

Landscape Architects Registration Examination Preparatory Course
Freeman & Jewell Landscape Architecture May 2019

Section 0

**An Overview
of the LARE**

INDEX

Freeman & Jewell LARE Review Course

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This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide general information about the LARE for the Candidates, as a way of introducing them to the specific idiosyncrasies of the LARE, the structure of the exam, the formats of the questions, and the computer interface currently in use by CLARB. In addition, some test taking tips and preparation ideas are touched on. Additional sources for study material are also mentioned.

The Instructor

1. My name is Ray Freeman, I am the coordinator for this course.
2. I have been licensed as a Landscape Architect since 1980.
3. Currently licensed in California since 1992
4. I've been teaching LARE reviews since April of 2000.
5. Taught grading and drainage at UC Berkeley for 5 years in 1990s. Taught the Grading & Drainage review course for UC Davis Extension several times and an exam overview course in spring 2001. Was a full time lecturer at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in fall 2008. Site Engineering at Academy of Art University and UC Berkeley Extension and Materials & Detailing at UC Berkeley, 2013-2015.
6. Worked in both the public and private sectors, 42 years experience.
7. Own LA firm in Berkeley, Freeman & Jewell. No employees. Primarily operate as a free-lance consultant.

Feedback is Encouraged

We would love to hear from you about your experience with the exam and the relevance of these classes to your preparation.

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E-mail is by far the best medium for posing questions as it allows me to keep an electronic record of your suggestions which can be directly incorporated into the course materials.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LARE Structure of the Test

1. These sections of the LARE are given over a 12 day period. CLARB reorganized all of the sections after the December 2016 exam period. In California, as in many other states, there is a state specific section, however, in California it is given at a separate time from the LARE.

Be aware that whenever CLARB reorganizes the LARE, the boundaries between the sections become somewhat blurred. It is likely that you will find topics on some sections of the test that seem to be in the wrong section. Adjust your study plans accordingly.

2. The LARE sections are:
 - A. Section 1: Project and Construction Management
85 multiple choice and key list questions; 2.5 hours exam time
 - B. Section 2: Inventory and Analysis
70 multiple choice and key list questions; 2 hours exam time
 - C. Section 3: Design
85 items; exam time 3.5 hours.
 - D. Section 4: Construction Documentation
105 items; exam time 4.0 hours.
3. California Section: The section may only be taken by those candidates who pass all 4 sections of the LARE.

The California section is a 100 question multiple choice exam. The first opportunity to take this new exam was September 2007. It was revised in August 2011, and may have been revised since.

4. Additional detail on the exam format is given in the Appendices to this section of the course book, and/or can be downloaded from the CLARB website in the form of the 2018 LARE Orientation Guide. I strongly recommend that you spend some time reviewing the lists of subject matter in these documents as they generally describe the information to be tested on each section of the LARE.

Additional Suggested Study Material (not exhaustive)

- A. LARE Orientation Guide (from the CLARB Web site);
<http://www.clarb.org/docs/default-source/take-the-exam/lareorientationguide.pdf?sfvrsn=4>
A 28 page downloadable PDF.
- B. LARE Exam Specifications (included in the Orientation Guide)
- C. LARE Reference List
<https://www.clarb.org/Candidates/Pages/StudyRefList.aspx>
- D. Exam Overview Videos from CLARB and the ASLA
<http://www.youtube.com/>
There are at least three videos from these entities on YouTube. Type in LARE Exam once you are in YouTube to find them. Two of them are about ten minutes long, the other is 44 minutes. Names are: LARE34, LARE Demonstration 2012, ASLA LARE Video
- E. “The Landscape Architect Registration Examination: A Step by Step Guide” You should try to find someone who has this old document from CLARB. It contains 30 sample questions for sections A, B and D. The questions are still valid as examples of the subject matter and question form, type and format that will be encountered on the new exam.
- F. Section 1 and 2 Practice Exams
Section 3 and 4 Practice Exams
<https://www.asla.org/LAREPrep.aspx>
- G. Books from Professional Publications, Inc., Morrison Media, LLC and Shake & Bake Publishing are out of date (all of their material is from 2005-2007 or earlier) However, much of the material in them is still valid for the former sections A, B and D.
- H. There is a fairly new company called LAREprep.
<https://www.lareprep.com/>

They offer a couple of practice tests for each section of the LARE. I have given a cursory look at their sample material, which consists of on-line tests. The material appears to be reasonable. Each test allows you access for 90 days. They cost between \$22-28 per test.

The California Supplemental Examination

The California specific exam is a 100 question multiple choice test. The subject matter will be primarily on issues of particular concern to Landscape Architecture in California. *You may not sit for this exam until you have passed all sections of the LARE.*

It would be reasonable to expect questions on firescaping, water conservation, irrigation design, CEQA, Title 24, the roles of various California agencies, California native plants, plant communities and environments.

As the LARE generally under tests on plant materials, planting design considerations, and plant diseases and pests_anticipate that the state exam may address many plant-related issues. In addition, testing on irrigation can be expected to be much more intense on the CSE than on the LARE.

PREPARATION FOR THE LARE

Study and Exam Preparation Strategy

The exam is divided into sections dealing with different aspects of practice. CLARB says that proficiency is evaluated by an objective, consistency-based procedure. Proficiency is also evaluated by timed applications of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Objective questions and individual performance problems are crafted to be adequately completed within a certain time period, if the candidate is proficient.

My experience and that of others is that the time constraints can be tight. ***Good time management during the exam is critical for success.***

You should therefore have two broad goals for your study strategy:

- Know the content of the exam well enough to answer the questions and solve linked problems (sections 3 & 4).
- Know both the content and the format of the exam well enough to apply your knowledge efficiently.

Not everyone processes and retains information in the same way. Some people read and retain, while others learn by doing. Part of your self-evaluation should be a look at your personal learning style. Understanding how you study can help in scheduling your exam preparation, finding appropriate study materials, and deciding what types of diagnostic vignettes, review sessions, study groups or partners, or other resources are most appropriate and efficient for your needs.

Possibly the three most important elements for passing the LARE are:

1. Fluency and experience within each subject area of the exam.
2. Developing and maintaining a positive attitude towards test-taking in general and developing the ability to deal effectively with test-taking stress. In other words, remain calm and focused during the exam. Develop an anxiety reduction routine to use during the test in case you need it.
3. Developing the ability to keep written instructions and information in context, treating each problem statement as a complete task.

Keeping the above elements in mind, focus your preparation on the following activities:

- Gather and consult necessary information sources and reference materials.
- Understand the rules of the LARE.
- Study.
- Read and work with the information in the LARE Orientation Guide.

Place some emphasis on the following:

- Your weak areas
- Areas given priority by the Exam Specifications
- Books with overviews of general principles and theories
- Books with glossaries of terms
- Books listed in CLARBs recommended references.
- Applied knowledge_the whys and hows of using information as a problem solving tool

You (and your study group if you have one) can consider building a reference library. If you have not been involved with implementation of the traditional design process, you would benefit from a text which describes the intent and methods of the process, because both the exam content and the format are based on the nomenclature and application of the simple process (site selection, inventory and analysis, functional diagrams, conceptual design, preliminary design, design development, details, documentation, grading and drainage and other aspects of traditional practice).

Balance your study time realistically: spend thirty minutes or more every day reading text, and spend concentrated blocks of time once a week on practice problems and review of your notes. In addition to memorizing basic formulas, definitions, and other specifics, use the references to understand the fundamentals behind the formulas and their application. Your understanding of these principles and your ability to apply them will be tested in several ways. Objective questions and performance problems will require "instant recall" of these principles to solve a variety of problems quickly.

Do not rely on last minute "cramming" to get you through the exam. As you may remember, this didn't work so well in college and it definitely **WILL NOT WORK** with the LARE. The exam material is too broad and the test too comprehensive to cram it all in a week or two. Immerse yourself gradually but fully in your study material and practice, practice, practice the performance problems.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA)

Every 5 to 7 years, CLARB mails an exhaustive survey to 6,000 licensed landscape architects in the United States and Canada. The results are compiled into the CLARB Task Analysis, a book which includes the practice type, ages, demographics, and other data about the respondents, and the summary of the data. Of particular importance to exam candidates, this book is a comprehensive list of the tasks listed in the survey which licensed landscape architects have described as both important to the practice of a minimally competent landscape architect, and as tasks which are frequently performed in the practice of landscape architecture. These tasks are described as "knowledge, skills, and abilities," and they are most often referred to as KSA.

For the candidate, the detailed lists of the KSA in the CLARB Task Analysis, which have been distilled and listed in the LARE Examination Specifications (see Appendices) are the core material of the LARE.

The KSA used in the exam are divided into the same areas of practice as the LARE. For each objective and performance exam section, the KSA which will be included in the section are listed. Some KSA are so important, or performed so frequently, that they will be tested in more than one section of the exam. The Task Analysis survey respondents rate the tasks on a 0 to 5 scale; 0 means the task is not important or not performed frequently by the minimally competent landscape architect. Obviously, the higher the score, the more likely the task needs to be tested in the LARE. By the same token, the items with higher scores may be more frequently tested within an exam section than items with lower scores.

For example, one obviously important and frequently performed task is "ability to interpret base plan information, topographic or other surveys." Because of its high importance score, there may be more questions about this KSA than all the other KSA in that section.

KSA Categories

Knowledge: Do you know this or not?

Applied: Use knowledge to solve a problem.

KSA Examples

- An objective question with a graphic illustration of topographic contours asks the candidate to identify specific land forms. (Sections 2, 3, or 4)
- Identify appropriate means of eliciting user values in order to develop a program for a project. (Section 1)
- Identify the type of planning regulation that controls building setbacks from property lines. (Section 2)
- Properly identify the party responsible for methods of construction. (Section 1)
- Be able to identify the proper sequence of stages in the design process, or know what tasks are typically performed within each stage. (Sections 2 or 3)
- Given a landform, choose among several options the best site to maximize solar access. (Section 3, possibly 2)
- Analyse a site to determine proper locations for various program elements. (section 2)
- Answer questions about contracts and construction law. (Section 1)
- Evaluate a construction detail for adequacy, or identify problems in the detail, or choose best detail from several options. (Section 4)
- Identify the proper fastener to use to assemble different material components (Section 4)
- Calculate slope between two points in order to meet a standard such as ADA or a stated slope requirement. (Section 4)

These examples are given to illustrate that knowing the KSAs will help you streamline your study time and evaluate your strengths. You can use the KSAs as a section-by-section checklist for you or your study group.

Explicit and Implicit Requirements

In an exam process that is very clear and precise, there are nonetheless some gray areas. It is impossible for CLARB to set down every single thing a landscape architect should know. In addition, the field has become so broad over the past fifteen years, that it is impossible to test every topic available. There are simply not enough exam questions to do that. Therefore, subject matter tested may vary from exam period to exam period.

There are explicit and implicit expectations. Individual problem statements, and the LARE Orientation Manual contain explicit directions and expectations that are clear, precise, and specific.

Beyond those are unwritten, implicit expectations of what a Landscape Architect should reasonably be expected to know without having to be reminded of their importance in protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare.

On the LARE explicit requirements are spelled out in the problem statement. Explicit requirements direct you to perform certain actions or to answer questions based on emphasis in specific areas. Mainly, you need to read the problem statements carefully and select the most appropriate answer from those available. You may not believe any of the available answers are “correct”, however you can only use the available answers.

The explicit expectations are prepared for ease of evaluation, consistency, and to help the candidate study for a particular section of the exam.

Implicit requirements may include:

- Anything to do with the Health, Safety and Welfare of the general public. For example, pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.
- Compliance with regulations and codes.
- Minimizing adverse environmental impacts
- Efficiency in the use of materials and cost savings.

These are listed in order of priority for questions that do not seem to rank one of these criteria above another.

Three critically important implicit requirements of the exam are:

- You will carefully read, understand and base your answer on the problem statements and contextual information on the exam.
- You will understand the material in the LARE Orientation Guide and know how to use any charts and tables in it that apply to the objective sections of the exam.

- A minimally competent landscape architect should not have to be reminded to provide solutions that are safe, efficient, and reasonable.

LARE EXAM SPECIFICATIONS & LARE ORIENTATION GUIDE

You are receiving copies of the LARE Exam Specifications and LARE Reference List as a part of this course. You can also download PDFs of these documents (which may be more current) from the CLARB web site. An additional document (The LARE Orientation Guide) provides slightly different descriptions of the material on the exam and has some tables and charts used in section 4.

Candidates who have registered for the exam can gain access to some free “New Content Examples” (test questions) for each section of the exam. There are 15 questions for each section.

Thoroughly familiarize yourself with the material in these documents. CLARB revised the Examination Specifications in late December 2016, however, they are still sketchy compared to the pre-2005 exam specifications.

Do not assume that material that isn’t in these documents will not be in the exam. Codes, regulations, and materials can vary widely from region to region and state to state. The LARE Exam Specifications, the LARE Orientation Guide, and standard references such as Time Savers Standards provide some consistency in standards applicable to the exam. The candidate should be wary about confusing, for example national ADA standards, with California Title 24 standards.

CLARB has flatly stated that relevant code information critical to answering questions on the exam will either be provided in pop-up windows (exhibits) on the computer screen or in the LARE Orientation Guide. Because it is impossible for any individual to remember everything about every single code, the exam tests whether, when you are given the code, you can use it effectively and accurately. If you can do it for the LARE, it is assumed you can do it in the office.

OTHER RESOURCES

1. CLARB downloadable practice tests were made available for Sections 1 and 2 in late August 2012. (see the ASLA web site)
2. CLARB downloadable practice tests were made available for Sections 3 and 4 in February 2013. (see the ASLA website)

3. Study Groups
Get together with a group of friends (people you meet here are good possibilities) and do some studying. You can often assign different topics to individuals who research them then get back together for updates.
4. Self Testing
Bear in mind that a significant part of preparing for the test is to actually experience the test environment in advance. *Taking multiple choice tests under time constraints is a good way to acclimate yourself to the exam in advance.* The demands of the LARE are quite different than what most of you have experienced in school or in your jobs, ***I can not emphasize enough how important it is to simulate the experience of the LARE in advance.***
5. Internet Resources
You may be able to find old test questions posted on the internet. The usual location to find discussions is the Google Groups LARE Exam group.
<http://groups.google.com/group/lare-exam?lnk=>

In addition, here is a Google Drive link to old resources:
<https://docs.google.com/folder/d/0BzvCItdSSIQwOTFXSHpGMG5abWc/edit> *Note: This link is good as of early March 2019.*

Here you can find some old sample tests and prep materials for the LARE. Some of it is duplicates and some quite dated. In addition, I would say the most valuable information is the sample exams produced by CLARB. There are also some sample tests which were prepared from the Georgia Chapter by faculty at the University of Georgia which is also pretty decent.
6. Scope out the test site
If possible, visit the room where the test will be held a week in advance. Check out the facility, water fountain location, bathroom locations, concession areas, and other facility related features that you feel will be relevant. Evaluate the noise levels in the testing facility. The new computer-based testing vendor is Pearson VUE. You can look at a video of one of their testing facilities and their process at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly3QqlES_4w&feature=plcp
7. Copies of old multiple choice tests from CLARB or material from the Step by Steps Guide or the Road to Licensure and Beyond. While this material may be out of date, it may prove useful in getting a better handle on the exam content and question formats.

STANDARD LARE QUESTION FORMATS

Note: This information is based on the LARE practice exams and information provided by CLARB in the Road to Licensure and Beyond, 5th ed., The LARE: A Step by Step Guide, and on the CLARB web site and associated videos.

Standard Multiple Choice Format

1. Three reasons an easement may be created include:
 - A. Parking, access, and wildlife corridors
 - B. Landscaping, utilities and timber harvesting
 - C. Access, wildlife corridors and drainage
 - D. Open space, access and utilities

This is a little more complex than a standard MC question. In this case, all three answers for each “Answer” must be correct. This topic is typically tested in Section 2.

Standard Multiple Choice Format with Calculations

2. You are given the following coordinates of two points:

Point #1	North 1000	East 500
Point #2	North 850	East 625

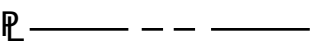
What is the horizontal distance between these points?

- A. 195 feet
- B. 548 feet
- C. 275 feet
- D. 175 feet

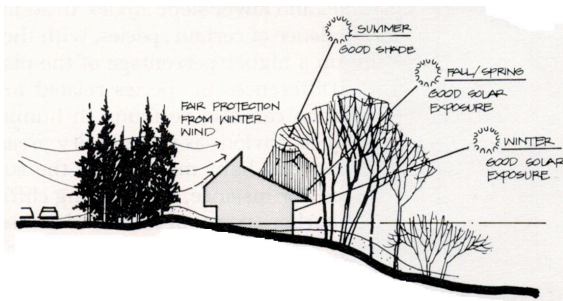
This is a layout/dimensioning calculation. It is likely it would be tested in Section 4.

Standard Multiple Choice Format with Graphics

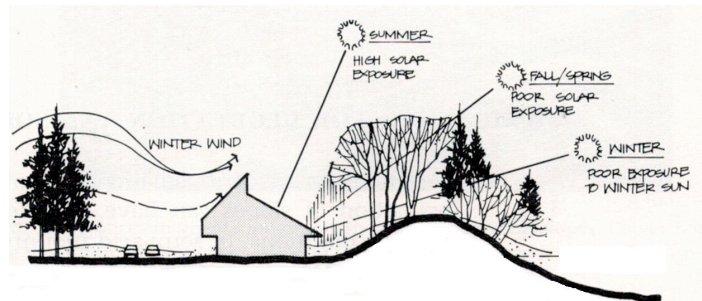
3. Which of the following is not a standard graphic symbol for the corresponding item?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| A. +100.0 | Existing Spot Elevation |
| B. DI | Drain Inlet |
| C. - - - - 30 - - - - | Existing Contour Line |
| D.  - - - - | Property Line |

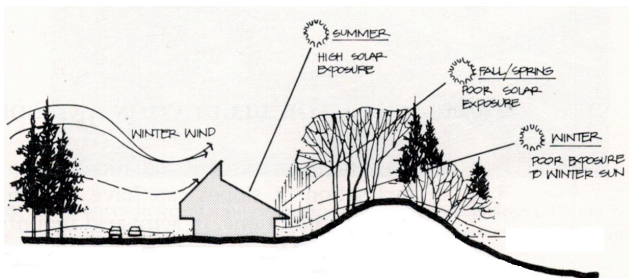
4. Which of the following grading and planting schemes is suitable for a cold, high elevation site?



A



B

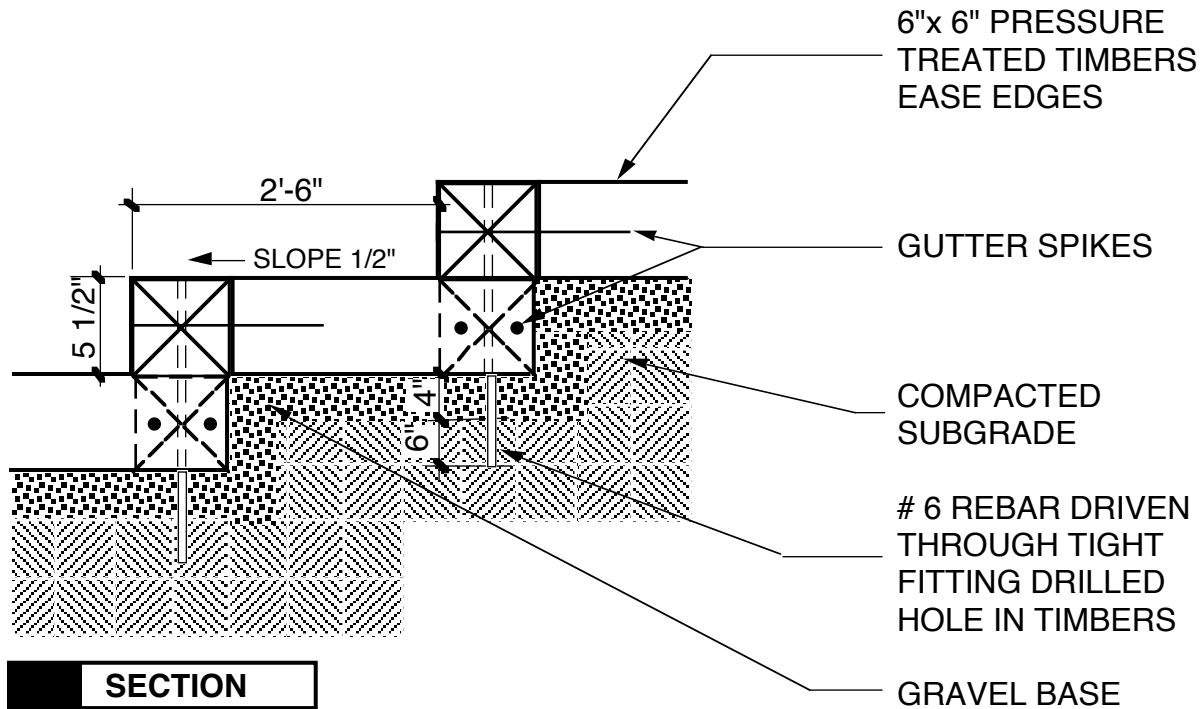


C

Illustrations from Marsh: Landscape Planning

Detail Evaluation Format (Section 4 Only)

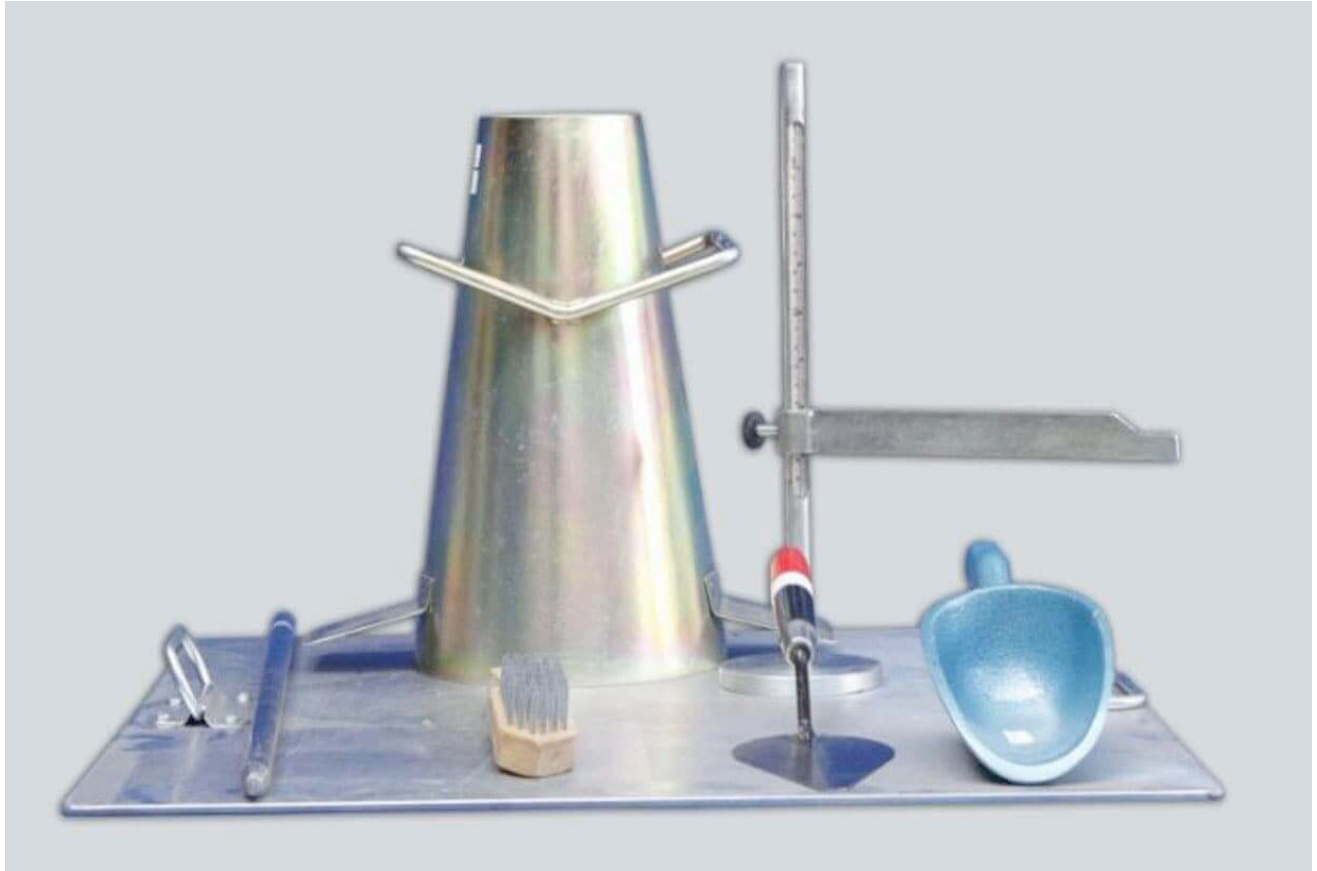
5. Evaluate the detail and determine if there is an error in the detail. Which of the following is the most correct statement concerning the detail shown?
- A. The detail is correct.
 - B. Base thickness is not appropriate (too thick or too thin).
 - C. Timber dimension is not appropriate.
 - D. Subgrade is inadequately prepared.
 - E. Riser height is not appropriate.
 - F. Slope on tread is inadequate.
 - G. Rebar embedment in subgrade is not appropriate.
 - H. Expansion joint required but not shown.



A recent (2013) wrinkle is details and plans or sections with drag and drop labels.

Photograph Evaluation Format

Evaluate a photograph of an object_for example a set of stairs_and choose an answer to a question about the photo that is most correct. This is a format added in September 2007. It's very similar to evaluating a detail.



6. What is the equipment above used for?

- A. Concrete compression test
- B. Concrete slump test
- C. Concrete strength test
- D. Concrete slip test

Multiple Answer Format

This, unfortunately, has been a very common format used by CLARB. It is like a multiple choice question within a multiple choice question. This format takes additional time and effort to answer in comparison to more standard multiple choice questions. There is some possibility that this type of question may not be used in the new exam.

7. Duties of the Landscape Architect during construction include:

- I. Insures compliance with the contract documents
 - II. Asserts control over methods of construction
 - III. Rules on the acceptability of materials
 - IV. Keeps the Owner informed of project status
-
- A. I and III only
 - B. I, II and III
 - C. I, III and IV
 - D. All of the above

This question format can be attacked with limited knowledge by eliminating answers that contain known incorrect info or including only those that contain know correct info.

Use of Tables and Charts

There will be at least one question in Section 4 that will require you to size timbers for (most likely) a wood deck using a chart.

There will also be at least one question on Section 4 that where you will size a storm drain pipe using a nomograph which is based on the Manning Equation.

It is possible that you will be required to develop answers by reading other types of tables or charts on sections 1, 2, and 3.

Interpreting soil boring information will be tested on sections 3 and 4, and possibly on section 2.

AIT FORMATS

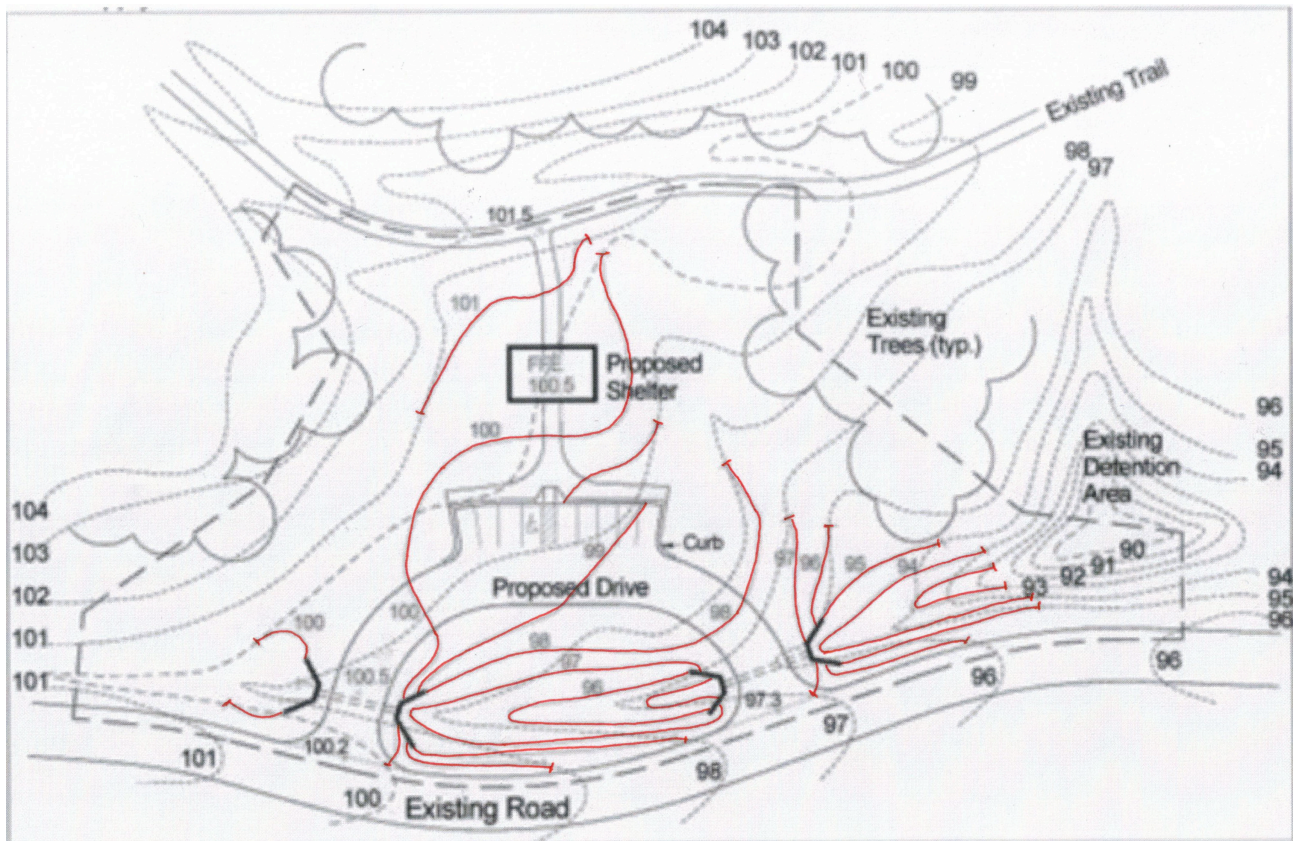
Measurement on most AIT (Advanced Item Type) questions is given in units. The actual dimensions are shown on the problem drawing where they are needed to solve the problem.

You can see examples of this on the CLARB You Tube videos.

Multiple Response Format

This question format will ask you to indicate answers from a list that apply to a single question. Below is an example.

Which statements are true? Select all that apply.



- ☐ The proposed contours indicate grading within the drip line of the existing trees.
- ☐ The proposed contours direct the runoff away from the picnic shelter.
- ☐ The proposed contours direct the water away from the existing detention area.
- ☐ All proposed contours tie into the correct corresponding existing contours.

Section 4 problem.

Where the list contains more than 4-5 possible answers, you will be told the correct number to choose. With less than 5 possible answers, you will be told to choose all that apply. This is a difficult question format.

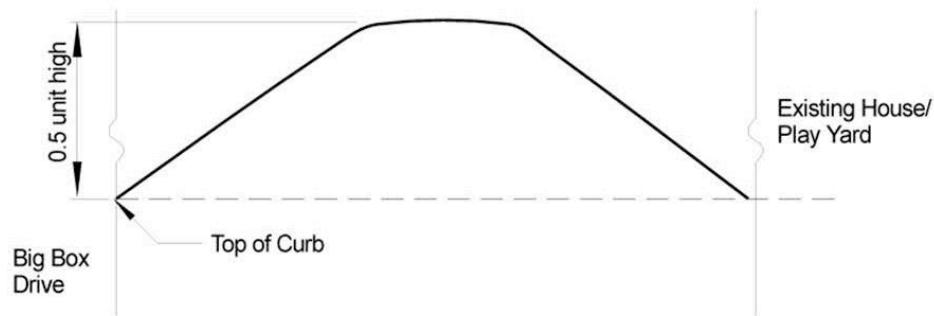
According to recent info from CLARB, when the question says “Select all that apply”, the number of correct answers will be more than one, but less than all.

The following formats are supposed to be exclusive to Sections 3 & 4.

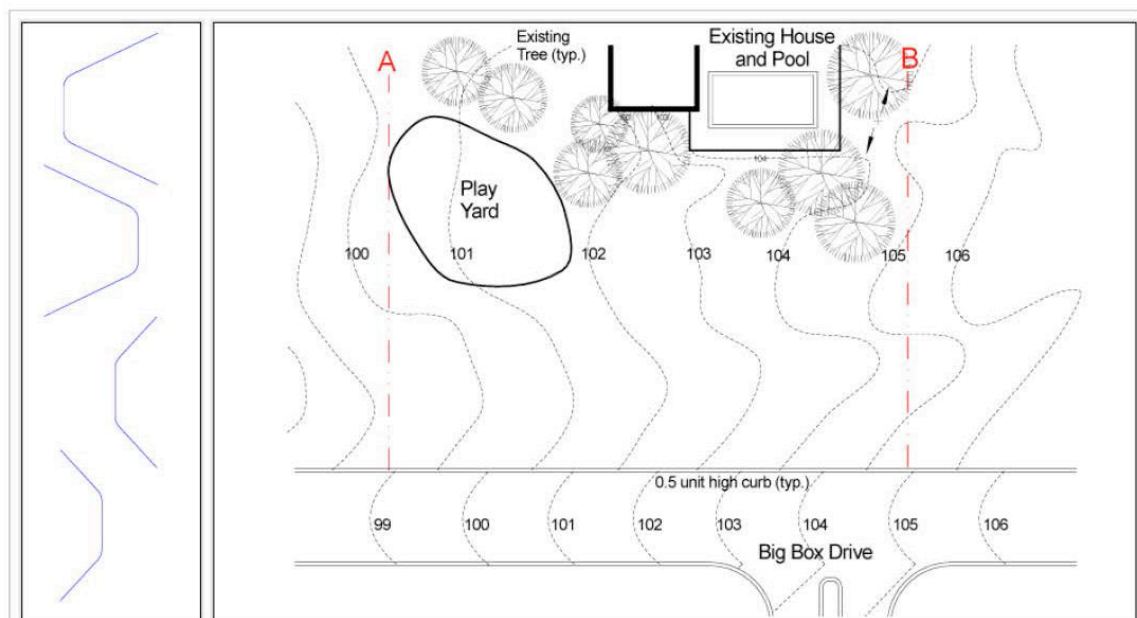
Drag and Place Format

You will be shown a site plan and be given one or more elements to correctly place on a site. These elements may include buildings, parking lots, play fields or courts, or other elements. The computer interface will allow you to pick up an element from a sidebar using the mouse and position it on a plan view of the site.

The following example is a Section 4 problem.



Question:

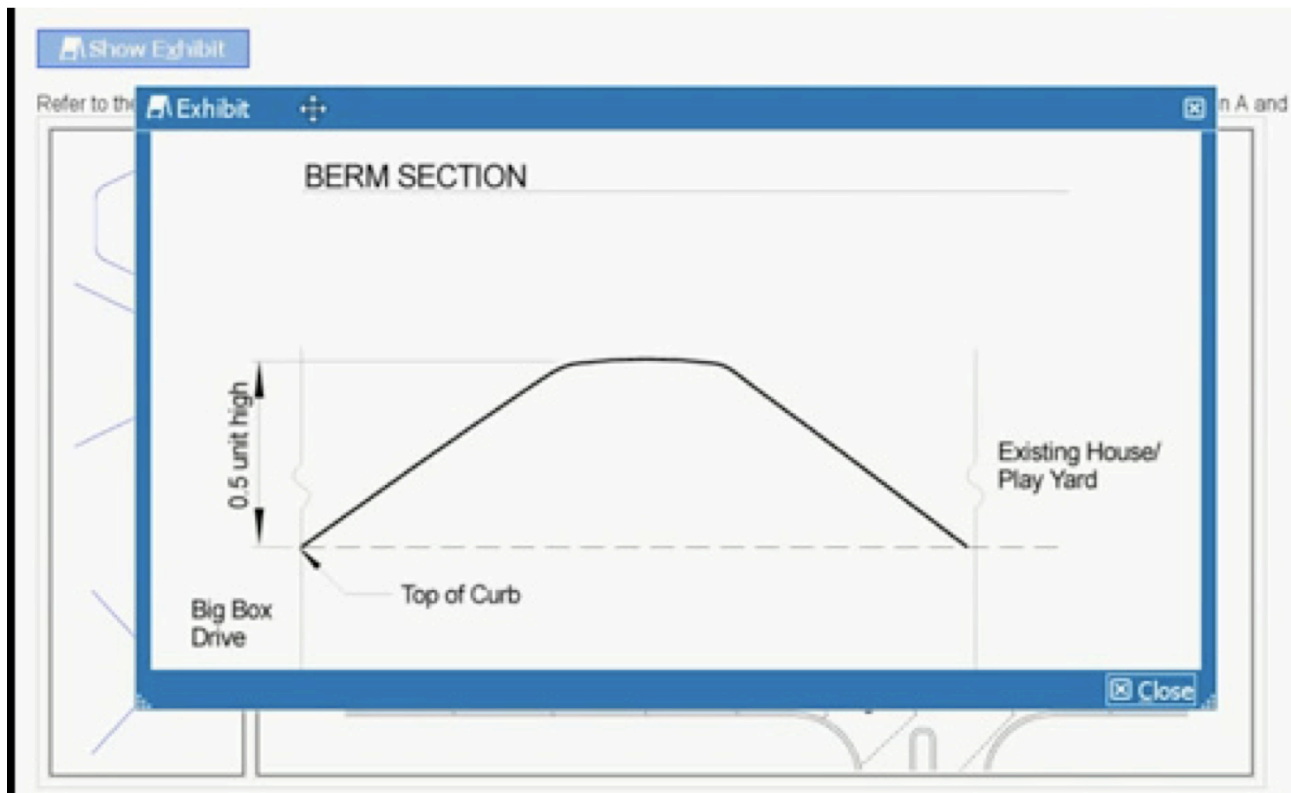


Q. Place the appropriate contours on the site plan to create a 0.5 unit high berm along the existing street between lines A and B.

Exhibits

Exhibits can be called up from certain graphical problems by clicking on a box labeled SHOW EXHIBIT. These exhibits contain information necessary to help solve the problem.

The illustration below shows what a 0.5 unit high berm looks like for the AIT problem immediately above. This exhibit contains two primary pieces of information: where the berm is placed relative to the road, and the landforms shape and proportions.



The further examples for this problem in the class powerpoint are from one of the CLARB videos and have been omitted from this text.

In this example, the shape of the landform should allow you to determine the two landforms in the well that are too tall. Also note that the Exhibit indicates that the toe of one side of the berm should touch or be very close to the curb.

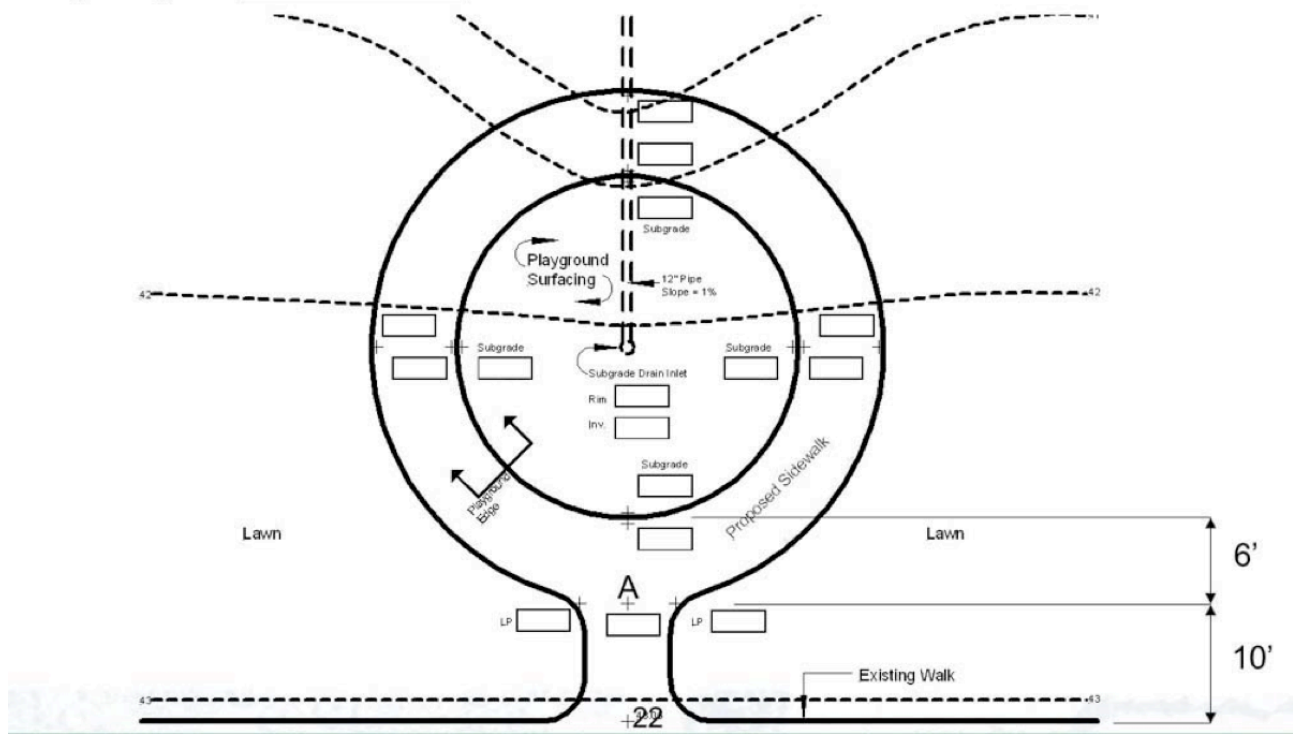
Sometimes there will be more than one exhibit associated with a plan view problem.

Fill in the Box Format

A variation on the drag and drop format may ask you to select a number or a label from a list and place it in a box provided on a drawing. For example, you may need to calculate a spot elevation, select the correct answer from a list, and place it in the correct box on the plan.

What would the spot elevation be at location A to ensure runoff does not flow onto the existing walk or playground surface? The paving must slope between 1% and 3%

Spot equals _____



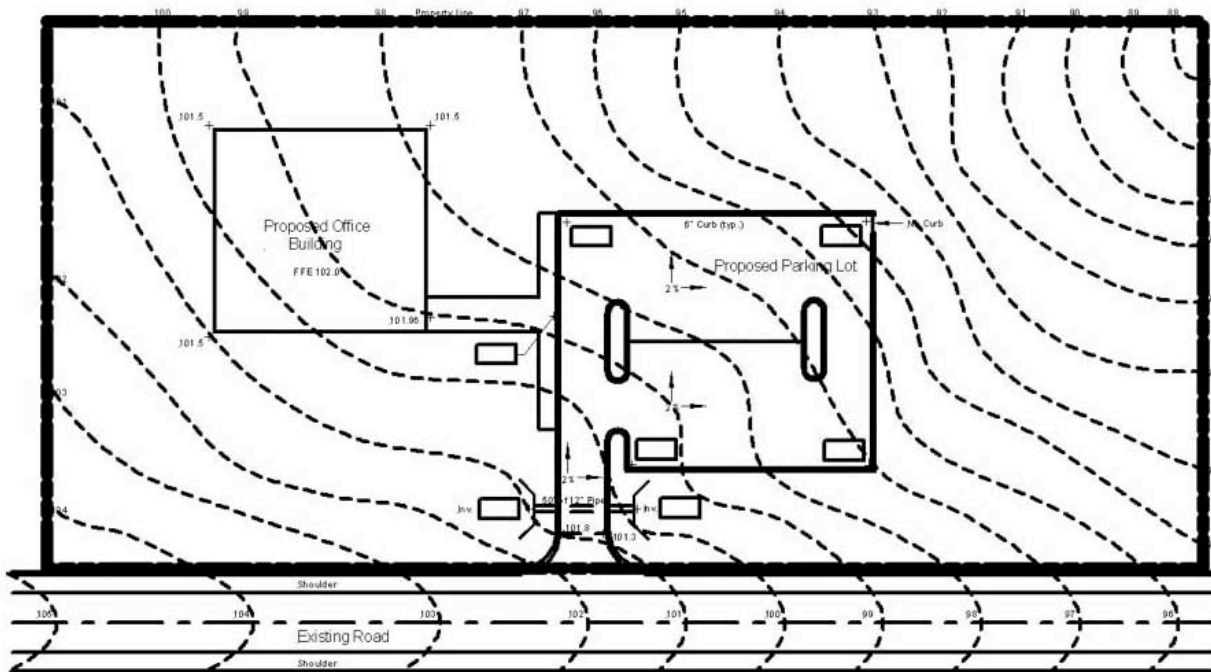
- 20.6
- 21.0
- 21.5
- 21.9

This is a Section 4 problem. There are many more boxes than needed, because CLARB is using an unmodified graphic from an old Section 4 vignette.

Hot Spot Format

You will be asked to click on a location on a site using the computer mouse to show the correct placement of a small element such as a spot elevation or drain inlet.

You have been asked to develop a grading plan for a proposed office building. Use your mouse to click the location where you would locate a high point of swale (HPS) to ensure that runoff was properly diverted on the site.

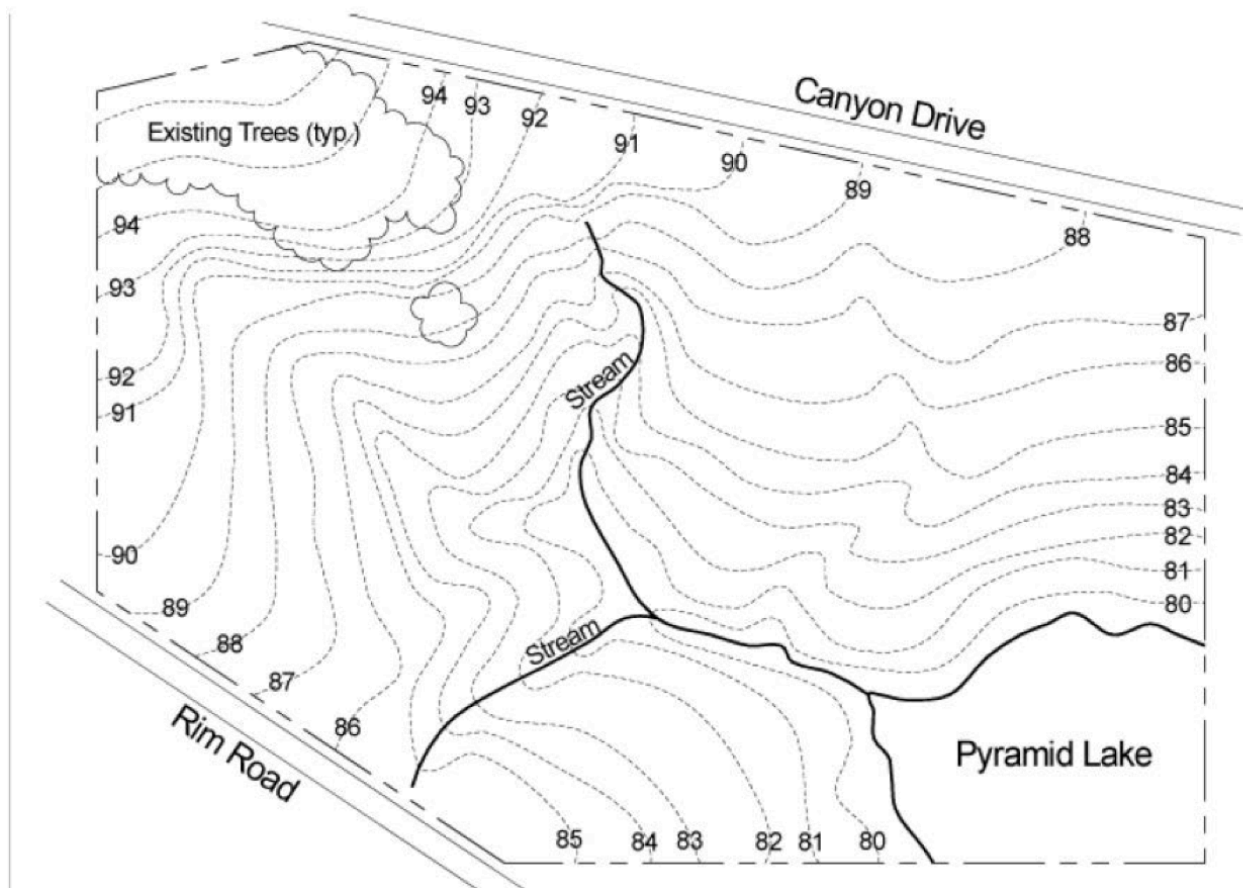


Section 4 problem, although by changing the wording of the question, CLARB has used this same graphic as a Section 3 question about pedestrian-vehicular conflicts.

Graphic Analysis Question

Utilizing the existing topography, identify the most appropriate location to construct an earthen berm to retain the largest volume of water with the least environmental impact. Construction is not permitted in the existing stream channels.

EXHIBIT

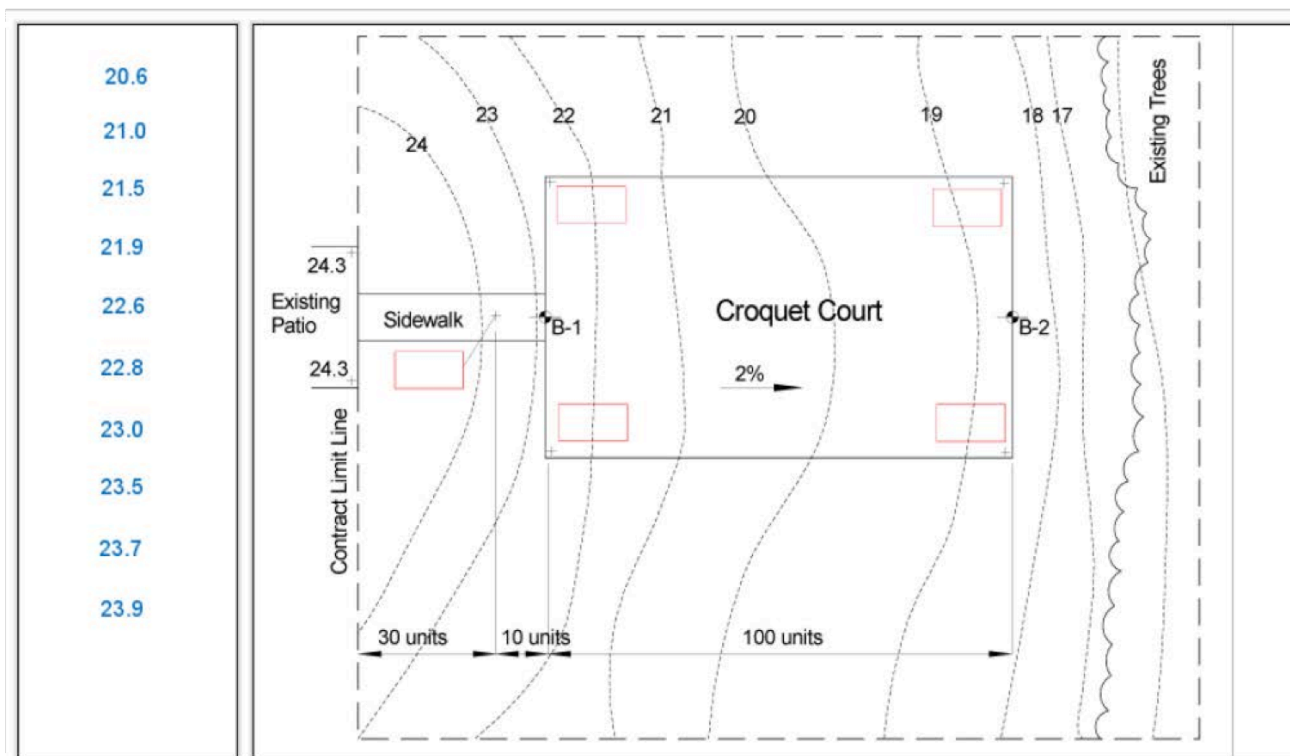


Here you must be able to evaluate watershed size (by implication) in order to solve this problem. This example is also from a CLARB video.

Multiple Box Fill-Ins and Exhibit

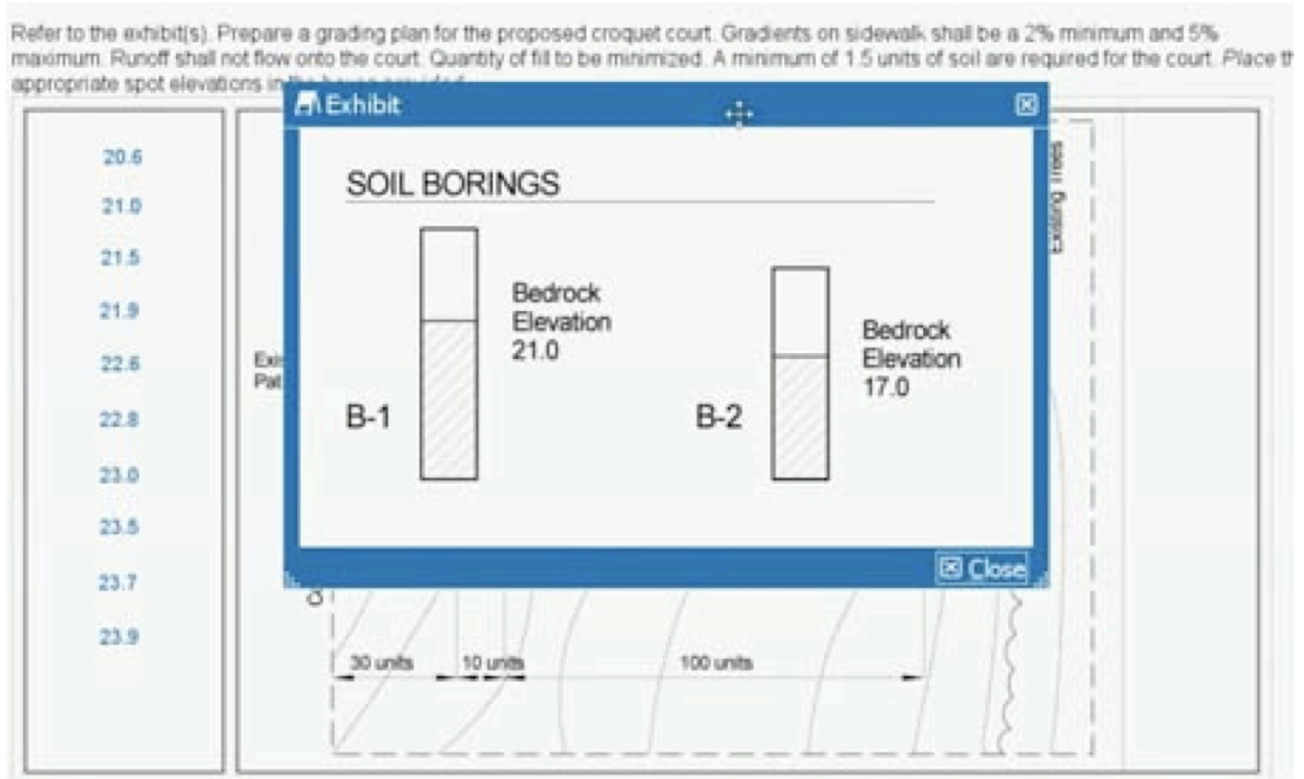
The following is also from a CLARB video. It illustrates the maximum level of complexity a section 4 graphic problem should involve.

Prepare a grading plan for the proposed croquet court. Gradients on the sidewalk shall be 2% min. and 5% max. Runoff shall not flow onto the court. Quantity of fill to be minimized. A minimum of 1.5 units of soil are required for the court. Place the appropriate spot elevations in the boxes provided.



Here the grades are influenced by soils conditions. Here you have a control elevation (ex. Patio), min and max grades on a sidewalk, a directive regarding walk drainage, and criteria for slope and direction of slope on the field. In addition, there are soil borings showing rock depth and a requirement in the problem statement for a minimum of 1.5 units of soil over rock. This is quite a bit more involved than the other AITs we saw earlier.

It will probably require at least 5 minutes to solve this problem.

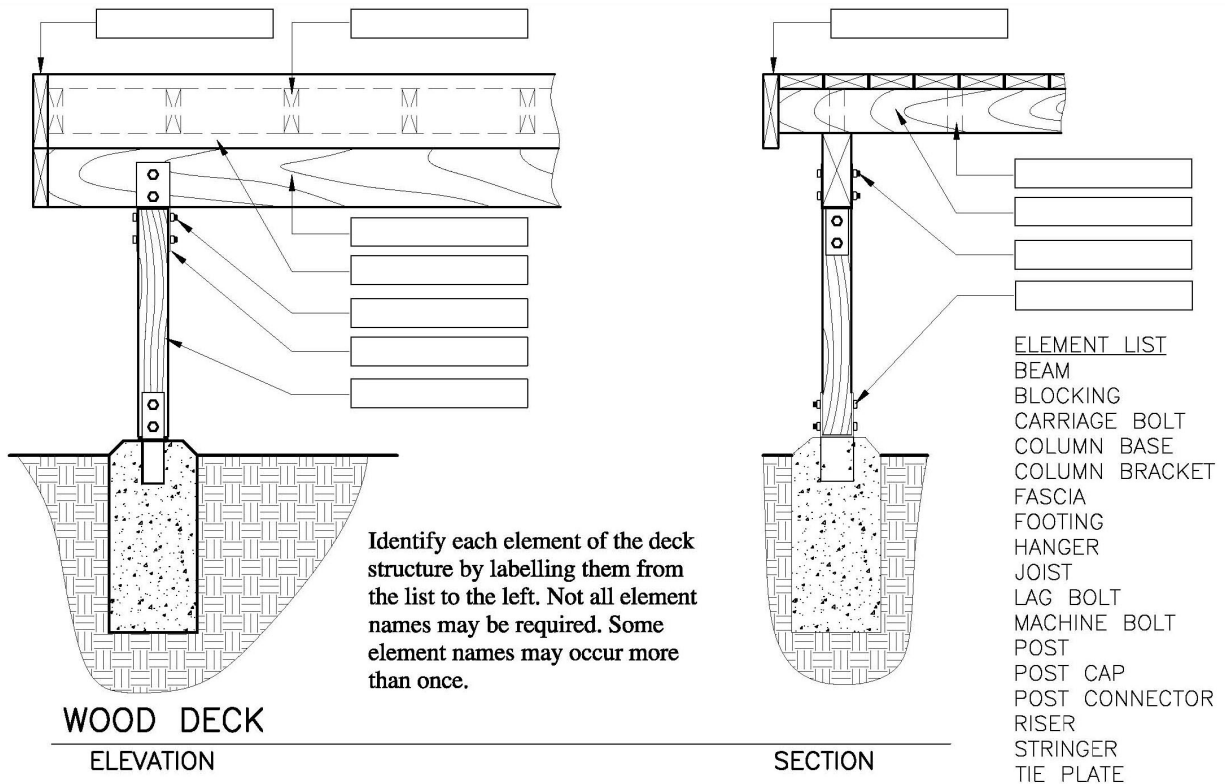


The soil borings exhibit for the croquet court problem. Here bedrock elevations are given relative to topographic elevations. Sometimes soil boring information will be given in depth below the ground surface.

On this problem, the 1.5 unit depth of soil requirement is tied to the bedrock conditions.

Fill in the Boxes Construction Detail Format

You will be given various drawings in plan, section or elevation and asked to fill in boxes from a list of possible answers. Plenty of boxes. More answers than boxes. You may need to use some answers more than once....or not.



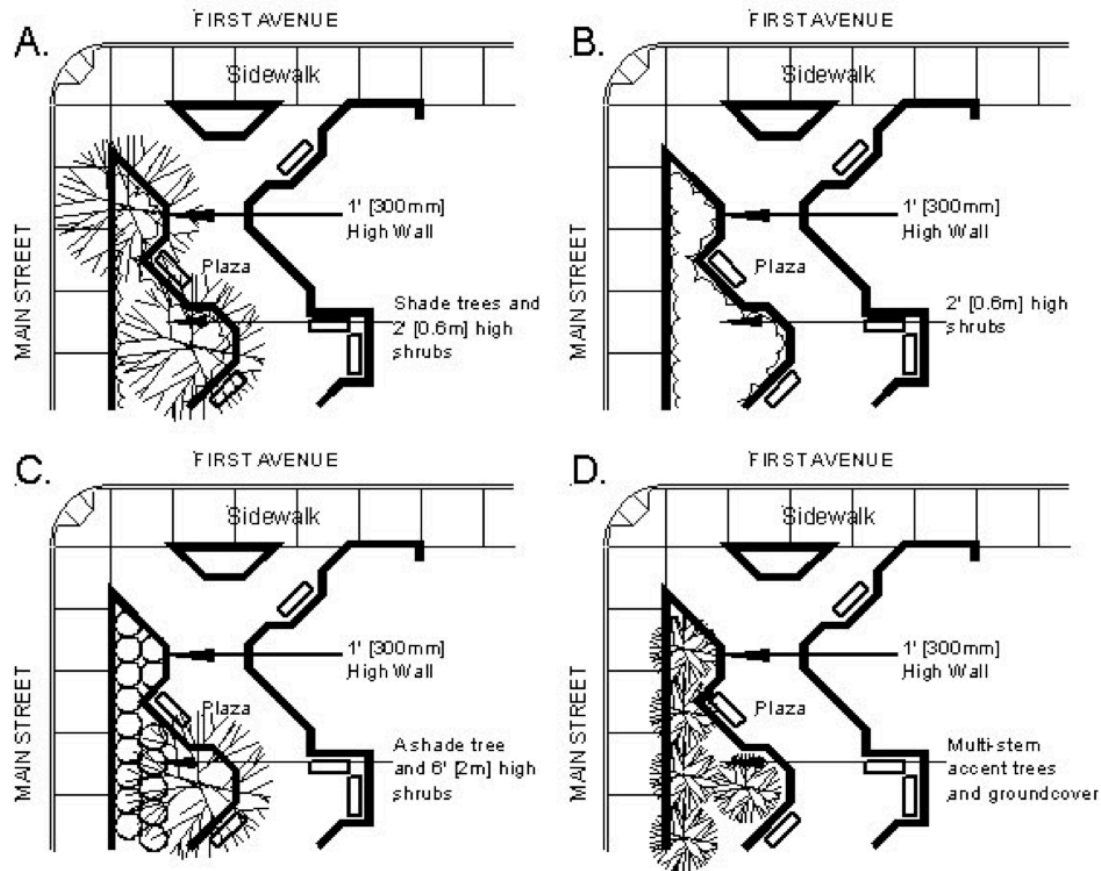
It's a detail, therefore a Section 4 problem.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Inappropriate Content for the Section

You will likely encounter some questions that you did not expect to find on the specific section you are taking. Here is one from a CLARB sample test. It's a plant massing question, clearly a task performed during design (schematic or design development), NOT construction documentation. Yet this question was in a section 4 practice test.

34. Using the graphic provided, select the planting scheme that provides the most comfort and security for plaza users in a warm climate. *Select the best scheme.*

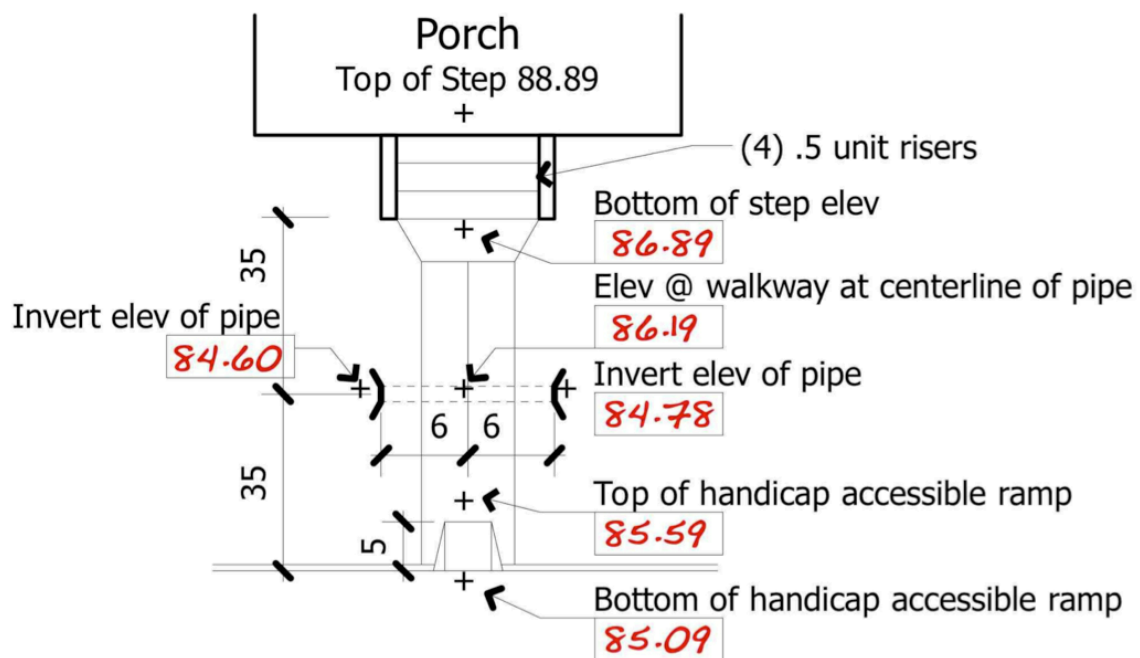


Also, Concrete questions seem to pop up in sections 1, 3 and 4 in various forms. Concrete testing is usually in section 1. Selection of color and finish might be in section 3, and questions about jointing are likely to be in section 4.

Take Practice and Reference Material with a Grain of Salt

Just because something is in print, or some way posted it to the internet does not mean it is true or accurate. Here is an example from the 2012 ASLA Convention LARE class. My advice is that if something you are reading seems questionable to you, treat it as an opportunity to conduct further research!

WALKWAY WITH PIPE UNDERDRAIN



Given: Concrete on walkway .5 units thick, slope 2%
.5 unit pipe to slope 1.5%
with a minimum of 12" cover over pipe, including walkway

The spot elevation 85.09 at the bottom of the curb ramp is incorrect! It does not comply with ADA requirements.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE EXAM

You will not be allowed to take any material into the exam. You will be given a white board and marker to use for notes.

You may not use your own calculator. The Pearson testing center is supposed to provide a separate one. If the exam proctor says otherwise, insist that this is correct. There is NO calculator built into the LARE computer interface!

Pearson Testing is supposed to provide earplugs or headphones. Insist on getting these before your clock starts ticking in case you need/want them.

You can't bring cell phones, pagers, translation tools, wallets, purses or other items into the exam room.

Snacks, drinks, kleenex, over the counter medications (aspirin, antacids, cough drops, etc.). Whatever you need to feel as comfortable as possible. You will probably have to leave these items in a locker provided by the testing facility. Check directly with the testing center in advance. You are allowed to access your locker during the exam.

Arrive early at the exam site and get organized and relaxed. Allow yourself enough time to do this and a few minutes to get focused and put on your "test warrior" face.

THE COMPUTER INTERFACE

If this is your first time sitting for the LARE, practicing with the computer interface in advance. You do not want to struggle with the tools you are using while the clock is ticking. Check with the vendor on your options. They should allow you a short period of time to practice with the interface prior to beginning your timed exam.

The computer has a clock that tells you how much time is remaining. The interface allows you to flag questions so that you can see you have not answered them. There is a master index screen (Review Screen) you can check. It is possible to go back and change your answers. You do not have to answer the questions in order.

You can go to a Review Screen and return to where you are at any time. See the CLARB videos.

TAKING THE LARE

The LARE is different from anything else you will experience in your career as a Landscape Architect. The exam is designed to test your level of competency for licensure, not your talent. The time limits for completing the sections place a premium on experience and fluency with various facets of the profession.

Landscape Architecture is not a job, it is a profession. As such it has an established set of standards of practice. Some of these are simple to describe and perform. Others are unwritten and difficult to pin down. The first group of standards can usually be found in reference manuals such as the Handbook of Landscape Architectural Construction. The second group is more in how we approach our work, how we conduct ourselves professionally, and how our competence and professional worth is judged by our clients and colleagues. The LARE is an attempt to objectively evaluate your Knowledge of standards, your technical Skills, your professional Abilities at problem solving, and your ability to apply these KSAs to real world issues.

Pre-Exam Preparations

The exam can be an intense, draining experience. You should take steps to improve your mental stamina and reduce your susceptibility to fatigue. By all means get plenty of sleep for several days before the exam, and during the days you are taking the exam. Avoid intoxicants for several days before and during the exam. Avoid excessive sugar and caffeine intake.

Concentrate your preparatory study on areas where you have the least experience.

Learn the material in the LARE Orientation Guide and the LARE Exam Specifications. These documents set standards that must be followed for all work pertaining to the LARE.

Test Taking Tips

1. Read the problem statement carefully. This is of some importance because CLARB has been known to get tricky with the wording of some of their questions. Here's an example from a CLARB Practice Test:

Question 8.

Despite a contract requirement to carry out site investigations prior to commencement of work, a contractor damaged a gas line. The gas line was not shown in the consultant's contract documents, but was on the survey prepared for the project. Who would most likely be responsible?

- A. The contractor
- B. The property owner
- C. The gas company
- D. The consultant and the contractor

Correct answer is D. Contractor failed to carry out the terms of the contract and thus was negligent. Consultant is liable because apparently the survey was not included in the construction drawing package.

Discussion.

2. Go through the section quickly. Answer those questions where you are sure of the answers. Then go through again, answering questions where you have been able to reduce the answer to one of two possibilities. Finally, answer the remaining questions.
3. Answer all of the questions. There is no penalty for a wrong guess.
4. Don't get hung up on a difficult question and waste valuable time. Go on and come back to it later. Save the hardest questions for last.
5. This method actually helps with the harder questions. Sometimes clues to questions you can not answer may be found in other questions in the section.
6. Consider saving questions that involve using charts & tables, or a set of involved calculations for near the end of the section.
7. You are allowed to go back to questions you have skipped.

8. On site planning problems, you may need to consider slope or elevation information, vegetation, existing water features such as streams or lakes, hazards, wildlife habitat, views, access points, internal circulation, soils, and adjacent land uses.

The basic ideas behind all of these tips are:

- A. Building your confidence through positive reinforcement.
- B. Getting the maximum number of questions answered in the time allotted.

Test Do's and Dont's

1. Do not panic. This is a recipe for disaster. You must maintain a calm and rational demeanor for the full three days. Any overly emotional response to a question or situation such as fear, frustration, resentment, anger, outrage, etc., will only lessen your chances of successfully completing the exam. Stay calm and focused. If necessary, take a moment to close your eyes, take some deep breaths, relax and regain focus. Stop and take a drink of water or splash some in your face (best to have a water bottle handy, and maybe a towel).
2. Taking a serious exam like the LARE requires a mindset unlike your usual state of mind. Practice at taking mini-exams and familiarizing yourself with the accompanying feelings are important tools for success.
3. It is important for you to take advantage of every break you can get. The night before the exam starts, get some exercise and plenty of rest to refresh you. After each full day of the exam, limit your studying to reviewing your notes, and do not cram to learn new material. Focus on eating right, resting, and moderate exercise. Take advantage of the scheduled breaks during the exam to get some fresh air and stretch. Avoid the clusters of people who want to compare their performance during the last section in a kind of "post mortem;" there will be time for that when the ENTIRE exam is over.
4. The LARE is a marathon, not a sprint. However, it is a little less so now that CLARB has set up the schedule so that you have multiple opportunities to take the exam each year. You still should get plenty of sleep and avoid stressing out about the sections you just took or the ones you'll be taking tomorrow. Focus on the now.
5. Be careful that you have actually clicked on the answer you intend. After completing an on-line practice test, I discovered that apparently I had checked "C" to one question when I intended "B".
6. If you have not reserved your spot at a testing center, do so as quickly as possible. There is very limited seating at quite a few of the testing sites.
7. Be prepared for testing center drama and computer related disasters. If this happens, try to stay cool. Otherwise you will probably hurt your performance. CLARB's new test vendor is Pearson-VUE. Be aware that there is limited seating at each test site. I strongly recommend that you make

reservations to take your exam as early as you can. Find out when the first day to call for a reservation is and do it right away.

LARE Qualifier Words

CLARB has a tendency to use words in their questions AND answers that may affect what the question is asking or whether the answer satisfies the wording of the question. I call these qualifier words. It is very important not to rush your reading of questions/answers as this can lead to unfortunate errors. Some examples of these words are given below in a list. While solving problems and taking sample tests during this weekend, I will try to point out how wording can affect the correct answer for specific problems/questions.

All
Always
Shall
Must
Only
Never
Not

At Least
No More Than
No Greater Than
No Less Than
Minimum
Maximum

Equal to
Greater Than
Less Than
Increase
Decrease

OTHER IDEAS SUGGESTED BY SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

- Stay near the test site in order to avoid commuter and traffic stress and the possibility of being late to a session. In any event, do not be late.
- Map out a test preparation strategy. For example:
 - 6 weeks prior to the exam: Develop game plan for study. Assemble study materials and get organized. Line up a study partner or group.
 - 4 weeks prior to the exam: Focus in your study on those areas you've identified as weaknesses.
 - 2 weeks prior to the exam: Finish up your original study and begin review of material to refresh and reinforce.
 - 1 week prior to exam: Light study only. Concentrate on mental preparation and getting rested and relaxed.
- Take increasingly longer timed practice tests. Take them with your study group, then check each others tests and discuss. If possible, make the final test similar in length to the actual exam sections.
- Have a go at writing some test questions to swap within your study group. This can be an excellent learning tool as well as be helpful to your colleagues.