

Judgment & Comprehension in Nursing Situations Subtest

How to Take the PSB Exam

Purpose of this subtest:

- This test was designed by psychologists to identify someone who will make appropriate decisions in the nursing role
 - Because a nurse often finds himself/herself working with others, the test is looking for individuals who can maintain composure even in emotional and stressful situations
 - The test is also looking to identify independent problem solvers
 - Do you know when to solve a problem alone and when to seek help from a supervisor?

What if I Have NO Nursing Experience?

- You can still pass and even perform well on this test without nursing experience
- Remember: This test is meant to identify who will be a good candidate for nursing school!
- If you want to pass this subtest, you should:
 - Study some nursing content
 - Learn test-taking skills and strategies
 - Practice sample questions
 - Keep a positive mental attitude😊

Passing PSB: Task #1

- Study nursing content, such as:
 - Nursing roles, job description, and licensure
 - Common hazards of this occupation
 - Essential qualities of a nurse
 - Legal and ethical expectations
- Where can I find this info?
 - A Nursing Foundations/Fundamentals/Transitions textbook
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics: www.bls.gov
 - Nursing sites

Passing PSB: Task #2

- Learn Test-Taking Skills & Strategies
 - Learn the testing format
 - Learn general test-taking strategies
 - Learn the common Judgment question categories

Testing Format

- 50 multiple-choice questions
- 30 minute limit
- Can scroll among all questions at any time during the test
- One point for each correct response
- No penalty for incorrect responses
 - Answer all questions!
 - Make educated guesses

General Test-Taking Skills

- Read each question thoroughly!
- Think of an answer before you read the choices
- Always read ALL of the responses before choosing
- Work from easy to hard:
 - If you know the answer, select it and move on
 - If you are unsure, skip the question and return to it later

General Test-Taking Skills

- **Use process of elimination:**
 - Eliminate any choice(s) that are obviously wrong
- **When choosing between the remaining choices:**
 - The nurse can usually **act first**, before getting a supervisor
 - Usually the **simplest response is best!**
 - Consider **beneficence** vs. **nonmaleficence**
 - Consider **connotative meaning**
 - **Never use force:** verbal or physical
 - **Avoid** any response that implies **emotion**

General Test-Taking Skills

- If you finish, you can go back and review your responses
 - NEVER change a response unless you know for sure that you are mistaken
 - Research tells us that 3 out of 4 times, your initial response is correct!

Final Thoughts:

- Practice, practice, practice! Study, study, study!
- Get plenty of rest the night before the test
- Avoid excessive caffeine
- Use relaxation before and during test
- Think positively!
 - Research tells us that positive mental attitude improves performance!
- Preparation is the key to relieving anxiety and performing well😊

Resources:

- Any introductory (Fundamentals, Foundations, or Transitions) Nursing textbook
- A PSB Preparation book (the following has the most information on the Judgment subtest):
 - Mometrix Test Preparation Team. (n.d.). *PSB practical nursing exam secrets study guide: Your key to exam success*. Mometrix Media.
- Psychological Services Bureau. (n.d.). *Student applicant: Resources for test taking*. Retrieved from: <http://www.psbtests.com/resources/resources.aspx>

Learn Common Question Categories

- Most of the test questions can be placed into a category.
- If you can identify the category, you will know what type of response you are looking for.

Diagnosing Questions: #1

- **Q#1: A patient, coworker, or visitor offends you, hits on you, is rude to you, or tells you how to do your job.**
- **Response: You will ignore the problem.**
 - Most of the time, the offense is not volitional. In either case, the outcome is inconsequential.
 - Never react with emotion!
 - Instead, ignore the person or “be tolerant”

Diagnosing Questions: #2

- Q#2: There is a problem that needs some attention.
- Response: The nurse can usually attempt a solution before seeking help from a supervisor.
 - The **simplest solutions** are typically the best!
 - Avoid marking a response in order to save money or time; you are **NEVER too busy!**
 - **Never rely on another person!**
 - **NEVER GET HOUSEKEEPING, AIDES, OR COWORKERS TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOU!!!**
 - Think of nonmaleficence vs. beneficence

Diagnosing Questions: #3

- Q#3: The nurse has attempted to solve a problem, but it didn't work!
- Response: Seek guidance from a supervisor
 - Avoid going to hospital security or other authority before getting your supervisor

Diagnosing Questions: #4

- **Q#4:** The nurse has been negligent or made an error, e.g., given a patient the wrong medication or caused a patient fall
- **Response:** The nurse, in these situations, must **always find a supervisor or file an incident report**
 - The test-designers want to see if you know you've made a mistake and if you will honestly inform authority
 - Do not do something that may put the patient at further risk, like moving him or giving more medication
 - Do not fall for other tempting responses!

Diagnosing Questions: #5

- **Q#5: The nurse is seeking employment.**
- **Response: The nurse should be courteous, yet persistent.**
 - If given the option: make an appointment to come back when the director is available
 - Avoid responses that imply that the nurse is being dishonest or pushy in order to get an interview
 - Never name drop; never follow the person; never demand or show up and wait
 - Avoid responses that imply that the nurse is giving up and making a rash decision based on emotion, e.g., seeking employment elsewhere or waiting for the secretary to call you

Diagnosing Questions: #6

- **Q#6:** There is a patient safety issue.
- **Response:** The nurse should always take the opportunity to educate the patient.
 - The nurse cannot ignore a dangerous situation
 - If we are denying the patient something, we want to provide explanation
 - Explain, even to a visitor, why smoking is dangerous to a patient on oxygen
 - Avoid judgment statements

Diagnosing Questions: #7

- Q#7: A patient asks for information that the nurse cannot give; wants to discuss something difficult; asks for advice; etc.
- Response: The nurse will at least acknowledge the patient
 - **Avoid** changing the subject
 - **Avoid** leaving the room
 - **Avoid** giving advice
 - We offer objective and comprehensive education
 - **Avoid** minimizing patient's feelings and judging

Diagnosing Questions: #8

- Q#8: You have conflict with authority (supervisor, nurse manager, etc)
- Response: You must use compromise/ collaboration in order to resolve this type of issue
 - Discuss any negative performance evaluations with him/her
 - If a supervisor says that you are not doing your job, ask for suggestions for improvement
 - Do not show emotion
 - Always address this issue; CANNOT IGNORE
 - Never speak badly of someone else

Diagnosing Questions:#9

- Q#9: You are administering medication
- Response: **ONLY** if the response explicitly states that you have physician consent!
 - Test designers view this as general knowledge: nurses cannot prescribe medication
 - “I will get you some medication/ Tylenol/ Aspirin” is wrong!
 - “I will see what your physician will prescribe/has ordered” is correct!

Diagnosing Questions #10

- Q#10: You are asked to give patient education
- Response: YOU must give the patient the information VERBALLY
 - You cannot rely solely on brochures, pamphlets, or videos
 - You cannot rely on a family member to educate the patient
 - You must educate the patient about any procedure that you are going to perform BEFORE you do it
 - What it is; why it is being done
 - Honestly answer questions about pain/discomfort but offer reassurance that you are there to help

Diagnosing Questions #11

- **Q#11: You are asked about treatments/ diagnoses that you know nothing about!**
- Response: Use your everyday experience and process of elimination

Diagnosing Questions #12

- Q#12: The most important quality of a nurse
- **Most important qualities** (look for these 1st):
 - Integrity, reliability, honesty, credibility, knowledge
- **Second most important qualities** (if none of the above are present, look for these):
 - Leadership, adaptability
 - Passion, friendliness, charisma are not as important as these characteristics