



NEW YORK STATE
TEACHER
CERTIFICATION
EXAMINATIONS™



**PREPARATION
GUIDE**

Elementary
Assessment of Teaching
Skills—Written
(ATS-W) (90)

The University of the State of New York • NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT • Office of Teaching Initiatives, Albany, New York 12234

NY-SG-FLD090-02

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NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™

PREPARATION GUIDE Elementary Assessment of Teaching Skills—Written (ATS–W) (90)

Table of Contents

1	.....	Introduction
2	.....	General Information about the NYSTCE
4	.....	Test-Taking Strategies
6	.....	About the Elementary Assessment of Teaching Skills—Written (ATS–W)
7	.....	Elementary ATS–W Objectives
20	.....	Multiple-Choice Section
21	.....	Sample Test Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions
22	.....	Sample Multiple-Choice Questions, Correct Responses, and Explanations
55	.....	Written Assignment Section
56	.....	Sample Test Directions for the Written Assignment
57	.....	Sample Written Assignment
58	.....	Stronger Response to the Sample Written Assignment
60	.....	Evaluation of the Stronger Response
62	.....	Weaker Response to the Sample Written Assignment
64	Evaluation of the Weaker Response
66	® Performance Characteristics and Scoring Scale

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■ INTRODUCTION

Purpose of This Preparation Guide

This preparation guide is designed to help familiarize candidates with the content and format of a test for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (NYSTCE®) program. Education faculty and administrators at teacher preparation institutions may also find the information in this guide useful as they discuss the test with candidates.

The knowledge and skills assessed by the test are acquired throughout the academic career of a candidate. A primary means of preparing for the test is the collegiate preparation of the candidate.

This preparation guide illustrates some of the types of questions that appear on a test; however, the set of sample questions provided in this preparation guide does not necessarily define the content or difficulty of an entire actual test. All test components (e.g., directions, question content and formats) may differ from those presented here. The NYSTCE program is subject to change at the sole discretion of the New York State Education Department.

Organization of This Preparation Guide

Contained in the beginning sections of this preparation guide are general information about the NYSTCE program and how the tests were developed, a description of the organization of test content, and strategies for taking the test.

Following these general information sections, specific information about the test described in this guide is presented. The test objectives appear on the pages following the test-specific overview. The objectives define the content of the test.

Next, information about the multiple-choice section of the test is presented, including sample test directions. Sample multiple-choice questions are also presented, with the correct responses indicated and explanations of why the responses are correct.

Following the sample multiple-choice questions, a description of the written assignment section of the test is provided, including sample directions. A sample written assignment is presented next, followed by an example of a stronger response to the assignment and an evaluation of that response. Finally, an example of a weaker response to the assignment is presented, followed by an evaluation of that response.

For Further Information

If you have questions after reading this preparation guide, you may wish to consult the NYSTCE Registration Bulletin. You can view or print the registration bulletin online at www.nystce.nesinc.com.

■ GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NYSTCE

How Were the NYSTCE Tests Developed?

The New York State Teacher Certification Examinations are criterion referenced and objective based. A criterion-referenced test is designed to measure a candidate's knowledge and skills in relation to an established standard rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates. The explicit purpose of these tests is to help identify for certification those candidates who have demonstrated the appropriate level of knowledge and skills that are important for performing the responsibilities of a teacher in New York State public schools.

Each test is designed to measure areas of knowledge called subareas. Within each subarea, statements of important knowledge and skills, called objectives, define the content of the test. The test objectives were developed for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations in conjunction with committees of New York State educators.

Test questions matched to the objectives were developed using, in part, textbooks; New York State learning standards and curriculum guides; teacher education curricula; and certification standards. The test questions were developed in consultation with committees of New York State teachers, teacher educators, and other content and assessment specialists.

An individual's performance on a test is evaluated against an established standard. The passing score for each test is established by the New York State Commissioner of Education based on the professional judgments and recommendations of New York State teachers. Examinees who do not pass a test may retake it at any of the subsequently scheduled test administrations.

Organization of Content

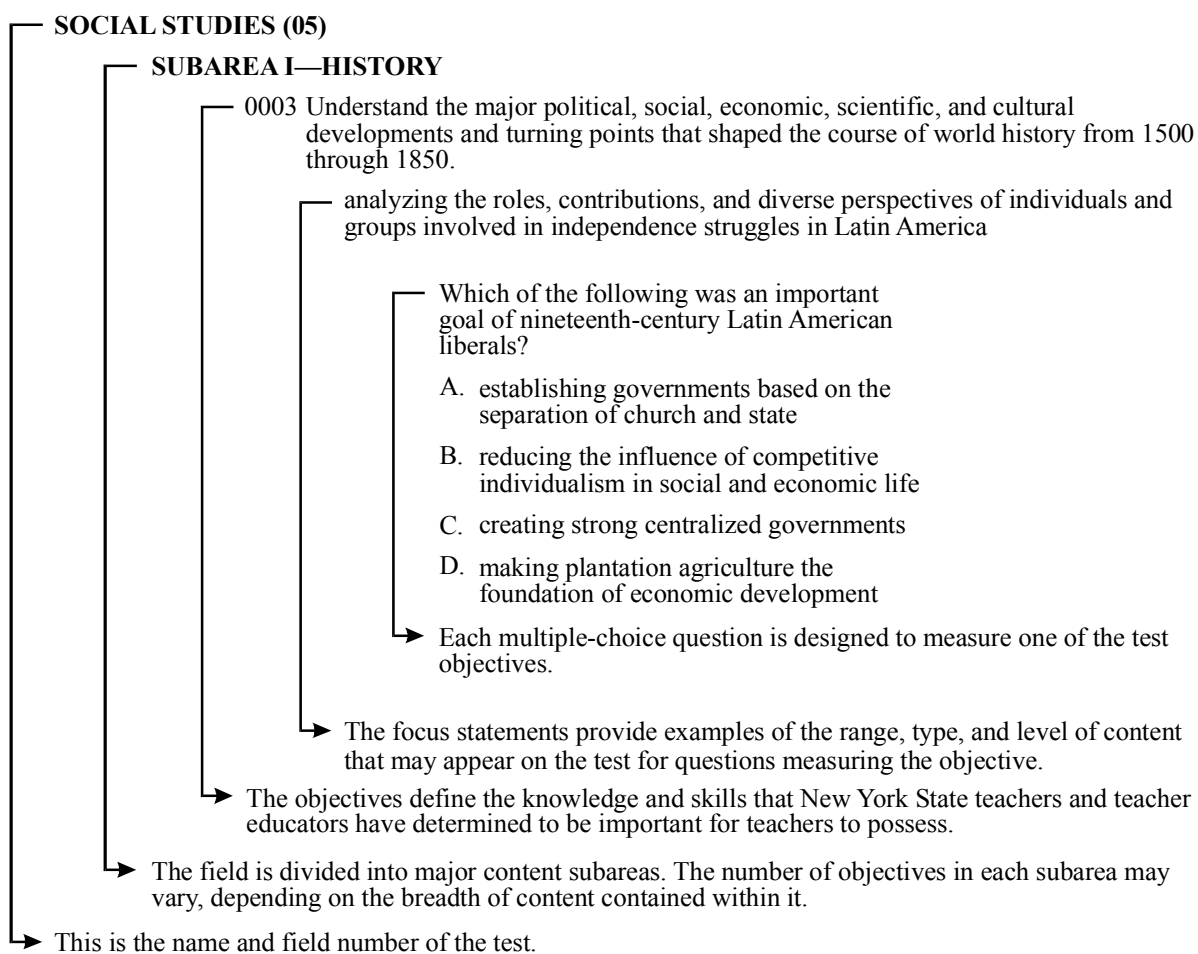
The content covered by each test is organized into **subareas**. These subareas define the major content domains of the test.

Subareas typically consist of several **objectives**. Objectives provide specific information about the knowledge and skills that are assessed by the test.

Each objective is elaborated on by **focus statements**. The focus statements provide examples of the range, type, and level of content that may appear on the tests.

Test questions are designed to measure specific test objectives. The number of objectives within a given subarea generally determines the number of questions that will address the content of that subarea on the test. In other words, the subareas that consist of more objectives will receive more emphasis on the test and contribute more to a candidate's test score than the subareas that consist of fewer objectives.

The following example, taken from the field of Social Studies, illustrates the relationship of test questions to subareas, objectives, and focus statements.



■ TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Be On Time.

Arrive at the test center on time so that you are rested and ready to begin the test when instructed to do so.

Follow Directions.

At the beginning of the test session and throughout the test, follow all directions carefully. This includes the oral directions that will be read by the test administrators and any written directions in the test booklet. The test booklet will contain general directions for the test as a whole and specific directions for individual test questions or groups of test questions. If you do not understand something about the directions, do not hesitate to raise your hand and ask your test administrator.

Pace Yourself.

The test schedule is designed to allow sufficient time for completion of the test. Each test session is four hours in length. The tests are designed to allow you to allocate your time within the session as you need. You can spend as much time on any section of the test as you need, and you can complete the sections of the test in any order you desire; however, you will be required to return your materials at the end of the four-hour session.

Since the allocation of your time during the test session is largely yours to determine, planning your own pace for taking the test is very important. Do not spend a lot of time with a test question that you cannot answer promptly; skip that question and move on. If you skip a question, be sure to skip the corresponding row of answer choices on your answer sheet. Mark the question in your test booklet so that you can return to it later, but be careful to appropriately record on the answer sheet the answers to the remaining questions.

You may find that you need less time than the four hours allotted in a test session, but you should be prepared to stay for the entire time period. Do not make any other commitments for this time period that may cause you to rush through the test.

Read Carefully.

Read the directions and the questions carefully. Read all response options. Remember that multiple-choice test questions call for the "best answer"; do not choose the first answer that seems reasonable. Read and evaluate all choices to find the best answer. Read the questions closely so that you understand what they ask. For example, it would be a waste of time to perform a long computation when the question calls for an approximation.

Read the test questions, but don't read into them. The questions are designed to be straightforward, not tricky.

Mark Answers Carefully.

Your answers for all multiple-choice questions will be scored electronically; therefore, the answer you select must be clearly marked and the only answer marked. If you change your mind about an answer, erase the old answer completely. Do not make any stray marks on the answer sheet; these may be misinterpreted by the scoring machine.

IF YOU SKIP A MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION, BE SURE TO SKIP THE CORRESPONDING ROW OF ANSWER CHOICES ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

You may use any available space in the test booklet for notes, but **your answers to the multiple-choice questions must be clearly marked on your answer sheet, and your response to the written assignment must be clearly written in your written response booklet. ONLY THE ANSWERS AND WRITTEN RESPONSE THAT APPEAR, RESPECTIVELY, ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET AND IN YOUR WRITTEN RESPONSE BOOKLET WILL BE SCORED.** Answers and written responses in your test booklet will not be scored.

Guessing

As you read through the response options, try to find the best answer. If you cannot quickly find the best answer, try to eliminate as many of the other options as possible. Then guess among the remaining answer choices. Your score on the test is based on the number of test questions that you have answered correctly. There is no penalty for incorrect answers; therefore, it is better to guess than not to respond at all.

Passages or Other Presented Materials

Some test questions are based on passages or other presented materials (e.g., graphs, charts). You may wish to employ some of the following strategies while you are completing these test questions.

One strategy is to read the passage or other presented material thoroughly and carefully and then answer each question, referring to the passage or presented material only as needed. Another strategy is to read the questions first, gaining an idea of what is sought in them, and then read the passage or presented material with the questions in mind. Yet another strategy is to review the passage or presented material to gain an overview of its content, and then answer each question by referring back to the passage or presented material for the specific answer. Any of these strategies may be appropriate for you. You should not answer the questions on the basis of your own opinions but rather on the basis of the information in the passage or presented material.

Check Accuracy.

Use any remaining time at the end of the test session to check the accuracy of your work. Go back to the test questions that gave you difficulty and verify your work on them. Check the answer sheet, too. Be sure that you have marked your answers accurately and have completely erased changed answers.

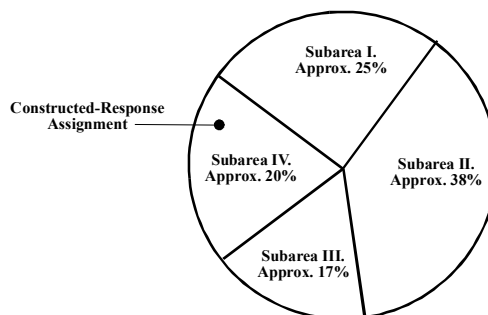
ABOUT THE ELEMENTARY ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING SKILLS—WRITTEN (ATS–W)

The purpose of the Elementary ATS–W is to assess pedagogical knowledge and skills in the following four subareas:

- Subarea I. Student Development and Learning
- Subarea II. Instruction and Assessment
- Subarea III. The Professional Environment
- Subarea IV. Instruction and Assessment: Constructed-Response Assignment

The test objectives presented on the following pages define the content that may be assessed by the Elementary ATS–W. Each test objective is followed by focus statements that provide examples of the range, type, and level of content that may appear on the test for questions measuring that objective.

The test contains approximately 80 multiple-choice test questions and one constructed-response (written) assignment. The figure below illustrates the approximate percentage of the test corresponding to each subarea.



The section that follows the test objectives presents sample test questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the test. To demonstrate how each objective may be assessed, a sample question is presented for each objective. The correct response and an explanation of why the response is correct follow each question. A sample written assignment is also presented, along with an example of a stronger response to the assignment and an evaluation of that response. Additionally, an example of a weaker response to the assignment and an evaluation of that response are presented.

The sample questions are designed to illustrate the nature of the test questions; they should not be used as a diagnostic tool to determine your individual strengths and weaknesses.

ELEMENTARY ATS–W OBJECTIVES

Student Development and Learning
Instruction and Assessment
The Professional Environment
Instruction and Assessment: Constructed-Response Assignment

The New York State educator has the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach the approved curriculum in New York State public schools. The teacher understands how children learn and develop and can provide learning experiences that support all children's intellectual, social, and personal growth, including children who have special needs and children for whom English is not their primary language. The teacher can use a variety of instructional and assessment strategies to foster students' academic development and to encourage students' active engagement in learning. The teacher recognizes the roles that family and community play in student learning and forges home-school partnerships to achieve common goals for children's education. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who is able to work collaboratively with other members of the school community and can take advantage of opportunities for professional development. Most importantly, the teacher is able to create a cooperative and supportive classroom environment that addresses the needs of individual students and within which all students can grow and learn.

SUBAREA I—STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

0001 Understand human development, including developmental processes and variations, and use this understanding to promote student development and learning.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of the major concepts, principles, and theories of human development (physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and moral) as related to children from birth to grade six
- identifying sequences (milestones) and variations of physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and moral development in children from birth to grade six
- recognizing the range of individual developmental differences in children within any given age group from birth to grade six and the implications of this developmental variation for instructional decision making
- identifying ways in which a child's development in one domain (physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, moral) may affect learning and development in other domains
- applying knowledge of developmental characteristics of learners from birth to grade six to evaluate alternative instructional goals and plans
- selecting appropriate instructional strategies, approaches, and delivery systems to promote development in given learners from birth to grade six

0002 Understand learning processes, and use this understanding to promote student development and learning.

For example:

- analyzing ways in which development and learning processes interact
- analyzing processes by which students construct meaning and develop skills, and applying strategies to facilitate learning in given situations (e.g., by building connections between new information and prior knowledge; by relating learning to world issues and community concerns; by engaging students in purposeful practice and application of knowledge and skills; by using tools, materials, and resources)
- demonstrating knowledge of different types of learning strategies (e.g., rehearsal, elaboration, organization, metacognition) and how learners use each type of strategy
- analyzing factors that affect students' learning (e.g., learning styles, contextually supported learning versus decontextualized learning), and adapting instructional practices to promote learning in given situations
- recognizing how various teacher roles (e.g., direct instructor, facilitator) and student roles (e.g., self-directed learner, group participant, passive observer) may affect learning processes and outcomes
- recognizing effective strategies for promoting independent thinking and learning (e.g., by helping students develop critical-thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills; by enabling students to pursue topics of personal interest) and for promoting students' sense of ownership and responsibility in relation to their own learning

0003 Understand how factors in the home, school, and community may affect students' development and readiness to learn; and use this understanding to create a classroom environment within which all students can develop and learn.

For example:

- recognizing the impact of sociocultural factors (e.g., culture, heritage, language, socioeconomic profile) in the home, school, and community on students' development and learning
- analyzing ways in which students' personal health, safety, nutrition, and past or present exposure to abusive or dangerous environments may affect their development and learning in various domains (e.g., physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, moral) and their readiness to learn
- recognizing the significance of family life and the home environment for student development and learning (e.g., nature of the expectations of parents, guardians, and caregivers; degree of their involvement in the student's education)
- analyzing how schoolwide structures (e.g., tracking) and classroom factors (e.g., homogeneous versus heterogeneous grouping, student-teacher interactions) may affect students' self-concept and learning
- identifying effective strategies for creating a classroom environment that promotes student development and learning by taking advantage of positive factors (e.g., culture, heritage, language) in the home, school, and community and minimizing the effects of negative factors (e.g., minimal family support)
- analyzing ways in which peer interactions (e.g., acceptance versus isolation, bullying) may promote or hinder a student's development and success in school, and determining effective strategies for dealing with peer-related issues in given classroom situations
- demonstrating knowledge of health, sexuality, and peer-related issues for students (e.g., self-image, physical appearance and fitness, peer-group conformity) and the interrelated nature of these issues; and recognizing how specific behaviors related to health, sexuality, and peer issues (e.g., eating disorders, drug and alcohol use, gang involvement) can affect development and learning

0004 Understand language and literacy development, and use this knowledge in all content areas to develop the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of students, including students for whom English is not their primary language.

For example:

- identifying factors that influence language acquisition, and analyzing ways students' language skills affect their overall development and learning
- identifying expected stages and patterns of second-language acquisition, including analyzing factors that affect second-language acquisition
- identifying approaches that are effective in promoting English Language Learners's development of English language proficiency, including adapting teaching strategies and consulting and collaborating with teachers in the ESL program
- recognizing the role of oral language development, including vocabulary development, and the role of the alphabetic principle, including phonemic awareness and other phonological skills, in the development of English literacy; and identifying expected stages and patterns in English literacy development
- identifying factors that influence students' literacy development, and demonstrating knowledge of research-validated instructional strategies for addressing the literacy needs of students at all stages of literacy development, including applying strategies for facilitating students' comprehension of texts before, during, and after reading, and using modeling and explicit instruction to teach students how to use comprehension strategies effectively
- recognizing similarities and differences between the English literacy development of native English speakers and English Language Learners, including how literacy development in the primary language influences literacy development in English, and applying strategies for helping English Language Learners transfer literacy skills in the primary language to English
- using knowledge of literacy development to select instructional strategies that help students use literacy skills as tools for learning; that teach students how to use, access, and evaluate information from various resources; and that support students' development of content-area reading skills

0005 Understand diverse student populations, and use knowledge of diversity within the school and the community to address the needs of all learners, to create a sense of community among students, and to promote students' appreciation of and respect for individuals and groups.

For example:

- recognizing appropriate strategies for teachers to use to enhance their own understanding of students (e.g., learning about students' family situations, cultural backgrounds, individual needs) and to promote a sense of community among diverse groups in the classroom
- applying strategies for working effectively with students from all cultures, students of both genders, students from various socioeconomic circumstances, students from homes where English is not the primary language, and students whose home situations involve various family arrangements and lifestyles
- applying strategies for promoting students' understanding and appreciation of diversity and for using diversity that exists within the classroom and the community to enhance all students' learning
- analyzing how classroom environments that respect diversity promote positive student experiences

0006 Understand the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities, developmental delays, and exceptional abilities (including gifted and talented students); and use this knowledge to help students reach their highest levels of achievement and independence.

For example:

- demonstrating awareness of types of disabilities, developmental delays, and exceptional abilities and of the implications for learning associated with these differences
- applying criteria and procedures for evaluating, selecting, creating, and modifying materials and equipment to address individual special needs, and recognizing the importance of consulting with specialists to identify appropriate materials and equipment, including assistive technology, when working with students with disabilities, developmental delays, or exceptional abilities
- identifying teacher responsibilities and requirements associated with referring students who may have special needs and with developing and implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and recognizing appropriate ways to integrate goals from IEPs into instructional activities and daily routines
- demonstrating knowledge of basic service delivery models (e.g., inclusion models) for students with special needs, and identifying strategies and resources (e.g., special education staff) that help support instruction in inclusive settings
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies to ensure that students with special needs and exceptional abilities are an integral part of the class and participate to the greatest extent possible in all classroom activities

SUBAREA II—INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

0007 Understand how to structure and manage a classroom to create a safe, healthy, and secure learning environment.

For example:

- analyzing relationships between classroom management strategies (e.g., in relation to discipline, student decision making, establishing and maintaining standards of behavior) and student learning, attitudes, and behaviors
- recognizing issues related to the creation of a classroom climate (e.g., with regard to shared values and goals, shared experiences, patterns of communication)
- demonstrating knowledge of basic socialization strategies, including how to support social interaction and facilitate conflict resolution among learners, and applying strategies for instructing students on the principles of honesty, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy, dignity, and other traits that will enhance the quality of their experiences in, and contributions to, the class and the greater community
- organizing a daily schedule that takes into consideration and capitalizes on the developmental characteristics of learners
- evaluating, selecting, and using various methods for managing transitions (e.g., between lessons, when students enter and leave the classroom), and handling routine classroom tasks and unanticipated situations
- analyzing the effects of the physical environment, including different spatial arrangements, on student learning and behavior

0008 Understand curriculum development, and apply knowledge of factors and processes in curricular decision making.

For example:

- applying procedures used in classroom curricular decision making (e.g., evaluating the current curriculum, defining scope and sequence)
- evaluating curriculum materials and resources for their effectiveness in addressing the developmental and learning needs of given students
- applying strategies for modifying curriculum based on learner characteristics
- applying strategies for integrating curricula (e.g., incorporating interdisciplinary themes)

0009 Understand the interrelationship between assessment and instruction and how to use formal and informal assessment to learn about students, plan instruction, monitor student understanding in the context of instruction, and make effective instructional modifications.

For example:

- demonstrating understanding that assessment and instruction must be closely integrated
- demonstrating familiarity with basic assessment approaches, including the instructional advantages and limitations of various assessment instruments and techniques (e.g., portfolio, teacher-designed classroom test, performance assessment, peer assessment, student self-assessment, teacher observation, criterion-referenced test, norm-referenced test)
- using knowledge of the different purposes (e.g., screening, diagnosing, comparing, monitoring) of various assessments and knowledge of assessment concepts (e.g., validity, reliability, bias) to select the most appropriate assessment instrument or technique for a given situation
- using rubrics, and interpreting and using information derived from a given assessment
- recognizing strategies for planning, adjusting, or modifying lessons and activities based on assessment results

0010 Understand instructional planning and apply knowledge of planning processes to design effective instruction that promotes the learning of all students.

For example:

- recognizing key factors to consider in planning instruction (e.g., New York State Learning Standards for students, instructional goals and strategies, the nature of the content and/or skills to be taught, students' characteristics and prior experiences, students' current knowledge and skills as determined by assessment results, available time and other resources)
- analyzing and applying given information about specific planning factors (see above statement) to define lesson and unit objectives, select appropriate instructional approach(es) to use in a given lesson (e.g., discovery learning, explicit instruction), determine the appropriate sequence of instruction/learning for given content or learners within a lesson and unit, and develop specific lesson and unit plans
- identifying the background knowledge and prerequisite skills required by a given lesson, and applying strategies for determining students' readiness for learning (e.g., through teacher observation, student self-assessment, pretesting) and for ensuring students' success in learning (e.g., by planning sufficient time to preteach key concepts or vocabulary, by planning differentiated instruction)
- using assessment information before, during, and after instruction to modify plans and to adapt instruction for individual learners
- analyzing a given lesson or unit plan in terms of organization, completeness, feasibility, etc.
- applying strategies for collaborating with others to plan and implement instruction

0011 Understand various instructional approaches, and use this knowledge to facilitate student learning.

For example:

- analyzing the uses, benefits, or limitations of a specific instructional approach (e.g., direct instruction, cooperative learning, interdisciplinary instruction, exploration, discovery learning, independent study, lectures, hands-on activities, peer tutoring, technology-based approach, various discussion methods such as guided discussion, various questioning methods) in relation to given purposes and learners
- recognizing appropriate strategies for varying the role of the teacher (e.g., working with students as instructor, facilitator, observer; working with other adults in the classroom) in relation to the situation and the instructional approach used
- applying procedures for promoting positive and productive small-group interactions (e.g., establishing rules for working with other students in cooperative learning situations)
- comparing instructional approaches in terms of teacher and student responsibilities, expected student outcomes, usefulness for achieving instructional purposes, etc.

0012 Understand principles and procedures for organizing and implementing lessons, and use this knowledge to promote student learning and achievement.

For example:

- evaluating strengths and weaknesses of various strategies for organizing and implementing a given lesson (e.g., in relation to introducing and closing a lesson, using inductive and deductive instruction, building on students' prior knowledge and experiences)
- recognizing the importance of organizing instruction to include multiple strategies for teaching the same content so as to provide the kind and amount of instruction/practice needed by each student in the class
- evaluating various instructional resources (e.g., textbooks and other print resources, primary documents or artifacts, guest speakers, films and other audiovisual materials, computers and other technological resources) in relation to given content, learners (including those with special needs), and goals
- demonstrating understanding of the developmental characteristics of students (e.g., with regard to attention and focus, writing or reading for extended periods of time) when organizing and implementing lessons
- applying strategies for adjusting lessons in response to student performance and student feedback (e.g., responding to student comments regarding relevant personal experiences, changing the pace of a lesson as appropriate)

0013 Understand the relationship between student motivation and achievement and how motivational principles and practices can be used to promote and sustain student cooperation in learning.

For example:

- distinguishing between motivational strategies that use intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and identifying the likely benefits and limitations of each approach
- analyzing the effects of using various intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies in given situations
- recognizing factors (e.g., expectations, methods of providing specific feedback) and situations that tend to promote or diminish student motivation
- recognizing the relationship between direct engagement in learning and students' interest in lessons/activities
- applying procedures for enhancing student interest and helping students find their own motivation (e.g., relating concepts presented in the classroom to students' everyday experiences; encouraging students to ask questions, initiate activities, and pursue problems that are meaningful to them; highlighting connections between academic learning and the workplace)
- recognizing the importance of utilizing play to benefit young children's learning
- recognizing the importance of encouragement in sustaining students' interest and cooperation in learning
- recognizing the importance of utilizing peers (e.g., as peer mentors, in group activities) to benefit students' learning and to sustain their interest and cooperation

0014 Understand communication practices that are effective in promoting student learning and creating a climate of trust and support in the classroom, and how to use a variety of communication modes to support instruction.

For example:

- analyzing how cultural, gender, and age differences affect communication in the classroom (e.g., eye contact, use of colloquialisms, interpretation of body language), and recognizing effective methods for enhancing communication with all students, including being a thoughtful and responsive listener
- applying strategies to promote effective classroom interactions that support learning, including teacher-student and student-student interactions
- analyzing teacher-student interactions with regard to communication issues (e.g., those related to communicating expectations, providing feedback, building student self-esteem, modeling appropriate communication techniques for specific situations)
- recognizing purposes for questioning (e.g., encouraging risk taking and problem solving, maintaining student engagement, facilitating factual recall, assessing student understanding), and selecting appropriate questioning techniques
- applying strategies for adjusting communication to enhance student understanding (e.g., by providing examples, simplifying a complex problem, using verbal and nonverbal modes of communication, using audiovisual and technological tools of communication)
- demonstrating knowledge of the limits of verbal understanding of students at various ages and with different linguistic backgrounds and strategies for ensuring that these limitations do not become barriers to learning (e.g., by linking to known language; by saying things in more than one way; by supporting verbalization with gestures, physical demonstrations, dramatizations, and/or media and manipulatives)

0015 Understand uses of technology, including instructional and assistive technology, in teaching and learning; and apply this knowledge to use technology effectively and to teach students how to use technology to enhance their learning.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of educational uses of various technology tools, such as calculators, software applications, input devices (e.g., keyboard, mouse, scanner, modem, CD-ROM), and the Internet
- recognizing purposes and uses of common types of assistive technology (e.g., amplification devices, communication boards)
- recognizing issues related to the appropriate use of technology (e.g., privacy issues, security issues, copyright laws and issues, ethical issues regarding the acquisition and use of information from technology resources), and identifying procedures that ensure the legal and ethical use of technology resource
- identifying and addressing equity issues related to the use of technology in the classroom (e.g., equal access to technology for all students)
- identifying effective instructional uses of current technology in relation to communication (e.g., audio and visual recording and display devices)
- applying strategies for helping students acquire, analyze, and evaluate electronic information (e.g., locating specific information on the Internet and verifying its accuracy and validity)
- evaluating students' technologically produced products using established criteria related to content, delivery, and the objective(s) of the assignment

SUBAREA III—THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

0016 Understand the history, philosophy, and role of education in New York State and the broader society.

For example:

- analyzing relationships between education and society (e.g., schools reflecting and affecting social values, historical dimensions of the school-society relationship, the role of education in a democratic society, the role of education in promoting equity in society)
- demonstrating knowledge of the historical foundations of education in the United States and of past and current philosophical issues in education (e.g., teacher-directed versus child-centered instruction)
- applying procedures for working collaboratively and cooperatively with various members of the New York State educational system to accomplish a variety of educational goals
- analyzing differences between school-based and centralized models of decision making
- applying knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of different components of the education system in New York (e.g., local school boards, Board of Regents, district superintendents, school principals, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services [BOCES], higher education, unions, professional organizations, parent organizations)

0017 Understand how to reflect productively on one's own teaching practice and how to update one's professional knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.

For example:

- assessing one's own teaching strengths and weaknesses
- using different types of resources and opportunities (e.g., journals, inservice programs, continuing education, higher education, professional organizations, other educators) to enhance one's teaching effectiveness
- applying strategies for working effectively with members of the immediate school community (e.g., colleagues, mentor, supervisor, special needs professionals, principal, building staff) to increase one's knowledge or skills in a given situation
- analyzing ways of evaluating and responding to feedback (e.g., from supervisors, students, parents, colleagues)

0018 Understand the importance of and apply strategies for promoting productive relationships and interactions among the school, home, and community to enhance student learning.

For example:

- identifying strategies for initiating and maintaining effective communication between the teacher and parents or other caregivers, and recognizing factors that may facilitate or impede communication in given situations (including parent-teacher conferences)
- identifying a variety of strategies for working with parents, caregivers, and others to help students from diverse backgrounds reinforce in-school learning outside the school environment
- applying strategies for using community resources to enrich learning experiences
- recognizing various ways in which school personnel, local citizens, and community institutions (e.g., businesses, cultural institutions, colleges and universities, social agencies) can work together to promote a sense of neighborhood and community

0019 Understand reciprocal rights and responsibilities in situations involving interactions between teachers and students, parents/guardians, community members, colleagues, school administrators, and other school personnel.

For example:

- applying knowledge of laws related to students' rights in various situations (e.g., in relation to due process, discrimination, harassment, confidentiality, discipline, privacy)
- applying knowledge of a teacher's rights and responsibilities in various situations (e.g., in relation to students with disabilities, potential abuse, safety issues)
- applying knowledge of parents' rights and responsibilities in various situations (e.g., in relation to student records, school attendance)
- analyzing the appropriateness of a teacher's response to a parent, a community member, another educator, or a student in various situations (e.g., when dealing with differences of opinion in regard to current or emerging policy)

SUBAREA IV—INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT: CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ITEM

The content to be addressed by the constructed-response assignment is described in Subarea II, Objectives 07–15.

■ MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION

This preparation guide provides sample multiple-choice questions and a sample written assignment for the test. The multiple-choice questions illustrate the objectives of the test—one sample question for each objective.

Three pieces of information are presented for each test question:

1. the number of the test objective that the sample question illustrates,
2. a sample test question,
3. an indication of the correct response and an explanation of why it is the best available response.

Keep in mind when reviewing the questions and response options that there is one best answer to each question. Remember, too, that each explanation offers one of perhaps many perspectives on why a given response is correct or incorrect in the context of the question; there may be other explanations as well.

On the following page are sample test directions similar to those that candidates see when they take the test.

SAMPLE TEST DIRECTIONS FOR MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

DIRECTIONS

This test booklet contains a multiple-choice section and a section with a single written assignment. You may complete the sections of the test in the order you choose.

Each question in the first section of this booklet is a multiple-choice question with four answer choices. Read each question CAREFULLY and choose the ONE best answer. Record your answer on the answer sheet in the space that corresponds to the question number. Completely fill in the space that has the same letter as the answer you have chosen. *Use only a No. 2 lead pencil.*

Sample Question:

1. What is the capital of New York?
A. Buffalo
B. New York City
C. Albany
D. Rochester

The correct answer to this question is C. You would indicate that on the answer sheet as follows:

1. (A) (B) ● (D)

You should answer all questions. Even if you are unsure of an answer, it is better to guess than not to answer a question at all. You may use the margins of the test booklet for scratch paper, but you will be scored only on the responses on your answer sheet.

The directions for the written assignment appear later in this test booklet.

FOR TEST SECURITY REASONS, YOU MAY NOT TAKE NOTES OR REMOVE ANY OF THE TEST MATERIALS FROM THE ROOM.

The words "End of Test" indicate that you have completed the test. You may go back and review your answers, but be sure that you have answered all questions before raising your hand for dismissal. Your test materials must be returned to a test administrator when you finish the test.

If you have any questions, please ask them now before beginning the test.



DO NOT GO ON UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

SAMPLE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS, CORRECT RESPONSES, AND EXPLANATIONS



Objective 0013

Understand the relationship between student motivation and achievement and how motivational principles and practices can be used to promote and sustain student cooperation in learning.

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

Students in a fourth-grade class will be doing research and writing reports as the final activity in a social studies unit the class has been working on for several weeks.

1. The teacher is considering how to motivate a student with a history of limited academic success. The student has developed an expectation of failure that makes him reluctant to put effort into his schoolwork. Which two of the following strategies would likely be most effective in engaging the student in the assignment?
 - I. organizing the assignment so that students have the opportunity to choose their own research topics
 - II. offering public recognition, such as gold stars on a chart, as an incentive for good work
 - III. pairing the student with a high-achieving classmate to work with on the assignment
 - IV. making it clear that students will be rewarded for effort as well as for achievement

- A. I and III only
- B. I and IV only
- C. II and III only
- D. II and IV only



Correct Response: B. The teacher in the question can probably best motivate a student with a history of limited academic success by using strategies to enhance the student's interest in the subject of the research report and help him find his own motivation. Allowing students to select their own research topics (Option I) is likely to serve this purpose by prompting the student to relate classroom activities to his own interests and experiences. Rewarding students for effort as well as for achievement (Option IV) would allow a student with a history of limited academic success an opportunity to be successful by reducing task risk (e.g., anxiety over receiving a grade) and increasing the potential for success without oversimplifying the task.

Other Responses:

- Responses A and C include Option III: pairing the student with a high-achieving classmate. Pairing learners with differing achievement levels can be a useful strategy for cooperative learning; however, it is not likely to be an effective motivational strategy in this situation, since it could prompt the low-achieving student to compare his work to that of his high-achieving peer rather than valuing his own effort, achievement, and progress.
- Responses C and D include Option II: offering public recognition as an incentive for good work. This motivational strategy is probably not appropriate for this situation because it would establish a focus on the student's performance relative to that of other, higher-achieving students, thereby fostering an atmosphere of competition and possibly diminishing the chances that he would fully engage in the assignment.



Objective 0001

Understand human development, including developmental processes and variations, and use this understanding to promote student development and learning.

2. One skill that the class will be learning during the report-writing activity is note taking. When planning the note-taking component, the teacher should be aware that, in terms of cognitive development, students of this age typically find it most difficult to:
 - A. create categories for organizing varied types of information.
 - B. recognize repeated information in a text.
 - C. identify information that is not related to a specific topic.
 - D. copy information accurately from a text.
-

Correct Response: A. Of the response options given, fourth-grade students are likely to find it most difficult to create categories for organizing varied types of information. This task requires the higher-order thinking skills of analysis (involving the ability to break information into its component parts and examine relationships of the parts to one another and to the whole) and synthesis (involving the ability to put parts together to form a pattern or structure that is new to the learner). In creating their own organizational categories, students are being asked to organize the information they have researched and synthesize it in a creative manner that emphasizes the discovery of new patterns or structures.

Other Responses:

- Response B. Although some fourth-grade students may have difficulty recognizing repeated information in a text, this kind of recognition task requires thinking that is less cognitively demanding than analysis or synthesis.
- Response C. Although some fourth-grade students may need help in identifying information extraneous to their topic, the thinking skills required (comparing, differentiating) are less cognitively demanding than the analysis and synthesis required for students to create their own categories as a means of organizing information.
- Response D. Although the teacher may wish to remind the class about the importance of taking accurate notes from texts, the thinking skill required for copying information from a text is less cognitively demanding than analysis or synthesis.



Use the excerpt below from a first-grade science lesson to answer the three questions that follow.

Ms. Lamont's first-grade class is just beginning a life science unit. In an introductory lesson on the functions of skin, Ms. Lamont talks to her students about the skin of an apple. A portion of the class's discussion appears below.

Ms. Lamont: Why does an apple have skin, do you think?

Andrew: To cover it up.

Thai: To make it red.

James: No, sometimes apples are green.

Ms. Lamont: Yes, that's very good. An apple's skin can be different colors, can't it? The skin covers the apple up and gives it color. Another thing the skin does is protect it from germs and insects. Today we're going to do an experiment to see how an apple's skin protects it. What do you think will happen to this apple if we cut off some of its skin?

Kevin: It will turn brown.

Melissa: It will get mushy.

Ms. Lamont: Kevin predicts the apple will turn brown, and Melissa predicts it will get mushy. A prediction is what somebody thinks will happen. What do the rest of you think will happen? *[The other children agree with Kevin's and Melissa's predictions.]* Any other predictions? No? Okay, I'll cut some of the skin off of this apple, like this, and we'll put it on the shelf. We'll also set out an apple that hasn't been cut. Now, how will we know if our predictions were right or not?



Objective 0002

Understand learning processes, and use this understanding to promote student development and learning.

3. Which of the following strategies for promoting learning is most evident in Ms. Lamont's lesson?
- A. encouraging students to reflect on inconsistencies between their current beliefs and new information
 - B. using students' prior knowledge as a basis for understanding new content
 - C. helping students relate knowledge in one content area to other domains of knowledge
 - D. prompting students to generate the questions that the teacher plans to address
-

Correct Response: B. In using an apple as the focus of an introductory discussion on the functions of skin, the teacher prompts students to use their shared experiences relating to a common phenomenon as a basis for understanding new content. Basing lessons on such prior knowledge helps make classroom learning more accessible and relevant to students and can thereby encourage their active exploration of new concepts.

Other Responses:

- Response A. Although the class discussion could possibly prompt some students to discover inconsistencies between their current beliefs and new information, the teaching strategy employed here is intended mainly to help students extend their current understanding of the concept of skin rather than reflect upon inconsistencies.
- Response C. Although both the content and the methodology of this lesson may have applications in content areas other than science, the primary purpose of the lesson is to promote students' understanding of science concepts, not to help them make interdisciplinary connections.
- Response D. Although this lesson could lead students to ask questions, its primary purpose is to prompt students to share relevant knowledge and make predictions based on their understanding of the function of an apple's skin. Throughout the discussion, the teacher generates the questions she wishes to have students pursue.



Objective 0011

Understand various instructional approaches, and use this knowledge to facilitate student learning.

4. Ms. Lamont's instructional strategy is an especially good one for young children because of its:
- A. emphasis on directly observable phenomena.
 - B. responsiveness to individual students' strengths and needs.
 - C. emphasis on the use of creative problem solving.
 - D. responsiveness to a variety of learning styles.
-

Correct Response: A. Research indicates that young children learn best from working with concrete objects, materials, and phenomena. Using words and other types of symbols is less effective than using concrete things to promote their understanding. Therefore, the teacher's instructional strategy, which involves manipulating and observing an apple and making predictions about what will happen to the apple, is an especially good one for young children because of its emphasis on concrete, observable phenomena.

Other Responses:

- Response B. This lesson involves a whole-class activity that is based on a general understanding of how young students learn; there is no indication that the teacher is emphasizing the use of strategies that are responsive to the specific strengths and needs of individual students.
- Response C. The thinking skills targeted in this lesson involve identifying relevant prior knowledge, drawing thoughtful conclusions, and making reasonable predictions rather than using creative problem solving.
- Response D. Because this lesson is devoted mostly to oral questioning and class discussion, it does not emphasize the presentation of content through multiple means that might appeal to students with different learning styles and preferences.



Objective 0014

Understand communication practices that are effective in promoting student learning and creating a climate of trust and support in the classroom, and how to use a variety of communication modes to support instruction.

5. Ms. Lamont's questioning strategy in this lesson serves primarily to:
- A. motivate students' independent exploration of ideas.
 - B. establish students' recognition of conflicting ideas that need to be resolved.
 - C. encourage students' active involvement in learning.
 - D. promote students' comprehension of information they have just encountered for the first time.
-

Correct Response: C. The teacher's questioning strategy in this lesson serves mainly to encourage students' active involvement in learning. By basing the lesson on her students' familiarity with a common object (an apple) and asking a series of questions about that object, the teacher prompts the students to examine their own prior experiences, share relevant knowledge with one another, and collaboratively explore future possibilities.

Other Responses:

- Response A. Although the teacher's questioning strategy is intended in part to prompt individual students to think about what they already know, the primary purpose of the questioning is to facilitate collaborative investigation of ideas rather than to motivate individual exploration.
- Response B. Although the teacher's questioning strategy may elicit from students a number of different ideas, the primary purpose is not to resolve potentially conflicting ideas but to establish and explore the students' shared experience.
- Response D. Because this portion of the lesson is based on students' familiarity with a common phenomenon, its aim is to explore their shared experience and to make predictions based on that experience, not to promote their comprehension of new information that they are encountering for the first time.



Objective 0003

Understand how factors in the home, school, and community may affect students' development and readiness to learn; and use this understanding to create a classroom environment within which all students can develop and learn.

6. According to research studies, which of the following home factors is likely to have the greatest effect on an elementary student's perception of his or her own academic competence?
- A. disciplinary practices used in the home
 - B. birth order and nature of relationships with siblings
 - C. parents' expressed beliefs about the student's abilities
 - D. types and educational value of playthings in the home
-

Correct Response: C. Research suggests that children in their elementary years have a natural desire to gain competence and skills that allow them access to new realms of experience and give them greater control over their environment. Various factors may influence whether and how this natural desire for increased competence manifests itself in any particular child. One important factor is parents' expressed beliefs about their child's capabilities and potential for achievement, which in turn can affect the child's perceptions of his or her own competence and learning potential. Parental expressions of confidence and encouragement can contribute significantly to a child's sense of competence in school. On the other hand, parents who express a lack of confidence in their child's abilities may see this attitude mirrored in the child's lack of academic competence and confidence.

Other Responses:

- Response A. Although disciplinary practices in the home may have significant effects on a child's overall personal development, this factor generally plays a less significant role in forming a student's perception of his or her own learning abilities than parents' expressed beliefs about those abilities.
- Response B. Birth order and relationships with siblings can have significant effects on the way children think of themselves and are socialized within the family; however, this factor generally has little direct or consistent effect on students' sense of academic competence.
- Response D. Although play is important for young children's cognitive and social–emotional development, the precise types and educational value of playthings that are available in a child's home are likely to be less important than parental attitudes in forming a child's perceptions of his or her own academic abilities.



Objective 0004

Understand language and literacy development, and use this knowledge in all content areas to develop the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of students, including students for whom English is not their primary language.

7. A fourth-grade teacher wants to help her students develop the habit of using self-monitoring to improve their comprehension of content-area readings. Which of the following strategies is likely to be most effective in accomplishing this goal?
- A. After students read a passage, they spend a few minutes writing in a learning log what they learned about the topic and what they did not understand.
 - B. Before students read a passage, they quickly write down what they already know about the topic and then briefly discuss what they wrote with a partner.
 - C. After students read a passage, they answer a set of questions the teacher has developed about the vocabulary and facts introduced in the passage.
 - D. Before students read a passage, they scan the text to identify unfamiliar vocabulary words and then use reference resources to find their meanings.



Correct Response: A. The activity described in Response A is a self-monitoring technique that the students can learn to use independently to monitor their comprehension of what they read. The students are expected to apply the technique after they have read a passage, when they have had an opportunity to comprehend the passage. Because the technique can be used by the students without the involvement of others, it represents a practical habit for them to develop.

Other Responses:

- Response B. This activity is to be applied before students read a passage, at a point when they have not yet had an opportunity to comprehend the passage. The technique is used to prepare for reading, not to monitor comprehension.
- Response C. This activity focuses on vocabulary and facts in the passage, rather than on the comprehension of ideas and the relationships between them. Further, the activity depends on the questions developed by the teacher and does not represent a habit that students can develop and use independently.
- Response D. This activity is to be applied before students read a passage, at a point when they have not yet had an opportunity to comprehend the passage. In addition, it focuses on vocabulary rather than comprehension.



Objective 0005

Understand diverse student populations, and use knowledge of diversity within the school and the community to address the needs of all learners, to create a sense of community among students, and to promote students' appreciation of and respect for individuals and groups.

8. A new elementary school teacher has been assigned to teach in a classroom that includes students from many cultural backgrounds. The teacher wants to ensure that the students' learning experiences will be positive and productive. This can best be accomplished by using which of the following principles to help guide instructional planning?
- A. A student's cultural background can be expected to have a negligible effect on the student's learning-related behaviors and interactions in the classroom.
 - B. Students from all cultural groups are likely to learn best if lessons are designed to avoid reference to any specific groups represented in the class.
 - C. Students within a particular cultural group can be expected to exhibit a broad range of interests, strengths, and needs.
 - D. Students from different cultural groups are not likely to share similar values and goals in regard to education.



Correct Response: C. The teacher can best ensure positive, productive learning experiences by recognizing that students, whatever their cultural background, are likely to exhibit individual interests, strengths, and needs that are not simply a product of cultural differences. In instructional planning, the teacher should respect individual differences and ensure that decisions about learning opportunities are based on an understanding of individual students rather than on cultural assumptions and stereotypes.

Other Responses:

- Response A. This principle is inappropriate because a student's behaviors and interactions in the classroom (e.g., in relation to collaboration versus competition with peers, teacher–student relationships) are often molded, at least in part, by cultural background and the norms learned as a member of a particular culture.
- Response B. This principle is inappropriate because learning is likely to be enhanced for students from different culture groups if the teacher incorporates into instruction content and examples related to various cultures, especially their own, to illustrate key concepts. This instructional strategy can help promote student learning by making content more relevant to students.
- Response D. Values and goals related to education vary widely among individual students and are not primarily a function of cultural differences. Students from different cultures may exhibit similar education-related values and goals, while students from the same culture may exhibit significant differences in this area.



Objective 0006

Understand the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities, developmental delays, and exceptional abilities (including gifted and talented students); and use this knowledge to help students reach their highest levels of achievement and independence.

9. Several months into the school year, a second-grade teacher is informed that Carl, a student with a moderate hearing loss, will be joining her class in a week. Carl wears hearing aids, and although his speech sounds unusual, he is able to communicate effectively with speech. Which of the following would be the best strategy for the teacher to use to prepare the other students for Carl's arrival?
- A. Inform students that Carl, a student with a disability, will be joining the class and discuss why they should not talk about the disability with him or in his presence.
 - B. Conduct a lesson before Carl's arrival that addresses how people hear sound and different types of hearing loss.
 - C. Inform students that a new classmate, Carl, will be joining them, but allow them to learn about their new classmate on their own after his arrival.
 - D. Explain before Carl's arrival that he wears hearing aids and why, and invite students to ask any questions they have on the subject.



Correct Response: D. Second-grade students are likely to have many questions about people they encounter who have disabilities, and a discussion of the type described would give them a chance to ask questions and would communicate to them that their interest is natural and acceptable. A class discussion before Carl arrives that addresses his hearing aids and why he uses them can help decrease any initial anxiety students may experience regarding Carl's differences and reduce the possibility of insensitivity or stigmatization.

Other Responses:

- Response A. In urging students not to comment on Carl's disability in his presence, the teacher may communicate the idea that differences among people should not be discussed and are in some way shameful. This could increase the students' discomfort and anxiety about interacting with Carl and having him as a member of the class.
- Response B. Although a lesson that addresses how people hear sound and different types of hearing loss might be informative for the class, the lesson may lack the specific application necessary to prepare second-grade students effectively for Carl's arrival. The indirectness of the approach may also negatively affect students' perceptions of and reactions to Carl when he arrives.
- Response C. Having students learn about Carl's disability on their own after his arrival will not help them understand and deal sensitively with their new classmate's disability, which could lead to disruption and anxiety when he joins the class.



Objective 0007

Understand how to structure and manage a classroom to create a safe, healthy, and secure learning environment.

10. Ms. Santoro is a preschool teacher whose class includes three and four year olds. In the first week of school, she receives a large number of complaints from children in the reading center that children playing in the block and dress-up areas are too noisy and are disturbing them. Which of the following would be Ms. Santoro's best *initial* response to this problem?
- A. Hold a class meeting to explain the problem to the children and ask for their help in finding a way to solve it.
 - B. Identify the children whose behavior is most problematic and schedule conferences with their parents to discuss the matter.
 - C. Analyze the layout of the room to assess whether changes in the spatial arrangement would be likely to solve the problem.
 - D. Establish a system of rewards to be given at the end of each week to the children who have been most considerate of others.



Correct Response: C. One important responsibility of a preschool teacher is to ensure that the classroom environment is conducive to productive activity and sustained involvement in learning. One factor that has a significant effect on the classroom environment is the arrangement of space. Given the nature of the problem described, it may be that a simple repositioning of activity centers would ensure that those areas requiring quiet are adequately separated from the noisier areas. Because spatial separation of this type is such an important principle of classroom management for preschoolers, it should be the first thing that the teacher investigates in response to the problem.

Other Responses:

- Response A. Although enlisting the children's help in addressing classroom issues is appropriate in some situations, it would not be the best response if the problem is primarily the result of how the teacher has organized the environment. The teacher's first step should therefore be to assess whether she has provided the children with the best environment for learning.
- Response B. Before attempting to identify particular children whose behavior may be problematic, the teacher should take steps to ensure that her own instructional management practices, including her decisions about how to arrange her classroom, are not causing or contributing to the observed problems.
- Response D. Establishing a system of rewards for children who have been considerate of others will probably not address the disruptions to learning that are occurring in this classroom, especially if the disruptions are more a result of instructional management issues than student behavior problems.



Objective 0008

Understand curriculum development, and apply knowledge of factors and processes in curricular decision making.

11. In which of the following situations would it be most important for the faculty at a school to reevaluate the adequacy of its current curriculum?
- A. The school recently received a textbook grant and plans to purchase new textbooks for many classrooms.
 - B. State and national professional organizations in some subject areas have recently changed their curriculum guidelines.
 - C. A substantial proportion of the school's faculty has changed since the current curriculum was developed.
 - D. Teachers have begun emphasizing newer teaching methods, such as cooperative learning, over more traditional methods.



Correct Response: B. State and national professional organizations in most subject areas publish curriculum guidelines specifying the skills and content that should be the focus of learning at various levels. These curriculum guidelines typically represent a consensus among professionals in each field. Periodically, professional organizations review their curriculum guidelines and may revise them in light of emerging issues and ideas in their field. Educators at the school and district levels should respond to such revisions by reviewing their curricula to determine whether revisions are needed to reflect current views and priorities in each field.

Other Responses:

- Response A. The function of textbooks should be to support curricular objectives, not to redefine them. Therefore, the introduction of new textbooks should not in itself require changes in the current curriculum.
- Response C. Although new teachers may bring their own unique perspectives, methods, and talents to the school, a change in faculty should not affect the school's curriculum. New teachers would be expected to use their teaching skills to implement whatever curriculum has been deemed appropriate for the school.
- Response D. Although a change from more traditional teaching methods to newer teaching methods would affect how curricular content is delivered to students, this type of change would not be likely to necessitate a major reevaluation or revision of the curriculum itself.



Objective 0009

Understand the interrelationship between assessment and instruction and how to use formal and informal assessment to learn about students, plan instruction, monitor student understanding in the context of instruction, and make effective instructional modifications.

12. A teacher's use of which of the following procedures can best help ensure fair and accurate assessment of content-area learning for students for whom English is a second language?
- A. Give the students varied opportunities (e.g., through speaking, writing, performing) to demonstrate what they have learned.
 - B. Emphasize the students' use of self-assessment procedures in evaluating their acquisition of knowledge and skills.
 - C. Administer classroom tests on a flexible schedule that allows the students themselves to determine when they are ready to be evaluated.
 - D. Use standardized, grade-level assessments whose norm group includes nonnative-English speakers to monitor the students' learning on an ongoing basis.



Correct Response: A. In conducting classroom assessments in English to measure the content-area learning of students for whom English is a second language (ESL students), teachers should strive to use assessment strategies that allow the students to demonstrate what they know while minimizing the potential effects of limited English proficiency on assessment results. Giving ESL students varied assessment opportunities (e.g., through speaking, writing, performing) ensures that the students have a chance to show what they have learned in a way that best reflects their true knowledge and skills.

Other Responses:

- Response B. Although having ESL students engage in self-assessment would be useful in some situations and for some purposes, this method may not yield results that are highly accurate in terms of evaluating students' actual knowledge and skills.
- Response C. Allowing ESL students to determine on their own when they are ready to be evaluated would not remove possible language-related obstacles to fair and accurate content-area assessment and thus would not greatly improve a teacher's ability to accurately evaluate student learning.
- Response D. Ongoing assessment of students' content-area learning generally requires the use of assessments that reflect specific content that has been the focus of recent classroom instruction. Since standardized, grade-level assessments tend to cover a relatively broad range of knowledge that is not tied to particular lessons, they are not likely to be useful for helping teachers accurately monitor ESL students' understanding of ongoing content-area instruction.



Objective 0010

Understand instructional planning and apply knowledge of planning processes to design effective instruction that promotes the learning of all students.

13. A sixth-grade teacher creates a questionnaire for each student to complete during the first week of school. The following are typical items on the questionnaire.

	Yes	Sometimes	No
I like to work by myself.			
I like to do projects with classmates.			
I like to learn by listening to others.			
I like to sit at a desk or table when I study.			
I like to talk to people about what I am learning.			

This questionnaire is likely to be most useful in helping the teacher:

- A. promote students' recognition of the value of varied types of learning experiences.
- B. evaluate the effectiveness of instructional activities and approaches used with the class.
- C. plan instructional activities that are responsive to students' learning styles and preferences.
- D. develop appropriate expectations for each student's behavior and achievement in the class.



Correct Response: C. The questionnaire elicits information from students about their individual preferences for particular types of learning environments and ways of learning, which in turn helps promote an understanding of their learning styles. Awareness of students' learning preferences can help the teacher determine how to provide learning opportunities that allow students to work and learn in their preferred modes and thus enhance learning.

Other Responses:

- Response A. The questionnaire focuses on having students think about and identify their own current preferences in learning; it is not intended to prompt students to look beyond these current preferences to understand or appreciate alternative types of learning experiences.
- Response B. Although the questionnaire could help the teacher plan instruction that accommodates students' learning styles, it would be of little use in evaluating the effectiveness of specific instructional activities and approaches, which would require the use of assessments that measure student learning.
- Response D. This questionnaire would probably not help the teacher develop expectations for each student's behavior and achievement, since it provides little or no direct information about students' typical behavior in class or typical levels of achievement.



Objective 0012

Understand principles and procedures for organizing and implementing lessons, and use this knowledge to promote student learning and achievement.

14. A third-grade teacher begins a lesson on nutrition by asking the class to help him develop a day's menu for each of two imaginary characters, Pat and Val. Pat, he tells the class, eats a healthful diet every day, while Val eats only foods with little nutritional value. He then asks the class to suggest a typical day's menu for each character for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, including any snacks. The teacher writes the two menus on the board as students suggest foods based on the two characters' eating habits. Partial menus for Pat and Val are shown below.

<u>Pat's</u> <u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Val's</u> <u>Breakfast</u>
orange juice	soda pop
cereal	chocolate cake
milk	potato chips
fruit	

This way of introducing the lesson would be especially effective for:

- I. encouraging students to apply critical-thinking skills.
 - II. promoting student's self-assessment of their knowledge of the topic.
 - III. prompting students to apply their current knowledge of the subject.
 - IV. generating students' interest in the subject.
- A. I and II only
- B. I and IV only
- C. II and III only
- D. III and IV only



Correct Response: D. The teacher introduces a lesson on nutrition with an activity that takes advantage of students' prior knowledge of different kinds of foods by having them generate examples of healthful and unhealthful foods. This helps create meaning for the students and encourages active engagement in learning, which should promote their interest in the lesson. Therefore, the activity should promote learning by prompting students to apply their current knowledge of the subject (Option III) and by stimulating their interest in the lesson (Option IV).

Other Responses:

- Responses A and B include Option I: encouraging students to apply critical-thinking skills. The activity described in the question prompts students to identify and categorize familiar foods on the basis of their healthfulness; it does not require the students to apply critical-thinking skills, which would involve evaluating conclusions through logical and systematic examination.
- Responses A and C include Option II: promoting students' self-assessment of their knowledge of the topic. Although the activity requires students to generate examples of healthful and unhealthful foods, it does not include a self-assessment component in which students would have to evaluate their own strengths and needs in regard to their knowledge of nutrition.



Objective 0015

Understand uses of technology, including instructional and assistive technology, in teaching and learning; and apply this knowledge to use technology effectively and to teach students how to use technology to enhance their learning.

15. Students in a fifth-grade classroom will use the Internet to conduct research for a social studies project. How can the teacher most effectively use the features of the Internet and Web browsers to help the students learn how to use the Internet for their work?
- A. by using a search engine while planning the project to prepare a list of appropriate pages for the students to visit as they conduct their research
 - B. by helping the students use the browser's "favorites" or "bookmark" feature to mark good sites to revisit and explore further
 - C. by using the browser's "history" and "back" functions to gather source and bibliographic information on the Web sites that the students have visited
 - D. by helping the students use the "feedback" or "e-mail" feature on the Web pages that they visit to address questions directly to the authors of those pages



Correct Response: B. The most effective research-related use of Internet and browser features among the response choices listed is Response B. The browser's "favorites" or "bookmark" feature is designed to save the addresses of, and links to, visited sites for future use. In their initial research, students are likely to find many Web pages that may be useful; their research will be facilitated if they learn how to note the locations of pages to which they may want to return later (e.g., to read them more carefully, print them, and/or pursue "links" to related pages and sites).

Other Responses:

- Response A. The use of a search engine by the teacher to prepare a list of pages for the students inappropriately shifts the responsibility for the research from the students to the teacher. If the students are to learn how to conduct research using the Internet, it is more appropriate for them to learn to use search engines themselves.
- Response C. The use of the "history" or "back" function of a Web browser is not an effective way to gather source and bibliographic information. Typically, a browser will retain only a small number of previously visited addresses, and the list will not be well organized. Students should gather source and bibliographic information at the time they visit or revisit the Web sites that they will use in their research.
- Response D. The use of a "feedback" or "e-mail" feature to communicate with the sponsor of a Web page is not an effective research method. Web sponsors cannot generally be expected to respond to e-mails generated by site visitors who seek information beyond what is posted on the site.



Objective 0016

Understand the history, philosophy, and role of education in New York State and the broader society.

16. In school districts in New York State, the major responsibilities of the district superintendent include:
- I. implementing policy decisions of the local school board.
 - II. representing faculty in contract negotiations.
 - III. approving and adopting annual district budgets.
 - IV. providing educational leadership for faculty and administrators.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only
-

Correct Response: B. In New York State, the district superintendent is responsible for communicating school board policies to district faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders and ensuring that the policies are implemented effectively and equitably. In addition, the superintendent is responsible for ensuring that district schools develop and maintain effective academic programs that promote all students' learning and progress. Therefore, the major responsibilities of district superintendents in New York State include implementing policy decisions of the local school board (Option I) and providing educational leadership for faculty and administrators (Option IV).

Other Responses:

- Responses A and C include Option III, which states that the district superintendent approves and adopts annual district budgets. This responsibility is reserved for the local school board.
- Responses C and D include Option II, which states that the district superintendent represents faculty in contract negotiations. Teachers are usually represented in contract negotiations and on other issues of employment by local and/or state representatives of the teachers' union.



Objective 0017

Understand how to reflect productively on one's own teaching practice and how to update one's professional knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.

17. Mr. Anderson, a fifth-grade teacher, learns that his supervisor will be observing him as he presents a lesson to one of his classes. The observation is part of a formative evaluation system used regularly in the school to promote teachers' professional growth and development. Before the observation, the supervisor schedules a preobservation conference. Mr. Anderson can best ensure that the observation process will be an effective means of promoting his own professional development by taking which of the following actions during the preobservation conference?
- A. Elicit from the supervisor as many ideas as possible about alternative ways to present content that is relevant to the lesson that will be observed.
 - B. Provide the supervisor with research justifying the instructional methods he plans to use during the observation.
 - C. Ask the supervisor to describe lessons presented by other school faculty who have performed especially well on similar evaluations.
 - D. Talk to the supervisor about self-identified areas of need and request feedback about performance in those areas.



Correct Response: D. Because the evaluation process is formative, its purpose is to analyze the teacher's instructional methods and help him grow and develop as a professional. The teacher can best profit from this opportunity by reflecting on and assessing his own teaching performance, identifying areas in which he would like to progress, and working collaboratively with his supervisor to enhance his teaching effectiveness in those areas.

Other Responses:

- Response A. Feedback resulting from the observation is likely to be most useful and constructive if the teacher uses his own characteristic teaching style and methods during the observed lesson. Therefore, eliciting a large number of ideas from the supervisor about alternative ways to present lesson content is unlikely to help achieve the goal of obtaining useful, constructive feedback.
- Response B. Providing the supervisor with research justifying the instructional methods used during the observation will not help achieve the primary goal of the observation, which is to permit the supervisor to evaluate and comment on the teacher's performance.
- Response C. The observation is likely to be most useful for promoting the teacher's professional skills if the evaluator is able to observe instructional methods typically used by the teacher. Therefore, seeking information about lessons presented by other, high-performing faculty members would probably not be helpful or appropriate.



Objective 0018

Understand the importance of and apply strategies for promoting productive relationships and interactions among the school, home, and community to enhance student learning.

18. A number of parents and community members have volunteered to help out for several hours a week in an elementary school classroom. Guidelines that the teacher could establish to make the best use of such volunteers include:
- I. using volunteers primarily for tasks that involve less intensive student interaction, such as materials distribution and bookkeeping.
 - II. recognizing that the volunteers themselves are the best judges of how they can be of most help in the classroom.
 - III. obtaining specific time commitments from volunteers and establishing a regular schedule for their work.
 - IV. providing ongoing training and monitoring of the volunteers' performance of clearly defined tasks.
- A. I and II only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. III and IV only



Correct Response: D. Parents and community volunteers can be an important resource in the elementary school classroom. Obtaining specific time commitments from volunteers and establishing a regular schedule (Option III) should help the teacher plan class activities more effectively and enable the teacher to make the best possible use of the volunteers' time in the classroom. Providing volunteers with ongoing training and monitoring their performance (Option IV) can help ensure that their efforts will contribute to and be consistent with the instructional goals of the class.

Other Responses:

- Responses A and B include Option I, which states that volunteers should be used primarily for tasks that involve less intensive student interaction. This guideline would unnecessarily limit the potential usefulness of volunteers in the classroom; many volunteers may have important knowledge and skills that could allow them to play an important role in instructional, recreational, and enrichment activities that involve significant interaction with students.
- Responses A and C include Option II, which states that volunteers are themselves the best judges of how they can be most helpful in the classroom. Decisions about how volunteers should be used in individual classrooms should rest with the teacher, whose responsibilities include organizing and coordinating all classroom activities to promote achievement of instructional goals.



Objective 0019

Understand reciprocal rights and responsibilities in situations involving interactions between teachers and students, parents/guardians, community members, colleagues, school administrators, and other school personnel.

19. A sixth-grade teacher has concerns about Becky, a student with special needs who has not been making much progress in achieving the goals in her individualized education program (IEP). The teacher has followed the recommendations in Becky's IEP and has been consulting with Becky's special education teacher, but the situation has not improved. It is now three months into the school year, and Becky's IEP team is scheduled to reconvene near the end of the school year. Which of the following best describes the sixth-grade teacher's responsibility at this point?
- A. requesting that members of Becky's IEP team meet as soon as possible to discuss the situation and reconsider the appropriateness of her current IEP
 - B. continuing to maintain records documenting Becky's problems, and share the information with other members of the IEP team at the next scheduled team meeting
 - C. revising the current IEP goals immediately to reflect Becky's strengths and needs better and notify others on Becky's IEP team of the changes
 - D. discussing the situation with Becky's parents and have them decide whether to meet now with Becky's IEP team or wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting



Correct Response: A. In the situation described, the teacher should take immediate action to help ensure Becky's continued progress in school while adhering to the legal guidelines governing the development and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs). The teacher has already tried various strategies for implementing Becky's current IEP, and Becky's next IEP team meeting is not scheduled to occur for several months. Requesting that Becky's IEP team meet as soon as possible to discuss the problem and reevaluate Becky's IEP would enable the professionals on the team to investigate the situation quickly and suggest either new ways of implementing the current IEP or changes in the IEP itself.

Other Responses:

- Response B. If there is a significant problem relating to Becky's IEP, delaying intervention until the end of the year may jeopardize Becky's academic progress during the entire year and cause her to fall further behind in school.
- Response C. By law, the creation of a student's IEP is a shared responsibility among all the members of the IEP team; the teacher does not have the right to revise Becky's IEP goals independently once they have been established by her IEP team.
- Response D. Although the teacher should certainly discuss Becky's academic performance and progress with Becky's parents, it is the teacher's responsibility to assess Becky's progress toward the academic goals specified in the IEP, as well as to request that the IEP team meet as soon as possible if, for any reason, those goals are not being met.

■ WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SECTION

On the following pages are:

- ▶ Sample test directions for the written assignment section
- ▶ A sample written assignment
- ▶ An example of a stronger response to the assignment and an evaluation of the response
- ▶ An example of a weaker response to the assignment and an evaluation of the response
- ▶ The performance characteristics and scoring scale

On the actual test, candidates will be given a different written assignment from the one provided as a sample in this preparation guide.

■ SAMPLE TEST DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of a written assignment. You are to prepare a written response of about 300–600 words on the assigned topic. *The assignment can be found on the next page.* You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response to the assignment.

Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use any blank space provided on the following pages to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. *However, your score will be based solely on the response you write in the written response booklet.*

Your response will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** Fulfill the charge of the assignment.
- **APPLICATION OF CONTENT:** Accurately and effectively apply the relevant knowledge and skills.
- **SUPPORT:** Support the response with appropriate examples and/or sound reasoning reflecting an understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills.

Your response will be evaluated on the criteria above, not writing ability. However, your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. This should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes that you think will improve your response.

SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

It is important for teachers to be able to provide students who have disabilities with effective learning experiences in an inclusive regular education classroom. Imagine that the educational goal below, formulated by a joint committee of teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians, has been established for your school.

GOALS FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Goal 5: Provide students who have disabilities with effective learning experiences in an inclusive regular education classroom.

**Examples
of Teaching
Objectives:**

Work with others inside and outside the school to facilitate student achievement of desired learning goals in an inclusive classroom.

Individualize instruction to promote learning and development for students with special needs.

Implement procedures to ensure that students with special needs participate to the greatest extent possible in all classroom activities.

In an essay written for a group of New York State educators, frame your response by identifying a grade level/subject area for which you are prepared to teach; then:

- explain the importance of providing students who have disabilities with effective learning experiences in an inclusive regular education classroom;
- describe two strategies you would use to achieve this educational goal; and
- explain why the strategies you describe would be effective in achieving this educational goal.

Be sure to specify a grade level/subject area in your essay, and frame your ideas so that an educator certified at your level will be able to understand the basis for your response.

STRONGER RESPONSE TO THE SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Grade level/subject area: fourth grade, all subjects.

Every effort should be made to include students who have disabilities in the regular classroom. This is required by law, but it should be done for other reasons as well. First, students with disabilities can contribute to their classrooms in important ways. When nondisabled students share learning experiences and develop relationships with students with special needs, they can expand their understanding and appreciation of the diversity they will encounter throughout their lives and be better prepared to work and play well with all kinds of people within and beyond the classroom. Inclusion also benefits students with disabilities. In an inclusive classroom, these students can live as normal a life as possible and not be totally defined by and isolated because of their disability. Through participation in all the activities that occur in a typical elementary classroom, students with special needs have opportunities to learn the same content as their peers and interact with peers in many learning and play situations. This can increase their chances for eventually being able to have full, productive lives in society.

Following are two strategies I would use to help a student with disabilities have effective learning experiences in my classroom and achieve to his or her fullest potential.

First, I would maintain regular, open communication with the student's special education professionals. These professionals could provide me with insights and information about the student's needs and how to adapt classroom activities to address needs and promote learning. I would establish a regular time—daily if possible—to meet with the special education teacher to discuss the student's progress and any issues that arise. This regular reflection would allow us to monitor the student's achievement and make plans to assure continued success. During the meetings, I would also discuss upcoming activities and determine what I (or the special education teacher) can do to modify/adapt instruction to allow the student to participate fully. Sometimes I would also include the student in discussions about his/her progress and activities. This involvement could help the student develop a sense of ownership and control of his/her own learning and show the student that his/her ideas are valued, which could help empower the student to be successful as a learner.

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■ STRONGER RESPONSE TO THE SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT *(continued)*

As a second strategy, I would familiarize myself with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and use it as an important resource for planning instruction. An IEP is created specially for each child with disabilities and is the basis for all decisions made about the child's education. As a classroom teacher, I must be prepared to use IEPs as I will be one of the people responsible for implementing my students' plans. The IEP provides information and guidelines for helping a student with disabilities learn in the regular classroom. It will give me useful information about the student (e.g., reading comprehension level, learning style) and identify general strategies for adapting the student's instruction. By defining specific learning goals and objectives that are appropriate for the student, the IEP can also let me know if learning is not proceeding as expected. If the student is not achieving the goals and objectives in the IEP, it may indicate that I need to change my approach and perhaps consult other professionals for assistance.

By setting up regular consultations with the special education professional, I will be able to discuss the student's progress and receive valuable insights for facilitating achievement. The IEP will provide me with a guide for planning instruction for a particular student and enable me to design activities that meet his/her specific needs. Both these strategies will help ensure that this student has an effective learning experience in my classroom.

■ EVALUATION OF THE STRONGER RESPONSE

In this stronger response, the writer demonstrates an accurate understanding of the role of a teacher in relation to learner characteristics, instructional design and delivery, and the teaching environment. In addition, the response fulfills the assignment by identifying a particular subject area and grade level; explaining why the stated educational goal is important; describing two strategies to address the goal; and explaining reasons why the strategies would be effective in attaining the goal.

Identify a particular grade level/subject area. The writer specifies that he/she is prepared to teach all subjects in a fourth-grade classroom.

Explain the importance of providing students who have disabilities with effective learning experiences in an inclusive regular classroom environment. The writer shows a good understanding of students both with and without disabilities, as well as the goals and benefits of including students with disabilities in a regular elementary classroom. After noting the legal basis for inclusion, the writer goes on to present an accurate explanation of potential advantages of inclusive classrooms for students with disabilities (e.g., expanded opportunities to learn and interact with peers, reduced isolation), as well as for their nondisabled peers (e.g., increased understanding and appreciation of society's diversity).

Describe two strategies you would use to achieve this educational goal. The two strategies described in the response reflect the writer's knowledge of students with disabilities, of how to establish procedures for planning and delivering effective instruction for those students in an inclusive classroom, and of how to work within the professional environment. In both strategies, the writer emphasizes the importance of using available resources and services to assist in planning and implementing instruction for students with special needs. In the first strategy, the writer describes how he/she would collaborate with special needs professionals on an ongoing basis to plan, adapt, and monitor student instruction. The discussion of this strategy includes relevant and accurate details regarding appropriate roles and benefits associated with this type of collaboration. The writer also discusses how students themselves can and should be brought into the collaborative planning process. For the second strategy, the writer discusses how the classroom teacher can use a student's IEP to help ensure that the student is provided with appropriate and effective learning experiences in the classroom. In this discussion, the writer shows a good understanding of the types of information included in an IEP and the role of the IEP in planning and modifying instruction and monitoring student learning.

Explain why the strategies you describe would be effective in achieving this educational goal. For each of the strategies described, the writer offers a strong, persuasive rationale that reflects an understanding of students with disabilities, of how to plan and deliver instruction that is responsive to their needs, and of how to work within the professional environment to ensure effective instruction. For example, in regard to working with special education professionals, the writer explains how participation in regular meetings would provide opportunities to "receive valuable insights" from a specialist while facilitating monitoring of

■ EVALUATION OF THE STRONGER RESPONSE *(continued)*

student achievement and planning for future activities. The writer also explains how a student's involvement in these meetings could "help the student develop a sense of ownership and control of his/her own learning . . . which could help empower the student to be successful as a learner." Regarding the strategy of using the IEP as a key resource, the response reflects the writer's recognition of the usefulness of the IEP as a tool to help measure student progress, identify potential problems, and guide instructional design and implementation.

WEAKER RESPONSE TO THE SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

It is very important to give students who have disabilities strong learning experiences in a regular classroom. Like all students, these students deserve the chance to learn. As a classroom teacher, it will be my responsibility to help all students learn, including students with disabilities. I have had some experiences as a student teacher, and during those experiences I have worked with a few special education students in the classroom. If some students who have special needs were assigned to my classroom, there are a few things that I would do to make sure that those students succeed. Based on my experiences, I have found that certain steps I could take would help both the students and me.

My first strategy would be to organize the classroom physically so that the desks of the special education students are located right near my desk. This would help these students see the chalkboard and overhead screen better. It would also help keep them from getting distracted by the other students in my class. Many special education students are used to being around only a few other students in a classroom, but my classroom would probably have at least 18 to 20 other boys and girls. The students with disabilities would probably have to get used to being part of a large class that includes many possible distractions that could keep them from getting their work done. Therefore, having these students sit right near me would have a number of benefits. It would reduce their distractions and help them concentrate on their work. It would insure that they can easily see everything that is going on while I am presenting whole-class lessons. It would also help me monitor their work and behavior more easily than if they were located in another part of the classroom.

Another strategy I would use would be to make assignments shorter for the students with disabilities. I would not want to overload any of them with work right away. For example, the special education students could complete 25 math problems instead of the 45 problems the rest of the class will be working on. This shorter assignment wouldn't overwhelm them and would give them confidence to try more later. At the same time, I would make sure that the 25 math problems the special education students are given cover all the same material as the 45 problems given to the rest of the class. I would gradually increase the number of problems when I could see that the students are able to do the work without

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WEAKER RESPONSE TO THE SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT *(continued)*

feeling overloaded. In a similar way, I could decide to give the students with disabilities less homework than other students, or perhaps no homework for awhile, until they settle in. The most important thing is that the students with disabilities need to feel comfortable about being in my classroom, and then they should be able to adjust well and progress in their learning.

If any of the students who have disabilities experience a lot of problems in my classroom, the special education teacher can work with those students in a resource room instead. The students could start out by spending much of the day in the resource room, and then gradually they could come back into my classroom until they are ready to be in the regular classroom full-time. The special education teacher has a lot of experience dealing with this type of student and would be able to help if I ran into trouble. The special education resource room would be a comfortable, familiar place to students with disabilities and they would always be welcome to come back in and be in my classroom when they could. I think it is important to seek advice from experts in this field.

These ideas would make special education students with all kinds of disabilities feel welcome and able to have fun and make new friends. I feel sure that I could give special education students a great deal of education in my class.

■ EVALUATION OF THE WEAKER RESPONSE

In this weaker response, the writer demonstrates a limited understanding of the role of a teacher in relation to learner characteristics, instructional design and delivery, and the teaching environment. In addition, the response only partially fulfills the assignment by omitting or responding in a limited way to one or more of the required elements, which include identifying a particular subject area and grade level; explaining why the stated educational goal is important; describing two strategies to address the goal; and explaining reasons why the strategies would be effective in attaining the goal.

Identify a particular grade level/subject area. The writer fails to specify a particular subject area or grade level in the response.

Explain the importance of providing students who have disabilities with effective learning experiences in an inclusive regular classroom environment. The writer addresses this part of the essay in a limited and vague way, stating only that "like all students, these students deserve the chance to learn." The response includes no further explanation or elaboration in regard to inclusion and its expected benefits.

Describe two strategies you would use to achieve this educational goal. The two strategies described in the response reflect a limited knowledge of students with disabilities and how to plan and deliver effective instruction for those students. The writer identifies some positive goals to consider in working with students with disabilities (e.g., making the students comfortable, monitoring the students' work on an ongoing basis, ensuring that assigned work is not overwhelming to the students). However, the strategies described in the response would be inadequate for achieving those goals and inappropriate for many students with special needs. The writer appears to assume that the two highly specific instructional modifications described in the response would be appropriate for addressing the needs of any student who has disabilities. This suggests that the writer lacks an accurate understanding of students with disabilities and what is required to individualize instruction to promote their success in an inclusive general education classroom. In regard to the first strategy—locating the students' desks near the teacher's desk—the writer incorrectly assumes that all students with special needs are easily distractible and require help seeing the chalkboard. While this strategy could help the teacher monitor some students' work in some classroom contexts, it may also have the negative effect of making a student feel different or isolated in others. Similarly, the strategy of shortening assignments may not be useful for all students with disabilities in all instructional contexts and may also result in a student's feeling different and isolated. There are many ways that assigned work may be modified to address a student's special needs, and no one way can be assumed to be appropriate for all students. The writer also mentions the value of the special education teacher as a resource person who can provide assistance and advice, but shows an inaccurate understanding of the role of the special education teacher in an inclusive classroom.

Explain why the strategies you describe would be effective in achieving this educational goal. The explanations for why the strategies described would be effective in achieving the stated goal are weak and of questionable accuracy. The writer suggests various benefits that

■ EVALUATION OF THE WEAKER RESPONSE *(continued)*

may result from placing a student's desk near the teacher's desk (reduced distractions, enhanced concentration, better viewing, better teacher monitoring) and shortening a student's assignments (reduced likelihood of feeling "overloaded," increased student comfort and confidence). However, as noted previously, these potential advantages may also have serious disadvantages and may be irrelevant to the particular needs of many students with disabilities.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS AND SCORING SCALE

Performance Characteristics

The following characteristics guide the scoring of responses to the written assignment.

PURPOSE:	Fulfill the charge of the assignment.
APPLICATION OF CONTENT:	Accurately and effectively apply the relevant knowledge and skills.
SUPPORT:	Support the response with appropriate examples and/or sound reasoning reflecting an understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills.

Scoring Scale

Scores will be assigned to each response to the written assignment according to the following scoring scale.

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough command of the relevant knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response completely fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding fully to the given task. • The response demonstrates an accurate and highly effective application of the relevant knowledge and skills. • The response provides strong support with high-quality, relevant examples and/or sound reasoning.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a general command of the relevant knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response generally fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding to the given task. • The response demonstrates a generally accurate and effective application of the relevant knowledge and skills. • The response provides support with some relevant examples and/or generally sound reasoning.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial command of the relevant knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding in a limited way to the given task. • The response demonstrates a limited, partially accurate and partially effective application of the relevant knowledge and skills. • The response provides limited support with few examples and/or some flawed reasoning.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no command of the relevant knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fails to fulfill the purpose of the assignment. • The response demonstrates a largely inaccurate and/or ineffective application of the relevant knowledge and skills. • The response provides little or no support with few, if any, examples and/or seriously flawed reasoning.