

How Cognitive Skills Relate to Pennsylvania System of School Assessment



Reading:

Cognitive Skill	Application to PSSA Questions	BrainWare Safari Exercises Developing the Skill
<p><i>Sustained Attention</i> – the ability to stay on task for a sustained period of time.</p>	<p>Reading a passage for comprehension requires sustained attention. If attention is not sustained, parts of the passage may not be processed or understood.</p>	<p>Most BrainWare Safari exercises work on sustained attention, including <i>Iguana Lookout, Jungle Labyrinth, Rhythm Ribbet, and Slithering Symbols.</i></p>
<p><i>Visual Sequential Memory</i> – the ability to recall a sequence of bits of information in the same order as originally received.</p>	<p>Given a series of events from a passage, a question which asks, “Which one of these things happened first?”</p>	<p><i>Arrow Point Bridge, Bear Shuffle, Rhythm Ribbet and Slithering Symbols</i> are exercises that work on visual sequential memory.</p>
<p><i>Conceptual Thinking</i> – the ability to recognize a collection of features that go together to create an idea or category of ideas.</p>	<p>After reading a short passage, a question which asks, “What is the main theme of this story?”</p>	<p><i>Ancient Logic and Reasoning</i> and <i>Llama Logic</i> help develop conceptual thinking skills.</p>

There are many cognitive skills involved in learning as well as being tested on what one has learned. This document provides examples of how the PSSA places demands on cognitive skills. This is not meant to provide a complete perspective on cognitive skills or a thorough analysis of the PSSA. These are simply examples for illustration. BrainWare Safari is a product of Learning Enhancement Corporation. It is a comprehensive program that develops 41 cognitive skills in a fun and entertaining video game format. For more information, contact Learning Enhancement Corporation at www.BrainWareforYou.com or 877-BRAIN-10 (877-272-4610). Examples taken from Pennsylvania Department of Education released items and item samples, grades 4-5.

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Mathematics:

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<p>Visualization – the ability to recall an image of what has been seen and to mentally manipulate and change aspects of that image in the mind.</p>	<p>Shown a series of figures, a question which asks, “Which of the following shows the flag above turned 90° clockwise?”</p>	<p>Most BrainWare Safari exercises develop visualization skills. Such exercises include Cave Comparisons, Piranha Pass, Web Weaving, and Whispering Waterfall.</p>
<p>Oculomotor – the ability to use the eyes efficiently to read and gather information from the environment.</p>	<p>Shown a series of shaded figures, a question which asks, “Each figure represents a fraction. Which two figures represent the same fraction?”</p>	<p>Iguana Lookout, Jungle Labyrinth, Piranha Pass, Sky Scanning and Turtle Recall address oculomotor skills.</p>
<p>Working Memory – the ability to hold information in the mind while performing a mental operation on it.</p>	<p>“A movie started at 7:15 PM. It lasted 1 hour and 45 minutes. At what time did the movie end?”</p>	<p>Bear Shuffle, Cave Comparisons, Memory Mountain and Tree Tic-Tac-Toe are among the exercises that improve working memory skills.</p>

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Science:

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<p>Visual Discrimination – the ability to distinguish differences.</p>	<p>Shown two life-cycle diagrams, a question which asks, “Which statement correctly compares these life cycles?”</p>	<p>BrainWare Safari exercises that develop visual discrimination include Cave Comparisons, Jumping Jaguar Flash, Sky Scanning and Volcanic Patterns.</p>
<p>Reasoning – the ability to form concepts and solve problems using unfamiliar information.</p>	<p>Shown a circuit diagram, a question which asks, “A student wants to complete the circuit to make only bulb X light up. Where could a wire be attached?”</p>	<p>Ancient Logic and Reasoning and Piranha Pass are two of the exercises that develop reasoning skills.</p>
<p>Logic – the ability to reason and think rationally and analytically.</p>	<p>Shown a list of animals, a question which asks, “Which animal most likely competes with humans for grain?”</p>	<p>Llama Logic and Tree Tic-Tac-Toe are two of the exercises that develop logic skills.</p>

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