



Effect of open book examination on B.Ed trainees

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Abstract

An "open book exam" is a test that allows you to bring the text or material you have been studying. This may sound at first that all you will need to do is look up the answer the day of the test--and thus a very easy type of test to take. However, this is not how this sort of test typically works. In fact, these are often quite difficult, as an open book exam requires a genuine understanding of the material and be able to interpret, think critically, and present an organized and well written answer. But with a bit of preparation, note taking skills, and test taking strategies, you can succeed your next open book exam.

You need to study for Open Book exams just as you would for any exam. If you know your subject, you'll have a knowledge base to draw on. You will also understand how and why topics are linked. This style of learning equips you well for exams and 'real life' experiences. If you don't study you won't know how to find answers and--books or no books--you can't answer the questions.

Keywords: organize, preparing resources open book exam, materials

Introduction

An "open book exam" is a test that allows you to bring the text or material you have been studying. This may sound at first that all you will need to do is look up the answer the day of the test--and thus a very easy type of test to take. However, this is not how this sort of test typically works. In fact, these are often quite difficult, as an open book exam requires a genuine understanding of the material and be able to interpret, think critically, and present an organized and well written answer. But with a bit of preparation, note taking skills, and test taking strategies, you can succeed your next open book exam.

Open book exams require you to

- Learn for understanding rather than just remembering
- Understand how to find information
- Make good notes and organise materials for fast reference
- Apply the information in your sources to the questions

Study

You need to study for Open Book exams just as you would for any exam. If you know your subject, you'll have a knowledge base to draw on. You will also understand how and why topics are linked. This style of learning equips you well for exams and 'real life' experiences. If you don't study you won't know how to find answers and--books or no books--you can't answer the questions.

Familiarise yourself with texts and notes, and make sure you can locate important information. Be familiar with your materials so you will not waste valuable exam time searching through them. Prepare your environment.

Planing is done keeping this....

Work out the materials and resources you will take into the exam room.

Don't overload with materials. Only take what you need into an Open Book exam. Carefully select your materials and resources and organise them for quick reference. The same goes for writing implements. Make sure you have spare pens, pencils and erasers. If you need any other tools, make sure they all work and pack them neatly. For those using non-solar calculators, don't forget spare batteries!

If you are doing a Take Home exam, gather readings, notes and resources together beforehand and organise them neatly in your study area at home. Make sure you have enough paper, pens etc. Set up a quiet space where you can concentrate, and where you can work without interruptions.

The exam requirements

For Open Book exams, find out

- The materials you can take into the exam room
- How much time you have
- The topic areas the exam will cover
- How long answers should be
- If you need to reference
- The types of questions--essays, short answers etc.

For take home exams, find out

- The time and date the exam should be handed in
- Where the exam should be handed in
- How much time you have to complete the exam
- The topic areas the exam will cover
- How long answers should be
- If you need to reference
- The types of questions--essays, short answers etc.

Don't anticipate questions

When you prepare your notes, don't waste time guessing possible questions or trying to prepare 'model' answers--

preprepared answers don't work. Essay style questions will tend toward a 'free' response rather than a fixed 'single right answer' question, so formula answers don't fit. However, you do need to have 'thought through' conceptual frameworks and philosophical positions, and have some general conclusions in mind. You don't need to know everything, but you need to know how to find the relevant information.

Practise

Your lecturer or tutor may provide some sample questions or a dry run. You might also want to check out some past exam papers in the Library.

Get a good night's sleep

On the night before the exam, don't stay up until all hours studying. You'll be fuzzy, stressed and unable to think clearly.

Preparing notes and materials

Organise

A large amount of materials might make you feel secure, but you'll probably work best relying on no more than a few pages of notes and a few well-chosen texts.

Spend some time making your reference materials as user-friendly as possible so that you don't waste time frantically flipping pages back and forth or shuffling papers. Unless you're sitting a Take Home exam, you'll need to work within a short time limit (a few hours). To do this well, try to have the essential facts, formulae, etc. at your finger tips. Also, writing a flow chart to show how the relevant topics are connected is very helpful.

Preparing Resources

Before the exam

- Use tables of contents and index pages to locate relevant sections in the books you plan to use.
- Bookmark useful chapters or pages. Post-it notes can be helpful here.
- Prepare brief summaries, e.g. in margins of texts to provide a quick reference.
- Prepare a list of key information (formulae, key definitions etc.) likely to be used.
- Use index cards to list key topics and relevant page numbers of texts. Use one card per book. This can help you find information quickly.

The focus of many educators has been to maximise the usefulness of every academic activity, whether these activities cause high- or low-anxiety levels amongst partaking students. With this in mind, the current study on B.Ed trainees is done for assessments is that of a learning tool, both able to objectively rank students according to ability, and to enhance and enrich the learning environment.

It is generally accepted that the perceived “worth” of an open book assessment is directly related to its ability to expose higher order “thinking” skills of candidates. For example, studies have suggested that assessments designed for open book completion prompt students to exhibit their levels of skill in analysing, synthesising, and evaluating course materials and designated learning outcomes in a measurable

and mainly standardised fashion.

When B.Ed students are surveyed, they almost always prefer open book assessments as opposed to closed book assessments, despite the acknowledged understanding that open book examinations generally require the exhibition of higher order thinking skills. Study have shown that students perceive five main benefits in open book examinations, namely practice in the creative use of course content, course content proficiency, increased opportunity for student self-evaluation and feedback, less examination stress and greater student regulation of content studied. The same study showed that educators perceive open book examinations as providing the opportunity to promote thinking rather than memorising. Therefore relaxing the environment within which students learn encourages student ownership of study, and increases self-evaluation with respect to the level of achievement of B.Ed trainees has been taken.

Subjects

The test population consisted of 20 second semester Bachelor of Education students at BLDEA’s JSS College of Education, Vijayapur, Dt Karanataka.). Students participating in the study were about to face University Examination after 15 days. The test students were completing an introductory four unit of Mathematics, and received much of their course material. Prior to this the students had received at least 6 weeks of instruction. No revision sessions were offered, however students were provided with the opportunity to complete the exam with provided materials.

Analysis

Table 1

Students Marks	Closed Book	Open Book
Minimum	21.0	26
Maximum	30	38
Mean	518	644
SEM	6.34	3.86

The above analysis shows that there is significant difference between closed book exam and open book exam, students formed well in open book examination Therefore relaxing the environment within which students learn encourages student ownership of study, and increases self-evaluation with respect to the level of achievement of B.Ed trainees has been taken.

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