I chose to take one particular action over another, how would I feel if I read about the action I took on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper?"* If your answer is "okay" than the choice you made is likely to be a good one.

**HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ANSWER FROM 3 or 4 POSSIBILITIES?**

9. A most often asked question: "is there one right, or correct answer to the question asked?" The answer is – YES. Out of 4 possible choices there is always one that can be immediately eliminated as being "ridiculous". This choice "sticks out" and should be eliminated at once. Of the remaining 3 choices, one usually doesn't "fit the question being asked" and can be eliminated. With only 2 remaining choices, carefully analyze each of the remaining choices and determine which one is the "best fit" and makes the most sense under the circumstances. Remember – the answer you choose MUST be reasonable, practical and rely upon common sense.



**HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS:**

- I. Your immediate supervisor isn't satisfied with the way you are handing in field reports. You are aware of this and want to do something about it. Which of the following actions should you **FIRST TAKE**?
- complain to other officers, telling them to join you in ridiculing the supervisor
  - meet with the supervisor and discuss your concerns
  - meet with the supervisor's immediate boss and lodge a formal complaint
  - none of the above

**ANSWER:** the question asks for YOUR FIRST ACTION. Choice "d" should be eliminated from consideration immediately – it shows no action being taken. Choice "a" would be eliminated next – ridiculing someone is no way to solve a problem! You could choose "c" and meet with your supervisor's boss and lodge a complaint. BUT "b" is the best action and the one you should take first – if you chose "b" you've shown that you did do something about your concern, and that you did discuss it with the person responsible for being dissatisfied with your work.

- II. While on car patrol, you notice a traffic signal light that is malfunctioning at a very busy intersection. Which one of the following should you **FIRST DO**?
- notify the traffic division of the problem and let them correct the situation
  - call your supervisor and have him handle the problem
  - notify the traffic division, remain at the intersection and direct traffic until assistance arrives, along with notifying the dispatcher of your actions
  - none of the above

**HELPFUL HINTS:**

- What are the facts in this story?
- What action is the police officer being asked to take?
- Which of the 4 choices should be eliminated immediately?
- Which, if any, of the remaining 3 choices doesn't fit as the best answer?
- Conduct "the front-page newspaper test" with the two answers you are considering.

- III. While on car patrol you receive a call from dispatch telling you to proceed to the corner of Main Street and Jolly Avenue. The dispatcher tells you that there are 5 suspicious youths, hanging around a very expensive looking car that is parked across from the bank. Which of the following should **YOU NOT DO**?
- ask the dispatcher for the license plate number of the vehicle
  - ask the dispatcher if Jolly Avenue can be approached by taking a shortcut through the parking lot of Smith's Hardware store
  - rush to the scene, park your vehicle in the parking lot of Smith's Hardware store and approach the youths from their "blind side" with your weapon removed from its holster
  - proceed to the scene with caution and be prepared to take appropriate action

**HELPFUL HINTS:** which answer did you choose and why?

**TEST PREPARATION EXERCISES: SITUATION AND JUDGMENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS**

## Written Examination

### POLICE OFFICER

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

This test consists of 28 questions that are divided into the following categories:

- I. Memory Recollection
- II. Reading Comprehension
- III. Word Analogies
- IV. Number and Letter Sequences/Patterns
- V. Hypothetical Situations
- VI. Charts

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR CRIMINAL OFFENDER RAP SHEETS



The first part of this test consists of a timed section. You are given **5** minutes to familiarize yourself with five (5) background rap sheets with related information that contains detailed facts. **You cannot take notes.** You must time yourself in this exercise.

When the study time has finished, take **3** minutes to answer questions 1 - 5 that appear immediately after the study material.

Questions 1 – 5 have to be answered in the **3** minute timeframe only. During an actual test you could not refer to the information provided in the booklet once you have finished studying the material.

There is no time limit for answering questions 6-28.

**YOU ARE BEING GIVEN (5) FIVE MINUTES TO STUDY THIS INFORMATION -- NO NOTE TAKING**

Name: John J. Jones  
Alias: "Jonnie J."  
Address: Westover, Wisconsin  
Race: Caucasian  
Gender: Male  
Arrests: Larceny, Breach of Peace, Disorderly Conduct, Loitering

Name: William Timothy Washington  
Alias: "Willy," "Wild One," "WTW"  
Address: Springfield, MA  
Race: African-American  
Gender: Male  
Arrests: Assault, Assault with a Weapon, Robbery

Name: Deborah Williams  
Alias: "Deb-Deb," "Dorah," "D.W.," "Willia"  
Address: Holyoke, MA 01040-5841  
Race: African-American  
Gender: Female  
Arrests: Narcotics, Prostitution, Disorderly Conduct

Name: Samuel W. Robbins  
Alias: "S.W.R.," "Sammy," "Rob"  
Address: Jersey City, N.J.  
Race: Hispanic  
Gender: Male  
Arrests: Forgery, Counterfeiting, Larceny

Name: Pamela Zello  
Alias: "Panhandler," "Z-K"  
Address: Toledo, Ohio 43605-2034  
Race: Caucasian  
Gender: Female  
Arrests: Risk of Injury to a Minor, Narcotics, Flight from Justice

**DO NOT LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS UNTIL YOUR TIME IS UP.  
TAKE 3 MINUTES TO ANSWER QUESTIONS 1 – 5**

Questions 1 – 5 must be answered in the 3-minute timeframe only. You cannot return to the information provided in the booklet once you have finished studying the material.



1. The alias "Wild One" is associated with which person?
  - a. John Jones
  - b. Deb Williams
  - c. Sam Robbins
  - d. W. T. Washington
  
2. The alias "Willia" is associated with which person?
  - a. T. Zerkowat
  - b. Deborah Williams
  - c. Tammy Ocohol
  - d. J.J. Jones
  
3. Which of the following persons is listed as an African-American?
  - a. J.J. Jones
  - b. W.T. Washington
  - c. S. W. Robbins
  - d. P. Zerkowitz
  
4. Deborah Williams was arrested for which of the following?
  - a. Prostitution
  - b. Theft
  - c. Grand Auto Theft
  - d. Robbery
  
5. Samuel W. Robbins resided at which of the following addresses?
  - a. Springfield, MA
  - b. Jersey City, Wisconsin
  - c. Jersey City, N.J.
  - d. Hartford, CT

**When you are finished answering these questions proceed to complete the remainder of the test. There is no time limit for the following section of the practice test.**

**Questions 6 – 10 refer to the following paragraph.**

"More than any other political figure, the President attracts the attention and emotion of American masses. The people look to the Presidency for leadership and reassurance. They want a President who will personalize government, simplify political issues, and symbolize the 'compassionate' and protective role of the state. They want someone who seems concerned about them. The people also look for toughness, competence and decisiveness in the Presidency. They are prepared to support a President who is willing to do something whether 'something' is a good idea or not. Presidential popularity goes up when the President takes dramatic action when the nation faces an external crisis or threat, such as Desert Storm. Generally, the people want to support the President. All Presidents begin their terms of office with broad public support. Over time, however, support decreases as troubles pile up and the President is unable to cope with them. Indeed, the popular expectations of a President far exceed his power to meet them."

6. According to the paragraph which of the following best describes what the American public looks for in the Presidency?
- power, justice and decisiveness
  - harshness, protection and personality
  - competence, leadership and compassion
  - none of the above
7. According to the paragraph, the majority of Americans:
- want to support the President
  - do not support the President
  - support the President more often than they do not
  - none of the above
8. The term COMPETENCE, as used in the paragraph, is best defined as meaning?
- popularity
  - capability
  - savvy
  - none of the above
9. According to the paragraph, as problems increase public support \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_.
- increases
  - decreases
  - remains the same
  - none of the above
10. According to the paragraph, Presidential popularity would be affected by which of the following situations?
- war waged on the United States
  - a President's plan to "ax" taxes in the United States
  - both "a" and "b"
  - none of the above



Questions 11 – 15 deal with WORD analogies.

11. CARPET is to FLOOR as \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_
- a. WALLPAPER, WALL
  - b. TABLECLOTH, TABLE
  - c. TARP, WOODPILE
  - d. none of the above
12. FIREFIGHTER is to HOSE as \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_
- a. PITCHER, BASEBALL
  - b. COMPUTER, PROGRAMMER
  - c. HAMMER, BUILDER
  - d. none of the above
13. CLERK is to CONVENIENCE STORE as \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_
- a. CLERK, CAR
  - b. WAITER, RESTAURANT
  - c. PILOT, PLAN
  - d. none of the above
14. TIRE is to CAR as \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_
- a. LEG, TABLE
  - b. BOAT, RUDDER
  - c. PROPELLER, PLANE
  - d. none of the above
15. BRANDING IRON is to CATTLE HERDER as \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_
- a. ANVIL, SHOEMAKER
  - b. NEEDLE, TATTOO ARTIST
  - c. BARREL, RODEO CLOWN
  - d. none of the above

Questions 16 – 20 all deal with the following numerical or letter sequences.

16. 14 28 84 336 \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_

- a. 672
- b. 1008
- c. 1680
- d. none of the above

17. B F K Q \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_

- a. V
- b. X
- c. Y
- d. none of the above

18. 13 13 26 78 312 \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_

- a. 624
- b. 936
- c. 1560
- d. none of the above

19. 19 57 19 76 19 \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_

- a. 76
- b. 95
- c. 114
- d. none of the above

20. 15 90 450 1800 5400 \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_

- a. 3600
- b. 10800
- c. 21400
- d. none of the above

**Questions 21 – 28 contain the remainder of questions for this test. Assume that you are the police officer that is mentioned in each question. No previous law enforcement experience is required to answer each of the questions.**

21. While on car patrol you are dispatched to a house that is leased by college students. The dispatcher informs you that someone has complained about extremely loud noises coming from the house. Upon arrival you observe several youths surrounding what appears to be a keg of beer. You take them by surprise. Under these circumstances what should your initial response be?
- a. immediately call for back up assistance
  - b. find out if the keg actually contains beer
  - c. confiscate the beer
  - d. request a supervisor's assistance
22. While on car patrol you are dispatched to a situation that has been described as a "disorderly crowd gathering in a public place." Upon arrival you see a news crew videotaping a group of people who are protesting for a social cause. Which of the following actions should you initially take under these circumstances?
- a. contact the dispatcher and find out if the department was previously notified of the event
  - b. ask members of the news team what is going on
  - c. ask the protestors if they have a permit to protest
  - d. request a supervisor's assistance because you are uncertain what to do
23. As a newly appointed officer you have been directed by your supervisor to attend a community meeting in three days at the Senior Citizen Center. Which of the following actions should you next take?
- a. tell your supervisor you don't understand why you are being asked to attend the event
  - b. ask your supervisor for more details
  - c. ask other officers if they know anything more about the activity
  - d. say nothing and attend the event
24. You have been employed as a police officer for less than one year and have exclusively worked the 11:00 pm to 7:00 am shift. There is a growing discontent with fellow officers over the favoritism that your Sergeant shows toward one or two officers. The group asks you to join them in confronting the Sergeant with their concerns. You are not in agreement with the list of concerns that the group has identified. Under these circumstances which of the following actions should you take?
- a. go along with the group's decisions to confront your Sergeant
  - b. contact the Sergeant and tell him that you are going along with the group because of peer pressure
  - c. tell the officers the way you feel about their attitudes
  - d. avoid providing the group with a decision and try to stay away from the conflict

25. You are at a roll call meeting with other officers and someone brings up the issue of field training. As a new recruit you have undergone many months of field training and are familiar with the program. Several officers feel that the training program you recently completed is "worthless" and doesn't replace actual experience acquired in the field. Under these circumstances which of the following is the best response for you to make?
- tell the officers that they are correct
  - tell the officers that you found the training program to be invaluable and that they should keep their opinions to themselves
  - ask the supervisor who is present to respond to their opinion
  - tell the officers that the training program is necessary and is a part of a total training program that includes field training

**Questions 26 – 28 refer to the Chart Below entitled: Police Responses by Shift (10/01-07)**

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
Shift A	15	20	25	12	23	?	28	155
Shift B	18	22	26	8	25	38	40	177
Shift C	19	21	?	7	22	40	32	164
Total	52	63	74	27	70	110	100	?

26. What is the number of calls that Shift A responded to on Friday?
- 30
  - 32
  - 34
  - none of the above
27. What is the number of calls that Shift C responded to on Tuesday?
- 21
  - 22
  - 23
  - none of the above
28. What is the total number of calls that Shifts A, B, and C responded to for the time period list?
- 456
  - 486
  - 496
  - None of the above

**ANSWERS TO TEST:**

- |      |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 8. B  | 15. B | 22. A |
| 2. B | 9. B  | 16. C | 23. B |
| 3. B | 10. C | 17. B | 24. C |
| 4. A | 11. A | 18. C | 25. D |
| 5. C | 12. A | 19. B | 26. B |
| 6. C | 13. B | 20. B | 27. C |
| 7. A | 14. A | 21. B | 28. C |