

The Praxis® Study Companion

Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications

5354



Welcome to the *Praxis*® Study Companion

Prepare to Show What You Know

You have been working to acquire the knowledge and skills you need for your teaching career. Now you are ready to demonstrate your abilities by taking a *Praxis*® test.

Using the *Praxis*® Study Companion is a smart way to prepare for the test so you can do your best on test day. This guide can help keep you on track and make the most efficient use of your study time.

The Study Companion contains practical information and helpful tools, including:

- An overview of the *Praxis* tests
- Specific information on the *Praxis* test you are taking
- A template study plan
- Study topics
- Practice questions and explanations of correct answers
- Test-taking tips and strategies
- Frequently asked questions
- Links to more detailed information

So where should you start? Begin by reviewing this guide in its entirety and note those sections that you need to revisit. Then you can create your own personalized study plan and schedule based on your individual needs and how much time you have before test day.

Keep in mind that study habits are individual. There are many different ways to successfully prepare for your test. Some people study better on their own, while others prefer a group dynamic. You may have more energy early in the day, but another test taker may concentrate better in the evening. So use this guide to develop the approach that works best for you.

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!

Know What to Expect

Which tests should I take?

Each state or agency that uses the *Praxis* tests sets its own requirements for which test or tests you must take for the teaching area you wish to pursue.

Before you register for a test, confirm your state or agency's testing requirements at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

How are the *Praxis* tests given?

Praxis tests are given on computer. Other formats are available for test takers approved for accommodations (see page 33).

What should I expect when taking the test on computer?

When taking the test on computer, you can expect to be asked to provide proper identification at the test center. Once admitted, you will be given the opportunity to learn how the computer interface works (how to answer questions, how to skip questions, how to go back to questions you skipped, etc.) before the testing time begins. Watch the [What to Expect on Test Day](#) video to see what the experience is like.

Where and when are the *Praxis* tests offered?

You can select the test center that is most convenient for you. The *Praxis* tests are administered through an international network of test centers, which includes Prometric® Testing Centers, some universities, and other locations throughout the world.

Testing schedules may differ, so see the *Praxis* web site for more detailed test registration information at www.ets.org/praxis/register.

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1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications (5354)

Test at a Glance			
Test Name	Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications		
Test Code	5354		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120		
Format	Selected-response questions		
Test Delivery	Computer delivered		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Development and Characteristics of Learners	20	16%
	II. Planning and the Learning Environment	27	23%
	III. Instruction	27	23%
	IV. Assessment	22	18%
	V. Foundations and Professional Responsibilities	24	20%

About This Test

The Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications test is designed for examinees who plan to teach in a special education program at any grade level from preschool through grade 12. The questions on the test assess an examinee's knowledge of the basic principles of special education and the application of these principles to realistic situations. Its focus is on five major content areas: Development and Characteristics of Learners, Planning and the Learning Environment, Instruction, Assessment, and Foundations and Professional Responsibilities. Questions may address disabilities of any degree varying from mild to profound. The content of this test is based largely on the Special Educator Professional Preparation Standards created by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

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

NOTE: The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) was published in May 2013 with revisions to the criteria for the diagnosis and classifications of mental disorders. In the interest of fairness, and to allow time for educator preparation programs to integrate such changes into their curricula, Praxis test materials will continue to reference the terminology, criteria, and classifications referred to in the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) until further notice.

Test Specifications

Descriptions of each content area covered by the test are provided below. Test specifications in this chapter describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Study topics that help you prepare to answer test questions can be found on page 27. For each content area, the approximate percentage of test questions pertaining to that area is shown. Not every subtopic in a given content area appears on any one test form, but every form of the test contains questions on a broad range of subtopics.

I. Development and Characteristics of Learners (approximately 16%)

- A. Human development and behavior
- B. Theoretical approaches to student learning and motivation
- C. Basic characteristics and defining factors for each of the major disability categories
- D. Impact of disabilities on individuals, families, and society across the life span
- E. Impact of language, cultural, and gender differences on the identification process
- F. Co-occurring conditions
- G. How family systems contribute to the development of individuals with disabilities
- H. Environmental and societal influences on student development and achievement

II. Planning and the Learning Environment (approximately 23%)

- A. Characteristics of good lesson plans
- B. Basic elements of effective lesson plans
- C. Learning objectives that are measurable and appropriately challenging
- D. Means of providing access to the curriculum
- E. Organizing the learning environment
- F. Understand how to manage student behavior
- G. Theory and practice of effective classroom management
- H. Design and maintenance of a safe and supportive classroom environment that promotes student achievement

III. Instruction (approximately 23%)

- A. Instructional strategies/techniques that are appropriate, considering students' ages and abilities
- B. Instructional strategies for ensuring individual academic success in one-to-one, small group, and large group settings

- C. Instructional strategies that facilitate maintenance and generalization of concepts
- D. Selection and implementation of research-based interventions for individual students
- E. Selection and implementation of supplementary and/or functional curriculum
- F. Options for assistive technology
- G. Instructional strategies/techniques that support transition goals
- H. Preventive strategies and intervention strategies for at-risk learners

IV. Assessment (approximately 18%)

- A. Evidence-based assessments that are effective and appropriate
- B. Define and use various assessments
- C. Interpret assessment results
- D. Understand and use the results of assessments

V. Foundations and Professional Responsibilities (approximately 20%)

- A. Federal definitions
- B. Federal requirements for the pre-referral, referral, and identification
- C. Federal safeguards of the rights of stakeholders
- D. Components of a legally defensible individualized education program
- E. Major legislation
- F. Roles and responsibilities of the special education teacher
- G. Roles and responsibilities of other professionals who deliver special education services
- H. Strengths and limitations of various collaborative approaches
- I. Communication with stakeholders
- J. Potential bias issues that may impact teaching and interacting with students and their families

2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

Become comfortable with the types of questions you'll find on the Praxis tests

The *Praxis* assessments include a variety of question types: constructed response (for which you write a response of your own); selected response, for which you select one or more answers from a list of choices or make another kind of selection (e.g., by clicking on a sentence in a text or by clicking on part of a graphic); and numeric entry, for which you enter a numeric value in an answer field. You may be familiar with these question formats from taking other standardized tests. If not, familiarize yourself with them so you don't spend time during the test figuring out how to answer them.

Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

Questions on computer-delivered tests are interactive in the sense that you answer by selecting an option or entering text on the screen. If you see a format you are not familiar with, read the directions carefully. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

For most questions, you respond by clicking an oval to select a single answer from a list of answer choices.

However, interactive question types may also ask you to respond by:

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of choices.
- **Typing in an entry box.** When the answer is a number, you may be asked to enter a numerical answer. Some questions may have more than one place to enter a response.
- **Clicking check boxes.** You may be asked to click check boxes instead of an oval when more than one choice within a set of answers can be selected.
- **Clicking parts of a graphic.** In some questions, you will select your answers by clicking on a location (or locations) on a graphic such as a map or chart, as opposed to choosing your answer from a list.
- **Clicking on sentences.** In questions with reading passages, you may be asked to choose your answers by clicking on a sentence (or sentences) within the reading passage.
- **Dragging and dropping answer choices into targets on the screen.** You may be asked to select answers from a list of choices and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting answer choices from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting choices from a drop-down menu (e.g., to complete a sentence).

Remember that with every question you will get clear instructions.

Perhaps the best way to understand computer-delivered questions is to view the [Computer-delivered Testing Demonstration](#) on the Praxis web site to learn how a computer-delivered test works and see examples of some types of questions you may encounter.

Understanding Selected-Response Questions

Many selected-response questions begin with the phrase “which of the following.” Take a look at this example:

Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?

- (A) Strawberry
- (B) Cherry
- (C) Vanilla
- (D) Mint

How would you answer this question?

All of the answer choices are flavors. Your job is to decide which of the flavors is the one made from beans.

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

- 1) **Limit your answer to the choices given.** You may know that chocolate and coffee are also flavors made from beans, but they are not listed. Rather than thinking of other possible answers, focus only on the choices given (“which of the following”).
- 2) **Eliminate incorrect answers.** You may know that strawberry and cherry flavors are made from fruit and that mint flavor is made from a plant. That leaves vanilla as the only possible answer.
- 3) **Verify your answer.** You can substitute “vanilla” for the phrase “which of the following” and turn the question into this statement: “Vanilla is a flavor made from beans.” This will help you be sure that your answer is correct. If you’re still uncertain, try substituting the other choices to see if they make sense. You may want to use this technique as you answer selected-response questions on the practice tests.

Try a more challenging example

The vanilla bean question is pretty straightforward, but you’ll find that more challenging questions have a similar structure. For example:

Entries in outlines are generally arranged according to which of the following relationships of ideas?

- (A) Literal and inferential
- (B) Concrete and abstract
- (C) Linear and recursive
- (D) Main and subordinate

You’ll notice that this example also contains the phrase “which of the following.” This phrase helps you determine that your answer will be a “relationship of ideas” from the choices provided. You are supposed to find the choice that describes how entries, or ideas, in outlines are related.

Sometimes it helps to put the question in your own words. Here, you could paraphrase the question in this way: “How are outlines usually organized?” Since the ideas in outlines usually appear as main ideas and subordinate ideas, the answer is (D).

QUICK TIP: Don't be intimidated by words you may not understand. It might be easy to be thrown by words like "recursive" or "inferential." Read carefully to understand the question and look for an answer that fits. An outline is something you are probably familiar with and expect to teach to your students. So slow down, and use what you know.

Watch out for selected-response questions containing "NOT," "LEAST," and "EXCEPT"

This type of question asks you to select the choice that does not fit. You must be very careful because it is easy to forget that you are selecting the negative. This question type is used in situations in which there are several good solutions or ways to approach something, but also a clearly wrong way.

How to approach questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages

When answering questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages, provide only the information that the questions ask for. In the case of a map or graph, you might want to read the questions first, and then look at the map or graph. In the case of a long reading passage, you might want to go ahead and read the passage first, noting places you think are important, and then answer the questions. Again, the important thing is to be sure you answer the questions as they refer to the material presented. So read the questions carefully.

How to approach unfamiliar formats

New question formats are developed from time to time to find new ways of assessing knowledge. Tests may include audio and video components, such as a movie clip or animation, instead of a map or reading passage. Other tests may allow you to zoom in on details in a graphic or picture.

Tests may also include interactive questions. These questions take advantage of technology to assess knowledge and skills in ways that standard selected-response questions cannot. If you see a format you are not familiar with, **read the directions carefully**. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

QUICK TIP: Don't make the questions more difficult than they are. Don't read for hidden meanings or tricks. There are no trick questions on *Praxis* tests. They are intended to be serious, straightforward tests of your knowledge.

Understanding Constructed-Response Questions

Constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by creating your own response to particular topics. Essays and short-answer questions are types of constructed-response questions.

For example, an essay question might present you with a topic and ask you to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the opinion stated. You must support your position with specific reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

- "Celebrities have a tremendous influence on the young, and for that reason, they have a responsibility to act as role models."
- "We are constantly bombarded by advertisements—on television and radio, in newspapers and magazines, on highway signs, and the sides of buses. They have become too pervasive. It's time to put limits on advertising."
- "Advances in computer technology have made the classroom unnecessary, since students and teachers are able to communicate with one another from computer terminals at home or at work."

Keep these things in mind when you respond to a constructed-response question

- 1) **Answer the question accurately.** Analyze what each part of the question is asking you to do. If the question asks you to describe or discuss, you should provide more than just a list.
- 2) **Answer the question completely.** If a question asks you to do three distinct things in your response, you should cover all three things for the best score. Otherwise, no matter how well you write, you will not be awarded full credit.
- 3) **Answer the question that is asked.** Do not change the question or challenge the basis of the question. You will receive no credit or a low score if you answer another question or if you state, for example, that there is no possible answer.
- 4) **Give a thorough and detailed response.** You must demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of the subject matter. However, your response should be straightforward and not filled with unnecessary information.
- 5) **Reread your response.** Check that you have written what you thought you wrote. Be sure not to leave sentences unfinished or omit clarifying information.

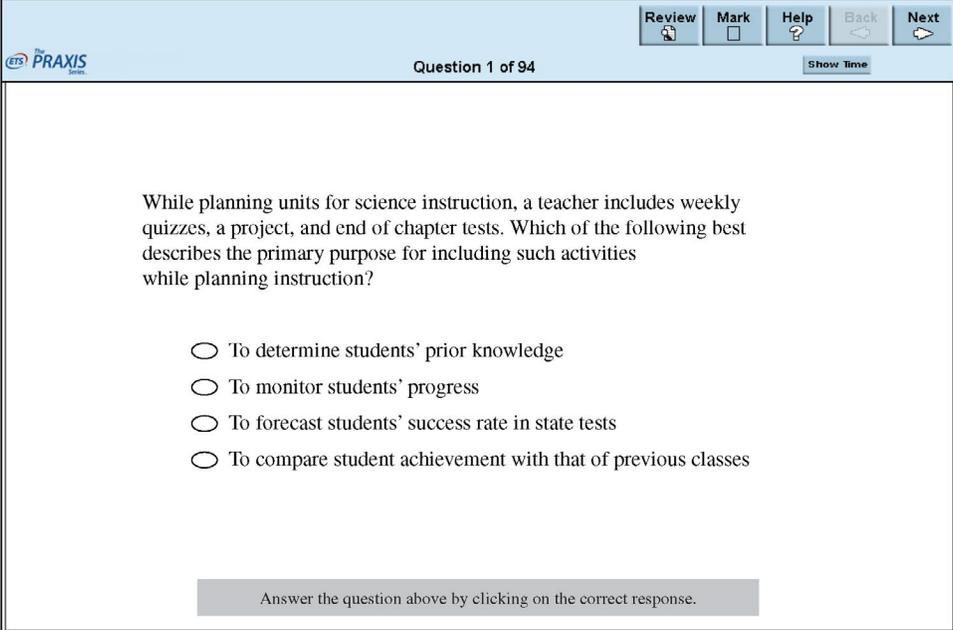
QUICK TIP: You may find that it helps to take notes on scratch paper so that you don't miss any details. Then you'll be sure to have all the information you need to answer the question.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Sample Test Questions

This test is available via computer delivery. The following sample question provides a preview of an actual screen used in a computer-delivered test. For the purposes of this Study Companion, the sample questions are shown as they would appear in a paper-delivered test.



The screenshot shows a test interface with a light blue header. On the right side of the header are five buttons: 'Review' (with a hand icon), 'Mark' (with a square icon), 'Help' (with a question mark icon), 'Back' (with a left arrow icon), and 'Next' (with a right arrow icon). Below these buttons is a 'Show Time' button. On the left side of the header is the 'ETS PRAXIS' logo. In the center of the header, it says 'Question 1 of 94'. The main content area contains a question and four radio button options. At the bottom of the content area, there is a grey instruction box.

ETS PRAXIS

Question 1 of 94

Show Time

While planning units for science instruction, a teacher includes weekly quizzes, a project, and end of chapter tests. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for including such activities while planning instruction?

- To determine students' prior knowledge
- To monitor students' progress
- To forecast students' success rate in state tests
- To compare student achievement with that of previous classes

Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response.

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions on 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 statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

Note: In this test, the following special education terminology will appear:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act may be referred to as IDEA.
 - Free Appropriate Public Education may be referred to FAPE.
 - Least restrictive environment may be referred to as LRE.
 - Individual Family Service Plan may be referred to as IFSP.
 - Individualized Education Program may be referred to as an IEP.
 - A teacher assistant, teacher aide, or paraeducator may be referred to as a paraprofessional.
 - A biological parent, legal guardian, surrogate, adoptive parent, or foster parent may be referred to as a parent.
 - Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder may be referred to as ADHD.
 - Emotional and behavioral disturbance may be referred to as EBD.
 - The diagnosis "autism spectrum disorder" may be referred to as ASD.
1. Which of the following is an accurate statement about what IDEA requires for any IEP?
 - (A) The IEP must include a multiyear outline of instructional objectives.
 - (B) The IEP must include a section on assistive devices, regardless of the nature or degree of the student's disability.
 - (C) The IEP must be in effect before special education services or related services are provided.
 - (D) The IEP must not be made available to any school personnel except special education teachers.
 2. Trish is a sixth-grade student who is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). She has difficulty maintaining eye contact and makes impulsive comments during lessons. Which of the following behavioral strategies would best help Trish?
 - (A) Assigning Trish a peer buddy to help her keep on task
 - (B) Providing Trish a visual menu of appropriate behaviors
 - (C) Seating Trish next to the window so she can look outside
 - (D) Giving Trish high-interest, low-reading-level assignments
 3. As an intervention, response cost is best suited for which of the following purposes?
 - (A) Improving students' understanding of directions
 - (B) Increasing the speed of performance in mathematics
 - (C) Decreasing the incidence of angry outbursts
 - (D) Decreasing excessive competitiveness among students
 4. Which of the following is a nondegenerative disorder that affects motor function as a result of brain injury that occurred before, during, or shortly after birth?
 - (A) Multiple sclerosis
 - (B) Cerebral palsy
 - (C) Muscular dystrophy
 - (D) Cystic fibrosis
 5. To promote the transfer of word attack skills to newspaper reading, a middle school teacher of students with intellectual disabilities is most likely to
 - (A) prepare teacher-made newspaper articles for the students to read
 - (B) select articles from the local newspaper for students to read
 - (C) develop writing exercises using words from the curriculum
 - (D) prepare worksheet exercises based on single sentences from newspaper articles

6. Under the provisions of IDEA, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for a 2-year-old child is most likely to include
- (A) a budget for early-intervention services
 - (B) plans for making the transition into preschool
 - (C) techniques for the family to use in introducing academic subjects
 - (D) a recommendation of counseling for the child's siblings
7. Which of the following is an example of functional language training for a child who is nonverbal?
- (A) Rewarding the child for making a vocalization approximating a sound made by the teacher
 - (B) Rewarding the child for any vocalization made while looking at the teacher
 - (C) Drilling on bilabial sounds so the child can say "mama"
 - (D) Teaching the child to point to the sink when he or she wants a drink of water
8. A well-made teacher-developed test is generally preferred to a standardized achievement test when measuring learning mastery because it
- (A) is more likely to yield a true score
 - (B) has higher interrater reliability
 - (C) allows comparison of students to each other
 - (D) has better content validity
9. In full inclusion settings, the most appropriate role for the special education teacher is to
- (A) plan instruction with the general education teacher and co-teach all students in the class
 - (B) serve as an instructional assistant to the general education teacher
 - (C) observe the general education teacher at least once a week in order to discuss teaching strategies that seem to work well
 - (D) manage the behavior of the students receiving special education while the general education teacher presents academic content
10. Which of the following statements best defines the ecological perspective on emotional and behavioral disorders?
- (A) Poisons in the physical environment cause emotional and behavioral disorders.
 - (B) Emotional and behavioral disorders involve interactions between the child and the child's social environment.
 - (C) Children with emotional and behavioral disorders need exposure to an ever-broadening social environment.
 - (D) Inclusion settings are less beneficial for students with emotional and behavioral disorders than for students with other types of disabilities.
11. Using a student's classwork as a means to evaluate progress and adapt instruction is known as
- (A) curriculum-based assessment
 - (B) standardized achievement testing
 - (C) summative assessment
 - (D) guided practice
12. Which of the following is the best rationale for using task analysis in instructing students with disabilities?
- (A) Instruction is delivered in steps that are easily achievable and that promote student success.
 - (B) Students can eventually learn to analyze assigned tasks themselves.
 - (C) Students learn classification skills by identifying similar aspects of different kinds of tasks.
 - (D) Instruction can be delivered effectively to many students at once without need for individualization.

13. Mary is a seventh-grade student who has a specific learning disability. Her mathematics achievement score indicates that she has a stanine of 9. Which of the following mathematics classes is most appropriate for Mary?
- (A) Remedial mathematics
 - (B) Functional mathematics
 - (C) Standard mathematics
 - (D) Advanced mathematics
14. Jodeen is a 7-year-old who has been evaluated and found to have a mild expressive language delay. Her hearing is normal, and her functioning in all areas other than expressive language is age appropriate. Which of the following placements would be most appropriate for Jodeen?
- (A) A self-contained special education class with speech and language services
 - (B) A part-time placement in a resource room for developmental and oral reading
 - (C) A full-time general education placement with speech and language services
 - (D) A full-time general education placement with an emphasis on reading support
15. Which of the following techniques is likely to be most successful in helping learners with intellectual disabilities to retain previously acquired skills?
- (A) Scheduling frequent peer tutoring sessions
 - (B) Acknowledging appropriate behavior regularly
 - (C) Providing periodic review of lessons
 - (D) Allowing longer independent practice periods
16. Which of the following is most clearly an example of a student using inappropriate syntax?
- (A) Saying, "I see football game"
 - (B) Saying, "Wa wa" as a substitute for water
 - (C) Saying, "Me sister shoes new happy"
 - (D) Saying, "He dranked his milk"
17. Which of the following conditions is frequently attributable to Trisomy 21?
- (A) Down syndrome
 - (B) Phenylketonuria (PKU)
 - (C) Klinefelter syndrome
 - (D) Turner syndrome
18. Shania is a tenth-grade student classified with a specific learning disability (SLD). She receives direct reading instruction in decoding skills to facilitate word recognition of vocabulary words. Shania's instruction represents
- (A) a remedial approach
 - (B) a compensatory approach
 - (C) a metacognitive strategy
 - (D) scripted reading instruction
19. An IEP must include which of the following components?
- (A) The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
 - (B) A record of past student performance
 - (C) A description of the student's intellectual functioning
 - (D) Suggestions for parental involvement
20. On the basis of such cases as *Hudson v. Rowley* (1982), the courts have determined that "appropriate education" means that
- (A) students will have all the resources and related services needed to fulfill their potential
 - (B) services that maximize achievement will be provided as long as the cost is not prohibitive
 - (C) learners with disabilities will have the same achievement opportunities as peers
 - (D) interpreters will be provided for all deaf children

21. Which of the following supports is most likely to help Beth, a middle-school student with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), be successful in her new placement?
- (A) Allowing Beth to attend school for a half-day for the first month
 - (B) Providing Beth with a visual schedule of daily activities
 - (C) Taking Beth on a tour of the school so that she can become familiar with the layout of the classrooms
 - (D) Providing Beth with time away from her classmates when she has an outburst
22. Which of the following is legally required to initiate a formal evaluation for a student suspected of having a specific learning disability?
- (A) Signed parental permission
 - (B) Verbal agreement provided by the parents
 - (C) Teacher referral
 - (D) Physician referral
23. What is the teacher's primary role when conflicts arise during unstructured playtime in a prekindergarten inclusion setting?
- (A) To help children develop appropriate ways to resolve conflict
 - (B) To teach children the essential features of good manners and etiquette
 - (C) To reconsider the need for free play in the prekindergarten schedule
 - (D) To intervene and discipline children as soon as conflict occurs during an activity
24. Students with learning disabilities are more likely than students without disabilities to exhibit which of the following?
- (A) Clear dominance of the left brain for learning
 - (B) Deficits in long-term memory retrieval
 - (C) Selective attention disorders
 - (D) Characteristics of giftedness in artistic expression
25. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides students who attend a school that receives federal funds with protection against which of the following?
- (A) Discrimination based solely on an individual's disability
 - (B) Discrimination based solely on an individual's gender or sexual orientation
 - (C) Discrimination based solely on an individual's citizenship status
 - (D) Discrimination based solely on an individual's socioeconomic status
26. What is the most commonly co-occurring type of disability associated with emotional and behavioral disorders?
- (A) A speech and language processing disorder
 - (B) Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
 - (C) Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
 - (D) Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
27. Which of the following would be an important daily-living skill for a high school student with an intellectual disability?
- (A) Knowing the multiplication table
 - (B) Using a microwave oven
 - (C) Identifying the states on a map
 - (D) Stating the main idea of a paragraph
28. Jen, a sixth-grade student, receives special education services under the category of specific learning disability. Jen's IEP states that written assignments will be completed using word processing and speech recognition software. Which of the following is most likely to promote successful use of assistive technology?
- (A) Limiting the amount of written homework
 - (B) Providing software for home use
 - (C) Assigning keyboarding homework
 - (D) Allowing choice of topic for written assignments

29. Jan is a child with a visual impairment. Which of the following is the best way for Jan's parents to assess her recreation and leisure skills?
- (A) A classroom visit
 - (B) A conversation with a school counselor
 - (C) A checklist from the expanded core curriculum
 - (D) An evaluation by a trained specialist in visual disabilities
30. Which of the following activities is the best example of a summative assessment?
- (A) An end of chapter test
 - (B) Writing sentences using spelling words
 - (C) Completing a homework assignment
 - (D) Practicing how to write the directions for baking a cake

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (C). According to IDEA, an IEP must be in effect before special education and related services are provided to an eligible student. None of the other choices is required. The objectives in an IEP are ordinarily for a single year, so (A) is not correct. (B) is not correct because what IDEA requires is that an IEP include a statement of the services and aids to be provided to the child. For some students with disabilities, this will include assistive devices, but many students with disabilities do not require such devices. Although special education teachers certainly have access to their students' IEPs, IDEA requires that regular education teachers and other service providers who are responsible for implementing a student's IEP have access to it as well, so (D) is not correct.

2. The correct answer is (B). A visual reminder can increase appropriate behavior. (A) is not correct because a peer buddy should not be given the task of keeping another student on task. (C) is not correct because that is not an appropriate strategy for Trish. (D) is not correct because that strategy is not related to the behavior.

3. The correct answer is (C). Response cost needs to be tied to the occurrence of a specific, observable behavior. The behaviors that are identified in (A), (B), and (D) would not benefit from the use of response cost.

4. The correct answer is (B). The characteristics that are listed are most commonly associated with cerebral palsy. (A), (C), and (D) are not characteristics of the nondegenerative disorder that is defined in the question.

5. The correct answer is (B). One component of successful transfer of learning is the similarity between the situation on which a skill is learned and the situation to which it is to be applied. (A), (C), and (D) are not correct because they are activities that would most likely not promote word attack skills.

6. The correct answer is (B). According to IDEA, the IFSP must include plans for making the transition from early intervention services into preschool. (A) is not correct because IFSPs do not include budgets. (C) and (D) are not correct because they are optional and are not likely to be documented in an IFSP.

7. The correct answer is (D). Functional language training involves giving children a means of influencing and interacting with the environment. (A), (B), and (C) are not correct because teaching children to make sounds or imitate words in isolation does not fulfill the goal of functional language training.

8. The correct answer is (D). Learning mastery generally refers to those lessons taught in the classroom. A teacher-developed test is more likely than a standardized achievement test to assess students' mastery of those lessons and is therefore more likely to have better content validity. (A) is not correct because all tests should be intended to yield true scores. (B) is not correct because interrater reliability is determined by the degree of agreement among raters. (C) is not correct because that is more characteristic of a norm-referenced assessment.

9. The correct answer is (A). In inclusion settings, an appropriate role for the special education teacher is as a co-teacher with the general education teacher. Although the special education teacher may have primary responsibility for behavior management with certain special education students, the teachers should share responsibility for both behavior management and academic content. The special education teacher should not be the assistant to the general education teacher, so (B) is not correct. While the special education teacher may observe the general education teacher and offer recommendations on working with classified students, this is done in the role of collaborating professional, not in the role of evaluator, so (C) is not correct. (D) is not correct because, although the special education teacher may have primary responsibility for behavior management with certain special education students, the teachers should share responsibility for both behavior management and academic content.

10. The correct answer is (B). The ecological perspective emphasizes the importance of interactions between the child and the child's environment in emotional and behavioral disorders. (A) is not correct; the ecological perspective on emotional and behavioral disorders does not refer to the influence of toxins in the physical environment. Neither (C) nor (D) defines this perspective.

11. The correct answer is (A). All student work reflects the curriculum; thus, the assessment is curriculum-based. (B) is incorrect because standardized tests compare students' data with those of other students in the same age-group. (C) is incorrect because summative assessments are used to determine whether the student is meeting the curriculum requirements; it is not used to guide instruction. (D) is incorrect because guided practice is a teaching strategy used to provide instruction, not evaluate progress.

12. The correct answer is (A). Instruction that is provided in steps that are easily achievable and that promote student success are two key justifications for the use of task analysis. (B) is incorrect because, although the skill it describes is a possible benefit of using task analysis, it is not the basic rationale for the use of task analysis. (C) is not correct because the learning of classification skills is not a primary objective of task analysis. (D) is not correct because individualization of instruction is always important in instructing students with disabilities.

13. The correct answer is (D). Mary's achievement score indicates high mathematical ability; 9 is the highest possible stanine score. Based on the information presented, the most appropriate placement is the advanced class. (A), (B), and (C) are not appropriate based on her high mathematical ability. Despite her learning disabilities, it is entirely possible that she could, perhaps with support, undertake an advanced class in an area of strength.

14. The correct answer is (C). Since Jodeen's functioning is age appropriate in most respects, it is probable that she could work at the level of the class in a general education setting if she were provided with appropriate support services to address her expressive language deficit. There is no clear justification for a full-time special education setting, as in (A), as the initial placement for a young child with a very specific expressive language delay and no other disability. There is no evidence that Jodeen needs support for reading, so (B) and (D) are not correct.

15. The correct answer is (C). Once a skill has been mastered, the teacher can best assure its retention by providing additional meaningful learning situations in which the student can recall and use the skill. (A), (B), and (D) are not correct because they would not assist learners in retaining previously acquired skills.

16. The correct answer is (C). Using inappropriate syntax involves not following rules for the correct arrangement of word sequence.

17. The correct answer is (A). There are several possible causes of Down syndrome, with the most common being trisomy 21, the failure of one pair of parental chromosomes to separate at conception. (B) is not correct because PKU is caused by a defect in the gene that helps create the enzyme needed to break down phenylalanine. (C) is not correct because Klinefelter syndrome occurs when a boy is born with one or more extra X chromosomes. (D) is not correct because Turner syndrome is a chromosomal condition that alters development in females.

18. The correct answer is (A). Remedial instruction is one-on-one or small-group instruction that focuses on the needs of the individual student. (A), (B), and (C), are not characteristic of the type of instruction that is being provided.

19. The correct answer is (A). As mandated in IDEA, a Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statement is a required component of any IEP.

20. The correct answer is (C). IDEA states that each student must be placed in the least restrictive environment in which the unique needs of the student can be met.

21. The correct answer is (B). Research has indicated that children with autism spectrum disorder prefer routines and structure in daily academic life. Using the visual schedule will help Beth anticipate the routine and become more accustomed to the new environment. (A) is not correct because reducing a child's school attendance to a half-day would not help her adjust to the new environment. (C) is not correct because taking Beth on a tour of the school would be useful but it is not a long-term support like a visual schedule. (D) is not correct because providing time away would not help Beth adjust to her school. Instead, this would limit interactions with peers and teachers, which would inhibit the adjustment process.

22. The correct answer is (A). Written consent by a parent or guardian is required to refer a student for a formal evaluation to determine whether special education services are appropriate. (B) is incorrect because the consent must be written, not verbal. (C) is incorrect because although school personnel can initiate a referral, written consent must be given by a parent/guardian to follow through with the screening. (D) is incorrect because a physician's input can be valuable; however, it does not initiate the referral process or provide consent for screening.

23. The correct answer is (A). Early childhood is a time to learn respectful communication and social skills through play and structured activities. (B) is incorrect because good manners and etiquette vary by culture and are best taught in informal home situations. (C) is incorrect because prekindergarten students need free play, which should not be restricted due to common conflicts. (D) is incorrect because teacher intervention is not always needed when conflicts arise; children should be encouraged and supported in solving basic conflicts.

24. The correct answer is (C). Students with learning disabilities are likely to lag behind other children in their ability to identify and focus on the key aspects of a task while disregarding the less important aspects of that task. (A) is incorrect because it has not been proven that students with learning disabilities are more likely than other students to have either left-brain or right-brain dominance for learning. (B) is incorrect because students with learning disabilities do not necessarily have difficulty with long-term memory retrieval. (D) is incorrect because there is no clear evidence to suggest that students with learning disabilities are more gifted than others in artistic expression.

25. The correct answer is (A). The premise of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is that a qualified individual cannot be denied participation because of a disability if the school receives federal funds. (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act does not relate to discrimination based on gender, citizenship, or socioeconomic status.

26. The correct answer is (B). Many children with emotional and behavioral disorders act impulsively, have short attention spans, and often exhibit anxiety, thus allowing the co-occurring classification of ADHD. (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because although they may be comorbid with an EBD, none of them are the most commonly co-occurring disability.

27. The correct answer is (B). Being able to heat up food would allow the student a measure of independence. (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because they are not daily-living skills.

28. The correct answer is (B). The student will be able to practice using the same programs at school and home, thus reinforcing her writing skills. (A) is incorrect because limiting homework does not help her to use the writing programs. (C) is incorrect because although typing practice is useful, it does not help her to use the programs, one of which is voice recognition software and does not require typing. (D) is incorrect because the accommodation of choice will not promote more successful use of assistive technology.

29. The correct answer is (C). Recreation and leisure skills are a part of the expanded core curriculum (ECC) for visually impaired children and Jan's parents can use a developmental checklist to ensure that Jan is learning these skills. (A) is incorrect because a classroom visit might provide information about Jan's academic and social skills, but would be unlikely to focus on recreation and leisure skills. (B) is incorrect because the counselor might provide information on improving recreation and leisure skills, but would not be able to describe Jan's current recreation and leisure skills. (D) is incorrect because a trained specialist is not likely to provide any additional information than the parents could gather using a checklist from the expanded core curriculum.

30. The correct answer is (A). Summative assessments are given to test student learning relative to the curriculum, and a chapter test assesses knowledge of the entire chapter. (B) is incorrect because writing sentences using spelling words is an example of an instructional activity, not a summative assessment. (C) is incorrect because homework is used as a follow-up to classroom instruction. (D) is incorrect because practicing a skill is part of instruction, not assessment.

4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

Set clear goals and deadlines so your test preparation is focused and efficient

Effective *Praxis* test preparation doesn't just happen. You'll want to set clear goals and deadlines for yourself along the way. Otherwise, you may not feel ready and confident on test day.

1) Learn what the test covers.

You may have heard that there are several different versions of the same test. It's true. You may take one version of the test and your friend may take a different version a few months later. Each test has different questions covering the same subject area, but both versions of the test measure the same skills and content knowledge.

You'll find specific information on the test you're taking on page 5, which outlines the content categories that the test measures and what percentage of the test covers each topic. Visit www.ets.org/praxis/testprep for information on other *Praxis* tests.

2) Assess how well you know the content.

Research shows that test takers tend to overestimate their preparedness—this is why some test takers assume they did well and then find out they did not pass.

The *Praxis* tests are demanding enough to require serious review of likely content, and the longer you've been away from the content, the more preparation you will most likely need. If it has been longer than a few months since you've studied your content area, make a concerted effort to prepare.

3) Collect study materials.

Gathering and organizing your materials for review are critical steps in preparing for the *Praxis* tests. Consider the following reference sources as you plan your study:

- Did you take a course in which the content area was covered? If yes, do you still have your books or your notes?
- Does your local library have a high school-level textbook in this area? Does your college library have a good introductory college-level textbook in this area?

Practice materials are available for purchase for many *Praxis* tests at www.ets.org/praxis/testprep. Test preparation materials include sample questions and answers with explanations.

4) Plan and organize your time.

You can begin to plan and organize your time while you are still collecting materials. Allow yourself plenty of review time to avoid cramming new material at the end. Here are a few tips:

- Choose a test date far enough in the future to leave you plenty of preparation time. Test dates can be found at www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates.
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule—and stick to it.

5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

Praxis tests with constructed-response questions assess your ability to explain material effectively. As a teacher, you'll need to be able to explain concepts and processes to students in a clear, understandable way. What are the major concepts you will be required to teach? Can you explain them in your own words accurately, completely, and clearly? Practice explaining these concepts to test your ability to effectively explain what you know.

6) Understand how questions will be scored.

Scoring information can be found on page 36.

7) Develop a study plan.

A study plan provides a road map to prepare for the *Praxis* tests. It can help you understand what skills and knowledge are covered on the test and where to focus your attention. Use the study plan template on page 25 to organize your efforts.

And most important—get started!

Would a Study Group Work for You?

Using this guide as part of a study group

People who have a lot of studying to do sometimes find it helpful to form a study group with others who are working toward the same goal. Study groups give members opportunities to ask questions and get detailed answers. In a group, some members usually have a better understanding of certain topics, while others in the group may be better at other topics. As members take turns explaining concepts to one another, everyone builds self-confidence.

If the group encounters a question that none of the members can answer well, the group can go to a teacher or other expert and get answers efficiently. Because study groups schedule regular meetings, members study in a more disciplined fashion. They also gain emotional support. The group should be large enough so that multiple people can contribute different kinds of knowledge, but small enough so that it stays focused. Often, three to six members is a good size.

Here are some ways to use this guide as part of a study group:

- **Plan the group's study program.** Parts of the study plan template, beginning on page 25, can help to structure your group's study program. By filling out the first five columns and sharing the worksheets, everyone will learn more about your group's mix of abilities and about the resources, such as textbooks, that members can share with the group. In the sixth column ("Dates I will study the content"), you can create an overall schedule for your group's study program.
- **Plan individual group sessions.** At the end of each session, the group should decide what specific topics will be covered at the next meeting and who will present each topic. Use the topic headings and subheadings in the Test at a Glance table on page 5 to select topics, and then select practice questions, beginning on page 11.
- **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it's your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.

- **Take a practice test together.** The idea of a practice test is to simulate an actual administration of the test, so scheduling a test session with the group will add to the realism and may also help boost everyone's confidence. Remember, complete the practice test using only the time that will be allotted for that test on your administration day.
- **Learn from the results of the practice test.** Review the results of the practice test, including the number of questions answered correctly in each content category. For tests that contain constructed-response questions, look at the Sample Test Questions section, which also contain sample responses to those questions and shows how they were scored. Then try to follow the same guidelines that the test scorers use.
- **Be as critical as you can.** You're not doing your study partner(s) any favors by letting them get away with an answer that does not cover all parts of the question adequately.
- **Be specific.** Write comments that are as detailed as the comments about the sample responses. Indicate where and how your study partner(s) are doing an inadequate job of answering the question. Writing notes in the margins of the answer sheet may also help.
- **Be supportive.** Include comments that point out what your study partner(s) got right.

Then plan one or more study sessions based on aspects of the questions on which group members performed poorly. For example, each group member might be responsible for rewriting one paragraph of a response in which someone else did an inadequate job.

Whether you decide to study alone or with a group, remember that the best way to prepare is to have an organized plan. The plan should set goals based on specific topics and skills that you need to learn, and it should commit you to a realistic set of deadlines for meeting those goals. Then you need to discipline yourself to stick with your plan and accomplish your goals on schedule.

5. Develop Your Study Plan

Develop a personalized study plan and schedule

Planning your study time is important because it will help ensure that you review all content areas covered on the test. Use the sample study plan below as a guide. It shows a plan for the *Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading* test. Following that is a study plan template that you can fill out to create your own plan. Use the "Learn about Your Test" and "Test Specifications" information beginning on page 5 to help complete it.

Use this worksheet to:

- 1. Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in chapter 1.
- 2. Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
- 3. Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
- 4. Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Praxis Test Name (Test Code): Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5712)

Test Date: 9/15/15

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Key Ideas and Details						
Close reading	Draw inferences and implications from the directly stated content of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/15	7/15/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the main idea or primary purpose of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/15	7/17/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the supporting ideas and specific details in a reading selection	3	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/15	7/21/15
Craft, Structure, and Language Skills						
Interpreting tone	Determine the author's attitude toward material discussed in a reading selection	4	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/26/15
Analysis of structure	Identify key transition words and phrases in a reading selection and how they are used	3	Middle and high school English textbook, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/27/15
Analysis of structure	Identify how a reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution, etc.	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Author's purpose	Determine the role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in an author's discussion or argument	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15

(continued on next page)

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Language in different contexts	Determine whether information presented in a reading selection is presented as fact or opinion	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Contextual meaning	Identify the meanings of words as they are used in the context of a reading selection	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Figurative Language	Understand figurative language and nuances in word meanings	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/15	8/8/15
Vocabulary range	Understand a range of words and phrases sufficient for reading at the college and career readiness level	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/15	8/17/15
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas						
Diverse media and formats	Analyze content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/15	8/24/15
Evaluation of arguments	Identify the relationship among ideas presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/15	8/24/15
Evaluation of arguments	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to the arguments in a reading selection	3	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/15	8/27/15
Evaluation of arguments	Determine the logical assumptions upon which an argument or conclusion is based	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/28/15	8/30/15
Evaluation of arguments	Draw conclusions from material presented in a reading selection	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/30/15	8/31/15
Comparison of texts	Recognize or predict ideas or situations that are extensions of or similar to what has been presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/3/15	9/4/15
Comparison of texts	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/5/15	9/6/15

My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

1. **Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in chapter 1.
2. **Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
3. **Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
4. **Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Praxis Test Name (Test Code): _____

Test Date: _____

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for this content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study this content	Date completed

(continued on next page)

6. Review Study Topics

Review study topics with questions for discussion

Using the Study Topics That Follow

The Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications test is designed to measure the knowledge and skills necessary for a beginning teacher.

This chapter is intended to help you organize your preparation for the test and to give you a clear indication of the depth and breadth of the knowledge required for success on the test.

Virtually all accredited programs address the topics covered by the test; however, you are not expected to be an expert on all aspects of the topics that follow.

You are likely to find that the topics below are covered by most introductory textbooks. Consult materials and resources, including lecture and laboratory notes, from all your coursework. You should be able to match up specific topics and subtopics with what you have covered in your courses.

Try not to be overwhelmed by the volume and scope of content knowledge in this guide. Although a specific term may not seem familiar as you see it here, you might find you can understand it when applied to a real-life situation. Many of the items on the actual test will provide you with a context to apply to these topics or terms.

Discussion Areas

Interspersed throughout the study topics are discussion areas, presented as open-ended questions or statements. These discussion areas are intended to help test your knowledge of fundamental concepts and your ability to apply those concepts to situations in the classroom or the real world. Most of the areas require you to combine several pieces of knowledge to formulate an integrated understanding and response. If you spend time on these areas, you will gain increased understanding and facility with the subject matter covered on the test. You may want to discuss these areas and your answers with a teacher or mentor.

Note that this study companion *does not provide answers for the discussion area questions*, but thinking about the answers to them will help improve your understanding of fundamental concepts and will probably help you answer a broad range of questions on the test.

Study Topics

An overview of the areas covered on the test, along with their subareas, follows.

I. Development and Characteristics of Learners (approximately 16%)

- A. Human development and behavior
- B. Theoretical approaches to student learning and motivation
- C. Basic characteristics and defining factors for each of the major disability categories
- D. Impact of disabilities on individuals, families, and society across the life span
- E. Impact of language, cultural, and gender differences on the identification process
- F. Co-occurring conditions
- G. How family systems contribute to the development of individuals with disabilities
- H. Environmental and societal influences on student development and achievement

Discussion areas: Development and Characteristics of Learning

- What does the term developmental disability mean?
- What are the differences between a developmental delay and a developmental disability?
- How is it that individuals with a similar disability can differ in the way they learn?
- Is there only one definition for each of the special disability categories?
- Be able to identify the basic characteristics or explain the factors for each type of disability.
- When is special education appropriate for children who speak a language other than English? When is it not appropriate?
- What conditions and disabilities may coexist within an individual? How will this affect the way they receive instruction?
- Does development end in adulthood? Who makes the determination of when development ends?

II. Planning and the Learning Environment (approximately 23%)

- A. Characteristics of good lesson plans
- B. Basic elements of effective lesson plans
- C. Learning objectives that are measurable and appropriately challenging
- D. Means of providing access to the curriculum
- E. Organizing the learning environment
- F. Understand how to manage student behavior
- G. Theory and practice of effective classroom management
- H. Design and maintenance of a safe and supportive classroom environment that promotes student achievement

Discussion areas: Planning and the Learning Environment

- What are common strategies that teachers can use to help students with various special needs succeed in the general education setting?
- What are the components of a measurable goal?
- What steps do teachers take to ensure that students in their classrooms have a meaningful learning experience?
- What are the characteristics of successful inclusion programs?
- What factors should be considered in structuring the learning environment?
- How will you organize your classroom management and instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners?
- What are some basic assumptions underlying behavioral approaches?
- What kind of behavior management plan would you develop for a specific student?
- How do we support students emotionally for personal growth?

III. Instruction (approximately 23%)

- A. Instructional strategies/techniques that are appropriate, considering students' ages and abilities
- B. Instructional strategies for ensuring individual academic success in one-to-one, small group, and large group settings
- C. Instructional strategies that facilitate maintenance and generalization of concepts
- D. Selection and implementation of research-based interventions for individual students
- E. Selection and implementation of supplementary and/or functional curriculum
- F. Options for assistive technology
- G. Instructional strategies/techniques that support transition goals
- H. Preventive strategies and intervention strategies for at-risk learners

Discussion areas: Instruction

- How would you arrange a classroom where you and your students can access materials easily, see and hear each other, and engage in active teaching and learning?
- How does a teacher determine how to establish groups for a particular lesson?
- What are the benefits of peer/crossage tutoring and cooperative learning?
- How do you ensure that students can generalize concepts they have learned in the classroom?
- How would you use technology in the classroom to meet the needs of diverse learners?
- What strategies are effective for having students move around the classroom without being disruptive?
- How can schools use outside support services to create a supportive learning environment for students with special needs?

IV. Assessment (approximately 18%)

- A. Evidence-based assessments that are effective and appropriate
- B. Define and use various assessments
- C. Interpret assessment results
- D. Understand and use the results of assessments

Discussion areas: Assessment

- What are the different ways of recording observations?
- Why do teachers construct their own tests?
- What might be included in a portfolio assessment of a student and which skills can be assessed using portfolios?
- When may test practices be considered discriminatory?
- How do teachers use assessment measures as a means for developing appropriate, individualized instruction? What types of tests do they use? How are they constructed?

V. Foundations and Professional Responsibilities (approximately 20%)

- A. Federal definitions
- B. Federal requirements for the pre-referral, referral, and identification
- C. Federal safeguards of the rights of stakeholders
- D. Components of a legally defensible individualized education program
- E. Major legislation
- F. Roles and responsibilities of the special education teacher
- G. Roles and responsibilities of other professionals who deliver special education services
- H. Strengths and limitations of various collaborative approaches
- I. Communication with stakeholders
- J. Potential bias issues that may impact teaching and interacting with students and their families

Discussion areas: Foundations and Professional Responsibilities

- What are the provisions for nondiscriminatory testing procedures in IDEA?
- What are some major arguments for and against classifying students?
- With whom can you discuss your students and their needs?
- What agencies can aid in preparing a student for work?
- Who participates on an IEP team?
- Who is accountable for the IEP?
- What types of activities could you use to encourage socialization among your students?
- What resources in your community assist parents of children with special needs?
- What is the relationship between a special education teacher and a paraprofessional?
- What is the relationship between a special education teacher and a general education teacher?
- What steps can teachers take to make collaboration successful?
- What are effective communication tools that teachers can use with parents?
- How might personal cultural biases affect you as a teacher? What can you do to counteract them?

7. Review Smart Tips for Success

Follow test-taking tips developed by experts

Learn from the experts. Take advantage of the following answers to questions you may have and practical tips to help you navigate the *Praxis* test and make the best use of your time.

Should I guess?

Yes. Your score is based on the number of questions you answer correctly, with no penalty or subtraction for an incorrect answer. When you don't know the answer to a question, try to eliminate any obviously wrong answers and then guess at the correct one. Try to pace yourself so that you have enough time to carefully consider every question.

Can I answer the questions in any order?

You can answer the questions in order or skip questions and come back to them later. If you skip a question, you can also mark it so that you can remember to return and answer it later. Remember that questions left unanswered are treated the same as questions answered incorrectly, so it is to your advantage to answer every question.

Are there trick questions on the test?

No. There are no hidden meanings or trick questions. All of the questions on the test ask about subject matter knowledge in a straightforward manner.

Are there answer patterns on the test?

No. You might have heard this myth: the answers on tests follow patterns. Another myth is that there will never be more than two questions in a row with the correct answer in the same position among the choices. Neither myth is true. Select the answer you think is correct based on your knowledge of the subject.

Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?

Yes. You can work out problems on the scratch paper, make notes to yourself, or write anything at all. Your scratch paper will be destroyed after you are finished with it, so use it in any way that is helpful to you. But make sure to select or enter your answers on the computer.

Smart Tips for Taking the Test

- 1. Skip the questions you find extremely difficult.** Rather than trying to answer these on your first pass through the test, you may want to leave them blank and mark them so that you can return to them later. Pay attention to the time as you answer the rest of the questions on the test, and try to finish with 10 or 15 minutes remaining so that you can go back over the questions you left blank. Even if you don't know the answer the second time you read the questions, see if you can narrow down the possible answers, and then guess. Your score is based on the number of right answers, so it is to your advantage to answer every question.

2. **Keep track of the time.** The on-screen clock will tell you how much time you have left. You will probably have plenty of time to answer all of the questions, but if you find yourself becoming bogged down, you might decide to move on and come back to any unanswered questions later.
3. **Read all of the possible answers before selecting one.** For questions that require you to select more than one answer, or to make another kind of selection, consider the most likely answers given what the question is asking. Then reread the question to be sure the answer(s) you have given really answer the question. Remember, a question that contains a phrase such as “Which of the following does NOT . . .” is asking for the one answer that is NOT a correct statement or conclusion.
4. **Check your answers.** If you have extra time left over at the end of the test, look over each question and make sure that you have answered it as you intended. Many test takers make careless mistakes that they could have corrected if they had checked their answers.
5. **Don’t worry about your score when you are taking the test.** No one is expected to answer all of the questions correctly. Your score on this test is not analogous to your score on the *GRE*[®] or other tests. It doesn’t matter on the *Praxis* tests whether you score very high or barely pass. If you meet the minimum passing scores for your state and you meet the state’s other requirements for obtaining a teaching license, you will receive a license. In other words, what matters is meeting the minimum passing score. You can find passing scores for all states that use the *Praxis* tests at http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/passing_scores.pdf or on the web site of the state for which you are seeking certification/licensure.
6. **Use your energy to take the test, not to get frustrated by it.** Getting frustrated only increases stress and decreases the likelihood that you will do your best. Highly qualified educators and test development professionals, all with backgrounds in teaching, worked diligently to make the test a fair and valid measure of your knowledge and skills. Your state painstakingly reviewed the test before adopting it as a licensure requirement. The best thing to do is concentrate on answering the questions.

8. Check on Testing Accommodations

See if you qualify for accommodations that may make it easier to take the Praxis test

What if English is not my primary language?

Praxis tests are given only in English. If your primary language is not English (PLNE), you may be eligible for extended testing time. For more details, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/plne_accommodations/.

What if I have a disability or other health-related need?

The following accommodations are available for *Praxis* test takers who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act disability requirements:

- Extended testing time
- Additional rest breaks
- Separate testing room
- Writer/recorder of answers
- Test reader
- Sign language interpreter for spoken directions only
- Perkins Braille
- Braille slate and stylus
- Printed copy of spoken directions
- Oral interpreter
- Audio test
- Braille test
- Large print test book
- Large print answer sheet
- Listening section omitted

For more information on these accommodations, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/disabilities.

Note: Test takers who have health-related needs requiring them to bring equipment, beverages, or snacks into the testing room or to take extra or extended breaks must request these accommodations by following the procedures described in the *Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-Related Needs* (PDF), which can be found at http://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/bulletin_supplement_test_takers_with_disabilities_health_needs.pdf.

You can find additional information on available resources for test takers with disabilities or health-related needs at www.ets.org/disabilities.

9. Do Your Best on Test Day

Get ready for test day so you will be calm and confident

You followed your study plan. You prepared for the test. Now it's time to prepare for test day.

Plan to end your review a day or two before the actual test date so you avoid cramming. Take a dry run to the test center so you're sure of the route, traffic conditions, and parking. Most of all, you want to eliminate any unexpected factors that could distract you from your ultimate goal—passing the *Praxis* test!

On the day of the test, you should:

- be well rested
- wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
- eat before you take the test
- bring an acceptable and valid photo identification with you
- bring an approved calculator only if one is specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators)
- be prepared to stand in line to check in or to wait while other test takers check in

You can't control the testing situation, but you can control yourself. Stay calm. The supervisors are well trained and make every effort to provide uniform testing conditions, but don't let it bother you if the test doesn't start exactly on time. You will have the allotted amount of time once it does start.

You can think of preparing for this test as training for an athletic event. Once you've trained, prepared, and rested, give it everything you've got.

What items am I restricted from bringing into the test center?

You cannot bring into the test center personal items such as:

- handbags, knapsacks, or briefcases
- water bottles or canned or bottled beverages
- study materials, books, or notes
- pens, pencils, scrap paper, or calculators, unless specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators)
- any electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices

Personal items are not allowed in the testing room and will not be available to you during the test or during breaks. You may also be asked to empty your pockets. At some centers, you will be assigned a space to store your belongings, such as handbags and study materials. Some centers do not have secure storage space available, so please plan accordingly.

Test centers assume no responsibility for your personal items.

If you have health-related needs requiring you to bring equipment, beverages or snacks into the testing room or to take extra or extended breaks, you need to request accommodations in advance. Procedures for requesting accommodations are described in the [Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-related Needs \(PDF\)](#).

Note: All cell phones, smart phones (e.g., Android® devices, iPhones®, etc.), and other electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices are strictly prohibited from the test center. If you are seen with such a device, you will be dismissed from the test, your test scores will be canceled, and you will forfeit your test fees. If you are seen *using* such a device, the device will be confiscated and inspected. For more information on what you can bring to the test center, visit www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/bring.

Are You Ready?

Complete this checklist to determine whether you are ready to take your test.

- Do you know the testing requirements for the license or certification you are seeking in the state(s) where you plan to teach?
- Have you followed all of the test registration procedures?
- Do you know the topics that will be covered in each test you plan to take?
- Have you reviewed any textbooks, class notes, and course readings that relate to the topics covered?
- Do you know how long the test will take and the number of questions it contains?
- Have you considered how you will pace your work?
- Are you familiar with the types of questions for your test?
- Are you familiar with the recommended test-taking strategies?
- Have you practiced by working through the practice questions in this study companion or in a study guide or practice test?
- If constructed-response questions are part of your test, do you understand the scoring criteria for these questions?
- If you are repeating a *Praxis* test, have you analyzed your previous score report to determine areas where additional study and test preparation could be useful?

If you answered “yes” to the questions above, your preparation has paid off. Now take the *Praxis* test, do your best, pass it—and begin your teaching career!

10. Understand Your Scores

Understand how tests are scored and how to interpret your test scores

Of course, passing the *Praxis* test is important to you so you need to understand what your scores mean and what your state requirements are.

What are the score requirements for my state?

States, institutions, and associations that require the tests set their own passing scores. Visit www.ets.org/praxis/states for the most up-to-date information.

If I move to another state, will my new state accept my scores?

The *Praxis* tests are part of a national testing program, meaning that they are required in many states for licensure. The advantage of a national program is that if you move to another state that also requires *Praxis* tests, you can transfer your scores. Each state has specific test requirements and passing scores, which you can find at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

How do I know whether I passed the test?

Your score report will include information on passing scores for the states you identified as recipients of your test results. If you test in a state with automatic score reporting, you will also receive passing score information for that state.

A list of states and their passing scores for each test are available online at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

What your *Praxis* scores mean

You received your score report. Now what does it mean? It's important to interpret your score report correctly and to know what to do if you have questions about your scores.

Visit http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/sample_score_report.pdf to see a sample score report.

To access *Understanding Your Praxis Scores*, a document that provides additional information on how to read your score report, visit www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand.

Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

- Your score and whether you passed
- The range of possible scores
- The raw points available in each content category
- The range of the middle 50 percent of scores on the test

If you have taken the same test or other tests in the *Praxis* over the last 10 years, your score report also lists the highest score you earned on each test taken.

Content category scores and score interpretation

Questions on the *Praxis* tests are categorized by content. To help you in future study or in preparing to retake the test, your score report shows how many raw points you earned in each content category. Compare your “raw points earned” with the maximum points you could have earned (“raw points available”). The greater the difference, the greater the opportunity to improve your score by further study.

Score scale changes

ETS updates *Praxis* tests on a regular basis to ensure they accurately measure the knowledge and skills that are required for licensure. When tests are updated, the meaning of the score scale may change, so requirements may vary between the new and previous versions. All scores for previous, discontinued tests are valid and reportable for 10 years, provided that your state or licensing agency still accepts them.

These resources may also help you interpret your scores:

- *Understanding Your Praxis Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- *The Praxis Passing Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- State requirements, found at www.ets.org/praxis/states

Appendix: Other Questions You May Have

Here is some supplemental information that can give you a better understanding of the *Praxis* tests.

What do the *Praxis* tests measure?

The *Praxis* tests measure the specific knowledge and skills that beginning teachers need. The tests do not measure an individual's disposition toward teaching or potential for success, nor do they measure your actual teaching ability. The assessments are designed to be comprehensive and inclusive but are limited to what can be covered in a finite number of questions and question types. Teaching requires many complex skills that are typically measured in other ways, including classroom observation, video recordings, and portfolios.

Ranging from Agriculture to World Languages, there are more than 80 *Praxis* tests, which contain selected-response questions or constructed-response questions, or a combination of both.

Who takes the tests and why?

Some colleges and universities use the *Praxis* Core Academic Skills for Educators tests (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) to evaluate individuals for entry into teacher education programs. The assessments are generally taken early in your college career. Many states also require Core Academic Skills test scores as part of their teacher licensing process.

Individuals entering the teaching profession take the *Praxis* content and pedagogy tests as part of the teacher licensing and certification process required by many states. In addition, some professional associations and organizations require the *Praxis* Subject Assessments for professional licensing.

Do all states require these tests?

The *Praxis* tests are currently required for teacher licensure in approximately 40 states and United States territories. These tests are also used by several professional licensing agencies and by several hundred colleges and universities. Teacher candidates can test in one state and submit their scores in any other state that requires *Praxis* testing for licensure. You can find details at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

What is licensure/certification?

Licensure in any area—medicine, law, architecture, accounting, cosmetology—is an assurance to the public that the person holding the license possesses sufficient knowledge and skills to perform important occupational activities safely and effectively. In the case of teacher licensing, a license tells the public that the individual has met predefined competency standards for beginning teaching practice.

Because a license makes such a serious claim about its holder, licensure tests are usually quite demanding. In some fields, licensure tests have more than one part and last for more than one day. Candidates for licensure in all fields plan intensive study as part of their professional preparation. Some join study groups, others study alone. But preparing to take a licensure test is, in all cases, a professional activity. Because a licensure exam surveys a broad body of knowledge, preparing for a licensure exam takes planning, discipline, and sustained effort.

Why does my state require the *Praxis* tests?

Your state chose the *Praxis* tests because they assess the breadth and depth of content—called the “domain”—that your state wants its teachers to possess before they begin to teach. The level of content knowledge, reflected in the passing score, is based on recommendations of panels of teachers and teacher educators in

each subject area. The state licensing agency and, in some states, the state legislature ratify the passing scores that have been recommended by panels of teachers.

How were the tests developed?

ETS consulted with practicing teachers and teacher educators around the country during every step of the *Praxis* test development process. First, ETS asked them what knowledge and skills a beginning teacher needs to be effective. Their responses were then ranked in order of importance and reviewed by hundreds of teachers.

After the results were analyzed and consensus was reached, guidelines, or specifications, for the selected-response and constructed-response tests were developed by teachers and teacher educators. Following these guidelines, teachers and professional test developers created test questions that met content requirements and [*ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness*](#).*

When your state adopted the research-based *Praxis* tests, local panels of teachers and teacher educators evaluated each question for its relevance to beginning teachers in your state. During this “validity study,” the panel also provided a passing-score recommendation based on how many of the test questions a beginning teacher in your state would be able to answer correctly. Your state’s licensing agency determined the final passing-score requirement.

ETS follows well-established industry procedures and standards designed to ensure that the tests measure what they are intended to measure. When you pass the *Praxis* tests your state requires, you are proving that you have the knowledge and skills you need to begin your teaching career.

How are the tests updated to ensure the content remains current?

Praxis tests are reviewed regularly. During the first phase of review, ETS conducts an analysis of relevant state and association standards and of the current test content. State licensure titles and the results of relevant job analyses are also considered. Revised test questions are then produced following the standard test development methodology. National advisory committees may also be convened to review and revise existing test specifications and to evaluate test forms for alignment with the specifications.

How long will it take to receive my scores?

Scores for tests that do not include constructed-response questions are available on screen immediately after the test. Scores for tests that contain constructed-response questions or essays aren’t available immediately after the test because of the scoring process involved. Official score reports are available to you and your designated score recipients approximately two to three weeks after the test date for tests delivered continuously, or two to three weeks after the testing window closes for other tests. See the test dates and deadlines calendar at www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates for exact score reporting dates.

Can I access my scores on the web?

All test takers can access their test scores via My *Praxis* Account free of charge for one year from the posting date. This online access replaces the mailing of a paper score report.

The process is easy—simply log into My *Praxis* Account at www.ets.org/praxis and click on your score report. If you do not already have a *Praxis* account, you must create one to view your scores.

Note: You must create a *Praxis* account to access your scores, even if you registered by mail or phone.

*[*ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness*](#) (2014, Princeton, N.J.) are consistent with the [*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*](#), industry standards issued jointly by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (2014, Washington, D.C.).

Your teaching career is worth preparing for, so start today!
Let the *Praxis*® *Study Companion* guide you.

To search for the *Praxis* test prep resources
that meet your specific needs, visit:

www.ets.org/praxis/testprep

To purchase official test prep made by the creators
of the *Praxis* tests, visit the ETS Store:

www.ets.org/praxis/store

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