

**AP<sup>®</sup> STATISTICS  
2011 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 6**

**Intent of Question**

The primary goals of this question were to assess students' ability to (1) construct and interpret a confidence interval for a population proportion; (2) create a probability tree to represent a particular random process; (3) use a probability tree to calculate a probability; and (4) integrate provided information to create a confidence interval for an atypical parameter.

**Solution**

**Part (a):**

The appropriate inference procedure is a one-sample z-interval for a population proportion  $p$ , where  $p$  is the proportion of all United States twelfth-grade students who would answer the question correctly.

The conditions for this inference procedure are satisfied because:

1. The question states that the students are a random sample from the population, and
2.  $n\hat{p} = 9,600 \times 0.28 = 2,688$  and  $n(1 - \hat{p}) = 9,600 \times 0.72 = 6,912$  are both much larger than 10.

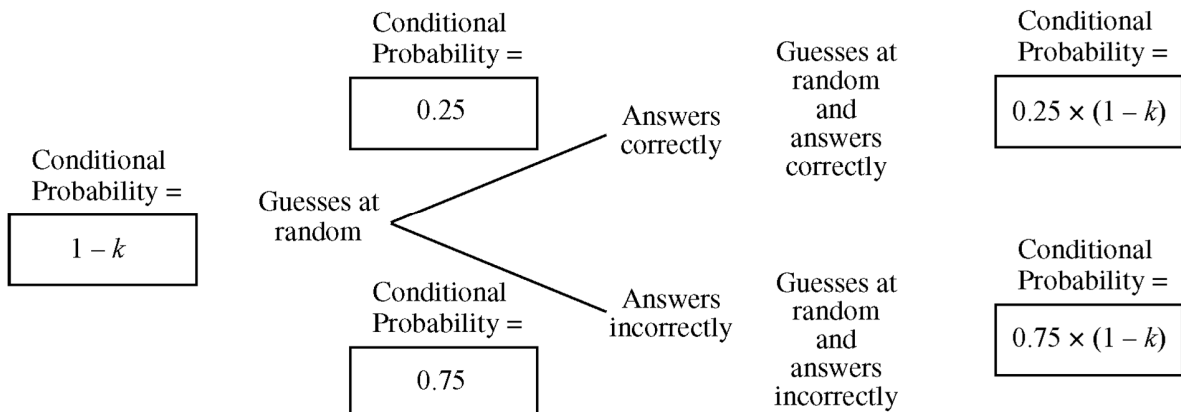
A 99 percent confidence interval for the population proportion  $p$  is constructed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{p} \pm z^* \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} &= 0.28 \pm 2.576 \sqrt{\frac{0.28(0.72)}{9,600}} \\ &= 0.28 \pm 0.012 \\ &\approx (0.268, 0.292) \end{aligned}$$

We are 99 percent confident that the interval from 0.268 to 0.292 contains the population proportion of all United States twelfth-grade students who would answer this question correctly.

**Part (b):**

The five probabilities to be filled in the boxes are shown below.



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**Question 6 (continued)**

**Part (c):**

$$\begin{aligned} P(\text{answers correctly}) &= \\ P(\text{knows correct answer and answers correctly}) + P(\text{guesses at random and answers correctly}) &= \\ k + 0.25 \cancel{\forall} (1 - k), \text{ which simplifies to } 0.25 + 0.75k, \text{ or } \frac{3k + 1}{4}. \end{aligned}$$

**Part (d):**

We want to estimate  $k$ , the proportion of all United States twelfth-grade students who actually know the answer to the history question.

From part (c) the probability that a randomly selected student correctly answers the question is  $0.25 + 0.75k$ . From part (a) we are 99 percent confident that this probability is between 0.268 and 0.292. Thus the endpoints for a confidence interval for  $k$  can be found by equating the expression  $0.25 + 0.75k$  from part (c) to the endpoints of the interval from part (a) as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ll} 0.25 + 0.75k = 0.268 & 0.25 + 0.75k = 0.292 \\ k = 0.024 & k = 0.056 \end{array}$$

We are 99 percent confident that the interval from 0.024 to 0.056 contains the proportion of all United States twelfth-grade students who actually know the answer to the history question.

**Scoring**

This question is scored in four sections. Sections 1 and 2 are based on part (a), section 3 consists of parts (b) and (c) and section 4 consists of part (d). Each section is scored as essentially correct (E), partially correct (P) or incorrect (I).

**Section 1** is scored as follows:

Essentially correct (E) if the response correctly includes the following three components:

1. Identifies the correct inference procedure.
2. Checks the randomness condition.
3. Checks the large sample size condition.

Partially correct (P) if the response correctly includes exactly two of the three components listed above.

Incorrect (I) if the response fails to meet the criteria for E or P.

*Notes*

- The identification of the procedure must include “z,” “proportion,” and “interval.”
- Stating the correct formula for a confidence interval for a proportion is sufficient for the first component.
- “Random sample given” is sufficient for the second component.

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### Question 6 (continued)

- To satisfy the third component, the response:
  - Must check both the number of successes and the number of failures.
  - Must use a reasonable criterion (for example,  $\geq 5$  or  $\geq 10$ ).
  - Must provide numerical evidence (for example,  $2,688 \geq 10$  and  $6,912 \geq 10$ , or  $9,600 \neq 0.28 \geq 10$  and  $9,600 \neq 0.72 \geq 10$ ).
- Any statement of hypotheses, definitions of parameters, statements of populations, etc. should be considered extraneous. However, if such statements are included and incorrect, this should be considered poor communication in terms of holistic scoring.
- Any checks of reasonable conditions, such as independence of observations, sample size less than 10 percent of population size,  $9,600 > 30$ , etc. should be considered extraneous. However, if a response includes an incorrect condition, such as population normality, reduce the score in section 1 from E to P or from P to I.
- Any reference to the central limit theorem should be treated as extraneous and not sufficient for the large sample size condition.

Section 2 is scored as follows:

Essentially correct (E) if the response correctly includes the following two components:

1. Calculates the interval.
2. Interprets the interval, including a confidence statement and correct parameter, in context.

#### Notes

- The critical value for the confidence interval must be for 99 percent confidence.
- If the response includes an incorrect formula or has incorrect values substituted into the formula, then the response does not earn credit for the calculation component, even if the final interval is correct.
- A response that makes minor arithmetic mistakes in the calculation of the interval is considered correct, as long as the resulting interval is reasonable.
- A correct interval that is stated only in the interpretation is considered sufficient for the first component.
- To identify the parameter, the response must refer to the proportion “who would answer the question correctly” or include a modifier for the proportion such as “population” or “true.” An interpretation about the sample proportion (for example, “the proportion of students who answered correctly”) is not sufficient for the second component.
- If the response provides only an interpretation of the confidence level instead of the confidence interval, the second component is considered incorrect. If an interpretation of the confidence level is given along with an interpretation of the confidence interval, both must be correct to be considered sufficient.
- A correct interpretation with an incorrect interval is sufficient for the second component.

Partially correct (P) if the response correctly includes exactly one of the two components.

Incorrect (I) if the response fails to meet the criteria for E or P.

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**Question 6 (continued)**

**Section 3** is scored as follows:

Essentially correct (E) if the response correctly includes the following two components:

1. In part (b) completes the tree diagram in terms of  $k$ .
2. In part (c) adds the correct results from the tree diagram.

*Notes*

- If a response states “not  $k$ ” or “ $k^c$ ” in the first box, the first component is considered incorrect.
- If the response to part (b) is incorrect, then part (c) is considered correct if the response is consistent with the response from part (b) or if the response to part (c) is correct.
- The response to part (c) does not need to show a simplified expression.
- The response to part (c) can be expressed as a fraction with the sum of the four branches in the denominator.
- A response to part (c) that adds the appropriate probabilities from the tree but has an error in the simplification of the sum is still considered correct.
- If the response to part (c) is expressed as  $P(0.25 + 0.75k)$  or equivalent, the second component is considered incorrect.
- If the tree diagram includes numbers only, adding the appropriate values is sufficient for the second component, provided that the sum is between 0 and 1.

Partially correct (P) if the response correctly includes exactly one of the two components.

Incorrect (I) if the response fails to meet the criteria for E or P.

**Section 4** is scored as follows:

Essentially correct (E) if the response correctly includes the following three components:

1. Equates the expression from part (c) to a numerical estimate from part (a).
2. Uses the endpoints from part (a) to calculate a reasonable interval.
3. Interprets the resulting interval, including a confidence statement and correct parameter, in context.

Partially correct (P) if the response correctly includes exactly two of the three components.

Incorrect (I) if the response fails to meet the criteria for E or P.

*Notes*

- Using the point estimate  $\hat{p} = 0.28$  from part (a) or the endpoints of the interval  $(0.268, 0.292)$  from part (a) is sufficient for the first component.
- A response that makes minor arithmetic mistakes in the calculation of the interval is considered correct, as long as the resulting interval is reasonable.
- For the third component, the parameter must be the proportion of students who actually know the answer to the history question.
- A response that creates a correct interval using linear transformations (of the point estimate and standard error/margin of error) is equivalent to transforming the endpoints and therefore is sufficient for the first two components.

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