

Special Education: Teaching Students with Mental Retardation (0321)

Test at a Glance

Test Name	Special Education: Teaching Students with Mental Retardation		
Test Code	0321		
Time	1 hour		
Number of Questions	50		
Format	Multiple-choice questions		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Questions
	I. Factors Other than Direct Instruction that Influence the Education of Students with Mental Retardation	11	23%
	II. Delivery of Services to Students with Mental Retardation	39	77%

About This Test

The Special Education: Teaching Students with Mental Retardation test is designed for examinees who plan to teach students with mental retardation, at any grade level from preschool through grade 12. The 50 multiple-choice questions assess the knowledge and understanding of the principles and other factors related to teaching students with mental retardation. Some of these questions are based on a case study of about 500 words that is related to the teaching of students with mental retardation.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

I. Factors Other than Direct Instruction that Influence the Education of Students with Mental Retardation

- Basic concepts, including deficits that affect learning (such as memory, generalization, skill maintenance, abstract thinking); affective behavior (for example, interpersonal skills, self-esteem, self concept, resistance to change); physical and language development (for example, motor skills, communication needs); family and personal living skills (such as sexuality, self-care, dependency or outer-directedness); classification of students with mental retardation (for example, labeling, race and gender issues, definition issues, limitations of standardized tests, degrees of severity); and causation and prevention of mental retardation (for example, environmental, cultural, genetic, and neurological factors)
- Definitions/terminology related to mental retardation (for example, federal definitions [IDEA] and professional organizations' definitions [including AAMR and CEC]; adaptive behaviors)

II. Delivery of Services to Students with Mental Retardation

- Conceptual approaches (for example, medical, psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, sociological, eclectic)
- Professional roles/issues/literature, including public attitudes toward individuals with mental retardation; the teacher's role as promoter of advocacy (for example, helping parents become advocates for their children, developing student self-advocacy, advocating for students' families and for educational change); the teacher's responsibility in cases of suspected abuse or neglect; the use of professional literature/organizations and formal published research for improving classroom practice and reflecting on one's own teaching; the influences of teacher attitudes and expectations on student achievement and behavior; and ways to work with health-related service and social service providers
- Assessment, including how to modify, construct, or select and conduct nondiscriminatory and appropriate formal and informal assessment procedures; how to interpret standardized and specialized assessment results; how to use evaluation results for various purposes, including monitoring instruction and IEP/ITP development; and how to prepare written reports and to communicate findings to others

- Placement and program issues, including the continuum of alternative placements and related services (for example, early intervention, support systems, least restrictive environment, REI, mainstreaming, integration and inclusion); family participation; cultural and community influences; transition of students with mental retardation (for example, into and within special education placements, community-based vocational training programs, postsecondary education, community living, family life); and access to assistive technology, services, and devices
- Curriculum and instruction for students with mental retardation, including knowing how to determine current levels of performance, instructional needs, appropriate related services and modifications to standard educational practice; knowing how to perform effective data collection, and data-based decision-making strategies for the classroom; understanding legally correct preparation of IEP/ITP instructional goals and objectives; understanding the chronological and developmental age appropriateness of instructional activities and materials; understanding appropriate planning and sequencing of instructional strategies; demonstrating an awareness of the influence of students' abilities, aptitudes, and self-image on their functional use of given concepts and on their achievement (for example, encouragement, positive reinforcement, specific corrective feedback, alternative methods for evaluation and grading); knowing how to identify, modify, use, and evaluate curricular materials, human resources, and technological equipment (for example, how to utilize volunteers, paraprofessionals, consultants/external resources, and technology, and how to conduct cross-age and peer-group tutoring); knowing how to address cultural, linguistic, gender, and learning-style differences in instructional strategies and materials; knowing how to select appropriate strategies and methods (for example, direct instruction, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, small- and large-group instruction, task analysis techniques, diagnostic/prescriptive methods, applied behavior analysis); understanding the appropriate use of varied instructional formats (for example, modeling, demonstration, timing, pacing, questioning techniques); and knowing how to address appropriate areas of instruction (for example, self-care and daily living skills, social-leisure skills, study and organizational skills, learning strategies, academics, vocational skills)

- How to manage the learning environment, including behavior management, behavior analysis (for example, identification and definition of antecedents, target behavior, consequent events); data-gathering procedures; selecting and using behavioral interventions (for example, approaches to changing behaviors, such as behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, and affective; degrees of intrusiveness); classroom organization/management; providing the appropriate physical-social environment for learning (for example, expectations, rules, consequences, consistency, attitudes, lighting, seating, access, strategies for positive interactions); transitions between lessons and activities; knowing how to group students; and effective and efficient documentation (for example, parent/teacher contacts and legal records)

Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

Note: In this test, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Public Law 101-476) will be referred to as IDEA. An individualized education program will be referred to as IEP.

1. After scoring 100% on an oral multiplication test and repeating this performance on a similar paper-and-pencil test, a 12-year-old student with mental retardation was unable to determine the total cost of purchasing six comic books when the price was \$3 for one comic book. This student is most clearly deficient in which of the following areas?
 - (A) Memory skills
 - (B) Computational skills
 - (C) Conceptual skills
 - (D) Generalization skills
2. Which of the following statements best explains the increase in the number of children identified as having mild mental retardation at the time this population reaches school age?
 - (A) Children with mental retardation tend to exhibit a cognitive slump at about age 6.
 - (B) Mental retardation is easier to detect at this age because emphasis is placed on academic achievement.
 - (C) A label of mild mental retardation cannot legally be given to children before they reach school age.
 - (D) School personnel are generally more eager than parents to find the reasons for children's learning difficulties.
3. According to the definition used by the American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR), which of the following is one of the conditions required before an individual can be said to have mental retardation?
 - (A) An IQ score below 50
 - (B) A known cause of the individual's condition
 - (C) Deficits in adaptive behavior
 - (D) Deficits in social skills
4. The most recent conceptual thinking related to program delivery options for individuals with mental retardation gives the greatest amount of emphasis to the
 - (A) development of skills that will promote independence in an institutional setting
 - (B) development of skills that will help with integration into the community
 - (C) mastery of academic skills
 - (D) mastery of computer technology
5. Using a functional approach is important when designing instruction for students with moderate and severe degrees of mental retardation because this approach
 - (A) follows a sequence according to normal child developmental milestones
 - (B) breaks down the skills to be taught into a series of discrete behaviors and then sequences those behaviors into the progression in which they occur when performing the skill
 - (C) concentrates on behaviors that are critical to performing a necessary task
 - (D) teaches those skills that occur naturally within a school environment
6. Which of the following procedures is likely to be most effective in teaching basic arithmetic concepts to students with mental retardation?
 - (A) Using manipulatives and pictures for counting and grouping
 - (B) Completing paper-and-pencil drill-and-practice worksheets
 - (C) Using calculators for problem-solving
 - (D) Using flash cards for learning basic addition and subtraction facts

Answers

1. The best answer is D. Poor generalization skills are exhibited when an individual cannot use a learned skill under conditions different from the learning situation.

2. The best answer is B. Young children with mild mental retardation often have age-appropriate adaptive behavior and social skills, and therefore perform adequately in the nonacademic situations encountered before school begins. They begin to exhibit problems, however, when the academic demands of the classroom are placed on them.

3. Of the choices given, C is the only condition specified in the AAMR definition of mental retardation.

4. The best answer is B. Although the process of successful integration into the community is extremely complex both conceptually and practically, it has been noted by many

educators, researchers, and advocacy groups in recent years that it is essential for appropriate programming to occur in school to assure such success for individuals with mental retardation.

5. The correct answer is C, since the functional approach emphasizes teaching skills that the students need now or will need in the future.

6. The best answer is A, since counting and grouping are two of the basic elements required in learning arithmetic concepts. All children who are learning basic arithmetic concepts are assisted in this effort if manipulatives, pictures, or other concrete representations of the concepts are presented.



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