



Practice Performance Task

OVERVIEW

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+) is a performance-task based assessment that measures your critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills.

A CLA+ Performance Task presents a real-world situation in which an issue, problem, or conflict is identified. You are asked to assume a relevant role to address the issue, suggest a solution, or recommend a course of action based on the information provided in a document library.

Typically a full CLA+ Performance Task contains six to twelve documents in the library, and students have 60 minutes to complete the task. The document library contains a variety of reference sources that can vary such as technical reports, data tables, newspaper articles, office memoranda, emails, and other every-day materials.

The CLA+ contains a variety of different Performance Tasks. You might be asked, for example, to evaluate the claims about the cause of an event (as you will be doing in this practice performance task that follows), or recommend a course of action where you must decide between options that have desirable and undesirable features.

What is presented in the practice example is a much abbreviated version of a Performance Task. It illustrates some of the key components you will find in completing the CLA+. The example only includes two documents, with only one question posed. Nevertheless, please familiarize yourself with how the Performance Task includes a real-world scenario, a question, and a series of documents that reflect authentically what you might actually find in this situation.

This example is also intended to familiarize you with what is expected in a high-quality response. The example response demonstrates the student's critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The CLA+ is an online assessment
- It is delivered through a secure browser
- For more information about the CLA+, please visit cae.org.
- You may also email the CLA+ Team at clateam@cae.org.



INSTRUCTIONS

This is an example of a brief Performance Task. In the course of this practice performance task, you will prepare a written response to a hypothetical but realistic situation. The Performance Task is made up of an introductory scenario, a question, and some documents that include several information sources. You will use information from the documents in carrying out the task.

While your personal values and experiences are important, you should base your response on the evidence provided in these documents.

PERFORMANCE TASK

ROLE

You are a staff member for an organization that analyzes the accuracy of policy claims made by political candidates. The organization is non-partisan, meaning that it is not influenced by, affiliated with or supportive of any one political party or candidate.

SCENARIO

Leila Jainson is running for reelection as the mayor of Stoneville. Mayor Jainson’s opponent in this contest is Dr. Carl Greer. Dr. Greer is a member of the Stoneville City Council. During a recent TV interview about cell phone use, Dr. Greer claimed that these phones interfered with people’s ability to operate a motorized vehicle and caused vehicle-related accidents in Stoneville. Dr. Greer said that reducing cell phone usage while driving motorized vehicles would lower the city’s vehicle-related accident rate. To support this argument, Dr. Greer presented a chart that compared the percentage of drivers who use cell phones while driving to the number of vehicle-related accidents. Dr. Greer based this chart on cell phone use and community data tables that were provided by the Stoneville Police Department and government population counts.

TASK

Your job is to evaluate Dr. Greer’s claims. To do so, please answer the question that follows, using the supporting documents provided (labeled A and B). Your answers should include the appropriate or relevant evidence (drawn from documents A and B) necessary to support your position.

QUESTION

Dr. Greer claims that “reducing cell phone usage while driving motorized vehicles would lower the city’s vehicle-related accident rate” (Document B exhibits the chart Dr. Greer used to support this statement).

1. What are the strengths and/or limitations of Dr. Greer’s position on this matter? What specific information in Documents A and B led you to this conclusion? What additional information, if any, would you like to have had?



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The two tables below present data about the city’s five regions. The percentage of registered drivers who use cell phones while operating a motorized vehicle (Table 1) was obtained from a population survey. The middle column of Table 1 shows the number of registered drivers involved in a motorized vehicle-related accident. The number of registered drivers (Table 1) and the percentage who are college graduates (Table 2) are based on 2005 government population counts. The percentage of moving violation offenders in Stoneville (Table 2) is based on 2005 Stoneville Police Department data.

TABLE 1: VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS STATISTICS

| Region | Percentage of drivers who use cell phones while operating a motorized vehicle | Number of registered drivers involved in a vehicle-related accident | Number of registered drivers | Number of vehicle-related accidents per 1,000 drivers |
|-------------|---|---|------------------------------|---|
| East | 1 | 72 | 8,396 | 8.58 |
| South | 3 | 110 | 13,099 | 8.40 |
| North | 5 | 171 | 18,886 | 9.05 |
| West | 8 | 204 | 23,993 | 8.50 |
| City Center | 10 | 222 | 25,875 | 8.58 |

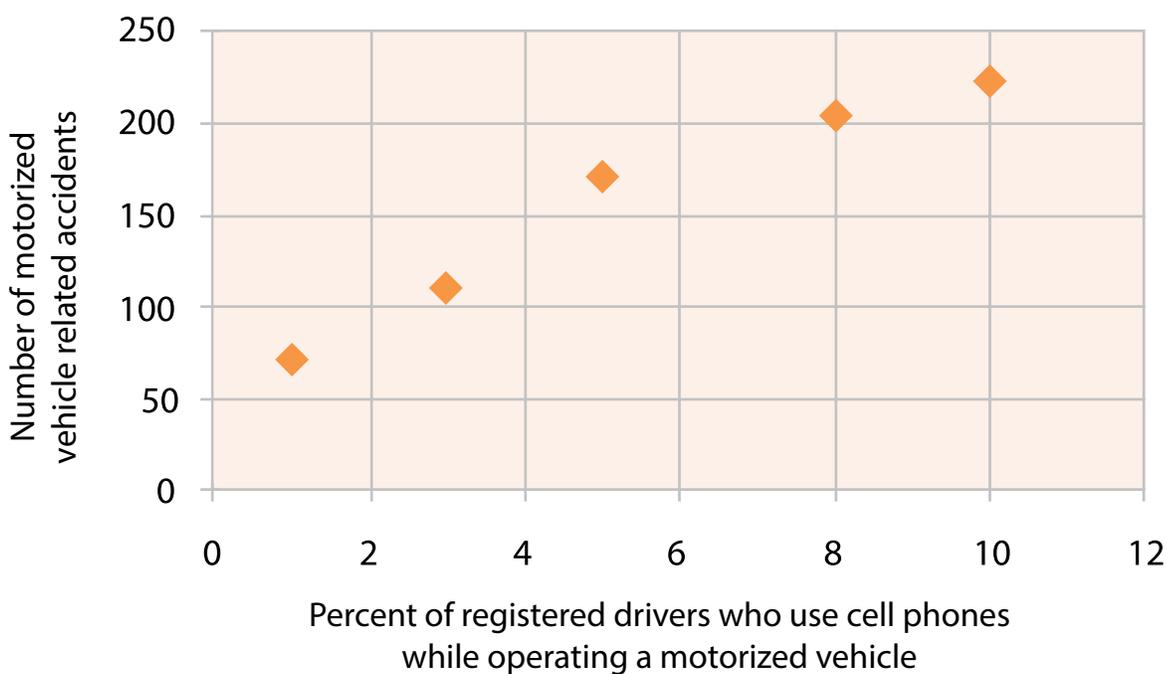
TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

| Region | Percentage of moving violation offenders in Stoneville | Percentage of drivers who are college graduates |
|-------------|--|---|
| East | 60 | 22 |
| South | 50 | 16 |
| North | 40 | 11 |
| West | 35 | 9 |
| City Center | 45 | 3 |

DR. GREER'S CHART

Dr. Greer used the chart below during a TV interview to show the relationship between the number people who use cell phones while driving a motorized vehicle and vehicular accidents in Stoneville. This chart is based on data that were provided to Dr. Greer by the Stoneville Police Department (Document A).

Motorized Vehicle Accident and Cell Phone Use in Stoneville



SAMPLE RESPONSE

Below is a sample of a high-quality response to this Performance Task and a rationale as to why it is considered such. This was developed to help you understand what is expected of a good response. However, please keep in mind that it by no means covers every possible response.

It is highly recommended that you take time to formulate your own response before reviewing this one.

I cannot agree with Dr. Greer that “reducing cell phone usage while driving motorized vehicles would lower the city’s vehicle-related accident rate.” Dr. Greer’s strategy of looking for root causes of vehicle-related accidents is a good one, but cell phone use while driving may not be the primary cause of vehicular accidents in Stoneville.

The chart he showed in his TV interview (Document B) seems to show that vehicle-related accidents increase along with the percent of registered drivers using cell phones while driving. However, Dr. Greer is either misunderstanding the information he gathered from Document A to create his chart, or he is misleading the public. What his chart (Document B) does not show is the population of each region. Therefore, the chart ends up comparing a number with a percent, which is not meaningful. Dr. Greer is correct in saying that the number of vehicle-related accidents increases with the total number of registered drivers living in each region, but he fails to consider number of accidents per 1,000 drivers. When I look at the tables provided by the police department (Document A), I can see that the number of vehicle-related accidents per 1,000 drivers stays relatively constant regardless of the percentage of drivers using cell phones while operating a motorized vehicle. You would expect the region with 1% cell phone users while driving and the one with 10% to have very different vehicular accident rates, but in fact, they are the same at 8.59. This suggests that reducing cell phone use while driving a motorized vehicle may not affect the vehicular accident rate at all.

There are many things that cause vehicle-related accidents. The North region has 5% of cell phone users while operating a motorized vehicle, but a noticeably higher vehicular accident rate of 9.04%, so it leads one to wonder what is going on in this region. It would be wise to examine this region to get an idea of all the other possibilities that may exist for vehicular accidents.

WHY THIS IS A HIGH-QUALITY RESPONSE

- Clearly states position and provides rationale
- Weighs other options, but presents a position based on available evidence
- Raises issues about cause and provides specific supporting evidence that raises doubts about cause
- Discards irrelevant information (e.g. percent of registered drivers who are college graduates)
- Provides a well-organized response
- Provides a well-constructed response with complex sentences that vary in structure and length
- Recognizes a need for additional information and made a specific recommendation on the type of information