



NEW YORK STATE
TEACHER
CERTIFICATION
EXAMINATIONS™



**PREPARATION
GUIDE**

**Students with
Disabilities CST
(60)**

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

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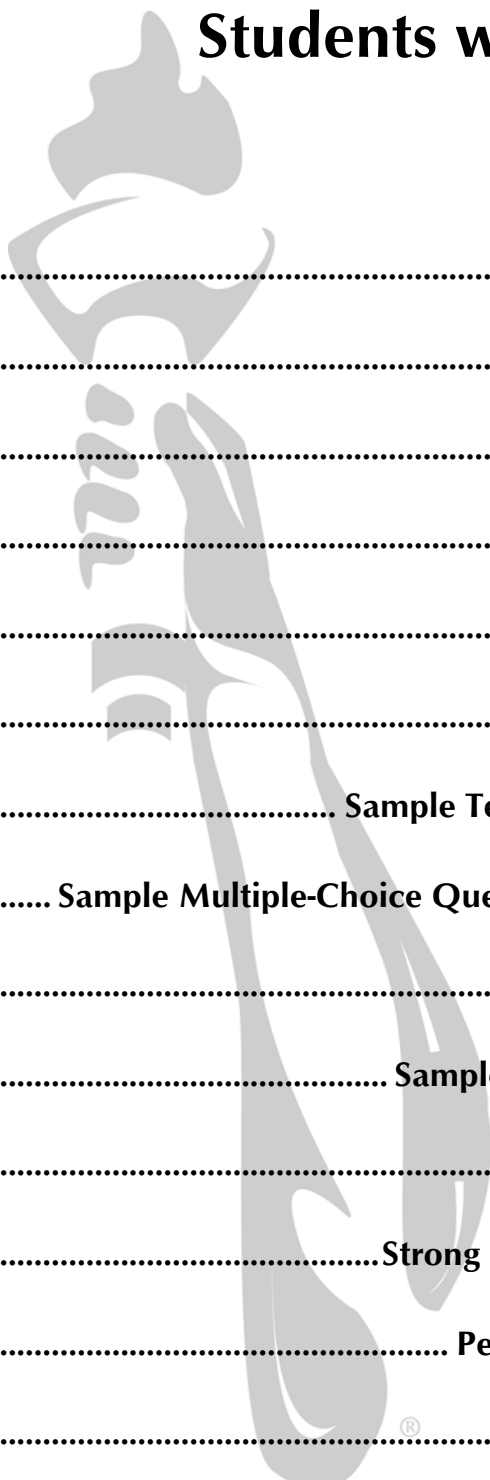
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NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™

PREPARATION GUIDE Students with Disabilities CST (60)

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■ INTRODUCTION

Purpose of This Preparation Guide

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

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

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

Organization of This Preparation Guide

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

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

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

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

For Further Information

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

■ GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NYSTCE

How Were the NYSTCE Tests Developed?

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

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

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

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

Organization of Content

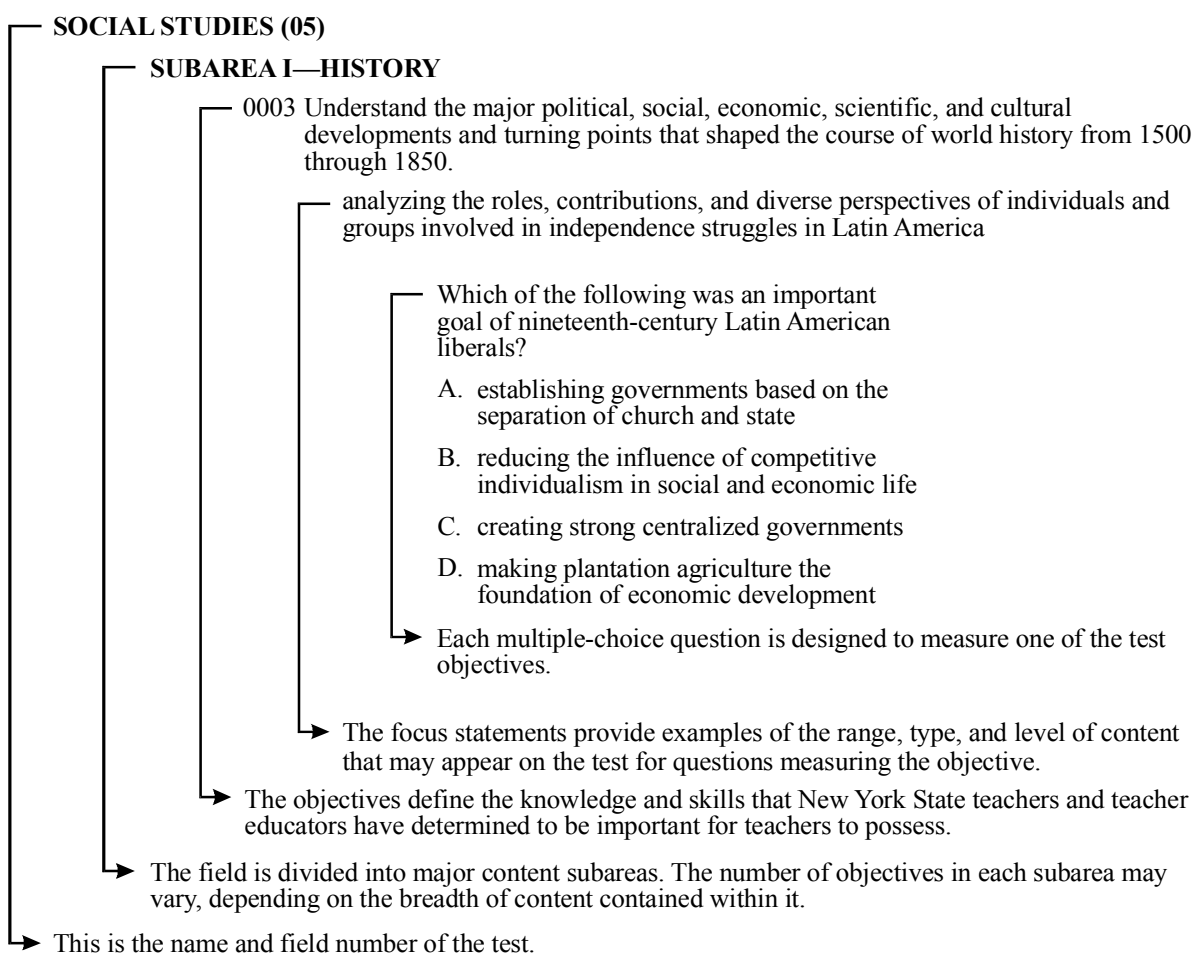
The content covered by each test is organized into **subareas**. These subareas define the major content domains of the test.

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

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

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

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



■ TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Be On Time.

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

Follow Directions.

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

Pace Yourself.

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

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

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

Read Carefully.

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

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

Mark Answers Carefully.

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

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

You may use any available space in the test booklet for notes, but **your answers and your written response must be clearly marked on your answer document. ONLY ANSWERS AND WRITTEN RESPONSES THAT APPEAR ON YOUR ANSWER DOCUMENT WILL BE SCORED.** Answers and written responses in your test booklet will not be scored.

Guessing

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

Passages or Other Presented Materials

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

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

Check Accuracy.

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

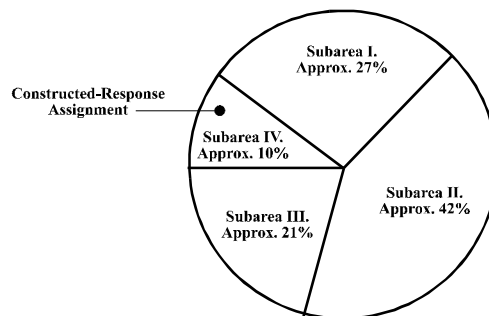
ABOUT THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TEST

The purpose of the Students with Disabilities Content Specialty Test (CST) is to assess knowledge and skills in the following four subareas:

- Subarea I. Understanding and Evaluating Students with Disabilities
- Subarea II. Promoting Student Learning and Development in a Collaborative Learning Community
- Subarea III. Working in a Collaborative Professional Environment
- Subarea IV. Promoting Student Learning and Development in a Collaborative Learning Community: Constructed-Response Assignment

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

The test contains approximately 90 multiple-choice test questions and one constructed-response (written) assignment. The figure below illustrates the approximate percentage of the test corresponding to each subarea.



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

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

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TEST OBJECTIVES

Understanding and Evaluating Students with Disabilities Promoting Student Learning and Development in a Collaborative Learning Community Working in a Collaborative Professional Environment Promoting Student Learning and Development in a Collaborative Learning Community: Constructed-Response Assignment

The New York State educator of students with disabilities has the knowledge and skills to teach effectively in New York State public schools. The educator of students with disabilities understands how students with disabilities learn and develop and can provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences that support each student's intellectual, social, and personal development. The educator of students with disabilities is able to use a variety of strategies and resources to evaluate students' strengths and needs, to accommodate those strengths and needs, and to ensure that students with disabilities participate as fully as possible in the educational and community environments. The educator of students with disabilities understands how to collaborate effectively with students, families, other members of the school staff, and members of the community to enhance student learning and to achieve common goals for students' education and transitions. Most importantly, the educator of students with disabilities understands how to create a safe and supportive classroom environment that addresses the needs of individual students, fosters self-esteem and a sense of autonomy, and promotes students' successful transition into adult life roles.

SUBAREA I—UNDERSTANDING AND EVALUATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

0001 Understand characteristics of individuals with disabilities.

For example:

- identifying types, etiologies, and characteristics of various disabilities
- demonstrating familiarity with similarities and differences among individuals with disabilities, including levels of severity and multiple disabilities
- analyzing similarities and differences (e.g., cognitive, physical, language, social, emotional) among individuals with and without disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of typical, delayed, and disordered communication patterns among individuals with disabilities
- recognizing how social and cultural factors (e.g., beliefs, traditions, values) may affect attitudes about disabilities and the relationship among student, family, and school

0002 Understand the effects of disabilities on human development and learning.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of typical patterns of human development (e.g., physical, sensory, motor, cognitive, language, social, emotional)
- recognizing the implications of various disabilities for physical, sensory, motor, cognitive, language, social, and/or emotional development and functioning
- demonstrating familiarity with developmental issues that may affect individuals with disabilities
- recognizing the possible effects of medications on student learning, development, and functioning (e.g., cognitive, physical, social, emotional)

0003 Understand types and characteristics of assessment instruments and methods.

For example:

- recognizing basic concepts and terminology used in assessment
- identifying types, characteristics, and methods of formal and informal assessment
- demonstrating familiarity with principles of and procedures for creating, selecting, evaluating, and using educational and adaptive behavior assessment instruments and methods
- recognizing appropriate purposes, uses, and limitations of various types of assessment instruments
- demonstrating knowledge of alternative assessments (e.g., authentic assessment, portfolio assessment)
- demonstrating familiarity with strategies for collaborating with families and with other professionals in the assessment process
- demonstrating an understanding of legal provisions, regulations, guidelines, and ethical concerns related to assessment, including preserving confidentiality
- understanding the implications of limited English proficiency in the assessment of students with disabilities

0004 Understand purposes, methods, and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and evaluating their progress.

For example:

- identifying procedures used for screening, prereferral, referral, classification, and declassification
- identifying appropriate assessment instruments and methods, including alternative assessment, for monitoring the progress of individuals with disabilities
- recognizing the importance of assessment in placement and accommodation decisions
- interpreting and applying formal and informal assessment data (e.g., standard scores, percentile ranks, stanines, grade equivalent scores, age equivalent scores, environmental inventories, rubrics) to develop an individualized instructional program
- identifying strategies for using assessment data and information from general education teachers, other professionals, individuals with disabilities, and parents to make instructional decisions and modify learning environments
- recognizing the importance to the decision-making process of background information regarding academic, medical, and family history and cultural background
- demonstrating knowledge of the implications of diversity with regard to assessment, eligibility, programming, and placement
- using ongoing assessment to evaluate and modify instruction

0005 Understand procedures for developing, implementing, and amending Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities.

For example:

- recognizing the rights, roles, and functions of IEP team members (e.g., special education teacher, student, parents/guardians, general education teacher, speech language therapist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, school administrator)
- identifying information that must be specified in an IEP (e.g., present levels of performance, achievable goals, measurable objectives, benchmarks, types of assistive technology that students may need, extent of participation in the general education curriculum)
- demonstrating knowledge of supports and accommodations needed for integrating students with disabilities into various program placements
- analyzing issues related to the preparation and amendment of an IEP
- demonstrating knowledge of the characteristics and purposes of various IEP team meetings (e.g., annual review, triennial review)
- demonstrating understanding of the purposes and components of transition planning, including the coordination of members of various disciplines and agencies to ensure the systematic transition at all levels (birth to adulthood) of students with disabilities
- using assessment data and information to plan appropriate individual programs for all students with disabilities, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- demonstrating understanding of requirements for creating and maintaining records and preserving confidentiality

SUBAREA II—PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

0006 Understand methods of planning and managing teaching and learning environments for individuals with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of basic principles of classroom management and research-based best practices for managing learning environments for students with disabilities
- demonstrating an understanding of the roles of the special educator, general educator, and other professionals in creating a learning environment that promotes students' achievement of goals and objectives
- applying techniques of collaborative planning with general educators and other professionals
- demonstrating familiarity with factors involved in creating a learning environment that is safe, positive, and supportive, in which diversity is celebrated, and that encourages active participation by learners in a variety of individual and group settings
- recognizing instructional management techniques that encourage self-advocacy and increased independence
- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to design and manage daily routines, including transition time, that promote students' success in a variety of instructional settings
- demonstrating familiarity with techniques for supporting the functional integration of students with disabilities in various settings, including general education settings
- recognizing appropriate collaborative techniques for ensuring the positive and effective functioning of classroom paraprofessionals, aides, and volunteers

0007 Understand principles of curriculum development and instructional planning for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of instructional planning for a variety of inclusive models (e.g., co-teaching, push-in, consultant teaching [CT])
- demonstrating knowledge of instructional methods, techniques, and curricula, including assistive and instructional technologies, used with students to accommodate specific disabilities
- demonstrating understanding of the connection between curriculum and IEP goals and objectives
- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to develop and implement appropriate curricula for students with disabilities
- demonstrating familiarity with strategies for integrating affective, social, and career/vocational skills with academic curricula
- recognizing strategies and techniques for ensuring the efficient and effective use of instructional time
- demonstrating knowledge of methods for preparing and organizing materials to implement daily lesson plans
- demonstrating understanding of language diversity and various communication styles and modes in planning effective instruction for students with disabilities

0008 Understand principles and methods involved in individualizing instruction for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to individualize instruction in a variety of inclusive models (e.g., co-teaching, push-in, consultant teaching [CT])
- applying techniques for planning, adapting, and sequencing instruction to meet IEP goals and objectives
- demonstrating knowledge of instructional and remedial methods, techniques, and materials used to address individual students' learning styles, strengths, and needs
- recognizing how cultural perspectives influence the relationship among families, schools, and communities, as related to effective instruction for students with disabilities
- recognizing effective strategies for involving the individual and family in setting instructional goals and charting progress
- demonstrating knowledge of assistive and instructional technologies for students with disabilities (e.g., alternative input and output devices)
- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to facilitate students' use and independent management of assistive technologies in various settings

0009 Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' language arts skills in a variety of settings.

For example:

- identifying types and characteristics of language arts difficulties associated with various disabilities
- demonstrating familiarity with a range of approaches to language arts instruction that meet the needs of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of principles of and methods for assessing and developing students' reading and other language arts skills
- recognizing strategies for promoting students' enjoyment and independent involvement in reading and writing
- applying strategies for promoting students' use of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills in language arts
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for integrating language arts skills across the content areas

0010 Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' mathematics skills in a variety of settings.

For example:

- identifying types and characteristics of reasoning and calculation difficulties typically observed in students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of principles and methods for improving students' computation and reasoning skills
- applying strategies for promoting students' use of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills in mathematics
- demonstrating familiarity with techniques for encouraging students' application of mathematics skills in a variety of contexts, including practical daily living situations
- evaluating, selecting, and adapting instructional strategies, materials, and resources to individualize instruction and facilitate student achievement in mathematics

0011 Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' acquisition of functional living skills.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of methods for teaching students with disabilities to use problem-solving, decision-making, and other cognitive strategies to meet their own needs
- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to facilitate students' maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments
- demonstrating familiarity with strategies for linking life skills instruction to employment and independent, community, and personal living
- demonstrating knowledge of methods, including collaboration among professionals in a variety of settings, for promoting students' development of independence to the fullest extent possible (e.g., self-advocacy skills, self-management strategies, independent use of assistive devices, person-centered planning)
- recognizing that cultural, linguistic, and gender differences need to be taken into account when developing instructional content, materials, resources, and strategies for promoting students' functional living skills
- demonstrating understanding of the development and use of a task analysis
- demonstrating knowledge of instructional techniques and strategies that promote successful transitions (e.g., from home to school; preschool to grade school; classroom to classroom; school to school; school to adult life roles, employment, or post-secondary education or training)

0012 Understand strategies and techniques used to improve the social competence of students with disabilities.

For example:

- identifying social skills needed for various educational and functional living environments, as well as for personal and social behavior in various settings
- demonstrating knowledge of effective social skills instruction and reinforcement by educators and other professionals across a variety of educational settings
- demonstrating familiarity with instructional techniques that promote the student's self-awareness, self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem, and personal empowerment
- recognizing effective strategies across a range of educational settings for preparing students to live harmoniously and productively in a diverse society
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for integrating social skills across curricula

0013 Understand the development and implementation of behavior interventions.

For example:

- demonstrating familiarity with a variety of effective behavior management techniques appropriate to the needs of students with disabilities, based on the individual's IEP
- demonstrating an understanding of effective collaboration among teachers and other professionals to identify appropriate modifications to the learning environment (i.e., schedule and physical arrangement) to manage inappropriate behaviors
- understanding the importance of ongoing communication about behavior interventions among the student, the student's teachers, and the student's parents/guardians
- recognizing that teacher attitudes and behaviors positively or negatively influence the behavior of students with disabilities
- identifying effective strategies for crisis prevention and intervention
- demonstrating an understanding of ethical considerations, laws, rules and regulations, and procedural safeguards regarding behavior interventions, including the concept of least restrictive intervention consistent with the needs of the individuals with disabilities
- demonstrating an understanding of how to develop, implement, and evaluate a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)
- recognizing the importance of teacher self-assessment/reflection in the development and implementation of behavior interventions

SUBAREA III—WORKING IN A COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

0014 Understand how to establish partnerships with students with disabilities and their families to enhance students' ability to achieve desired learning outcomes.

For example:

- identifying effective strategies for collaborating with students with disabilities to promote their development of self-advocacy skills
- applying strategies for assisting parents/guardians in becoming active participants in the educational team
- demonstrating familiarity with typical concerns of parents/guardians of students with disabilities and with strategies for planning an individualized program that addresses these concerns
- recognizing the effects of cultural and environmental influences (e.g., cultural and linguistic diversity, socioeconomic level, abuse, neglect, substance abuse) on students and their families
- demonstrating knowledge of factors that promote effective collaboration in a culturally responsive program that fosters respectful and beneficial relationships among students, families, and educators
- demonstrating an understanding of how to communicate effectively and to adapt communication techniques and strategies in response to the characteristics and needs of students and their families
- demonstrating knowledge of ethical practices related to communication and collaboration with families, including confidentiality and informed consent

0015 Understand how to establish partnerships with educators, administrators, other school professionals, and community members to enhance learning opportunities for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating familiarity with a variety of collaborative, inclusive teaching models (e.g., co-teaching, push-in, consultant teaching [CT]) and their implementation
- demonstrating an understanding of effective communication (e.g., active listening, conflict resolution, building consensus, understanding verbal/nonverbal communication)
- applying collaborative strategies for working with general educators and other professionals in the school to solve problems and build consensus with regard to students with disabilities and the special education program
- identifying principles and analyzing factors related to the coordination of efforts (e.g., information-sharing systems, scheduling) among professionals working with students with disabilities
- demonstrating an understanding of how to work effectively within school administrative structures to ensure that students with disabilities receive services as specified in their IEPs
- identifying the roles of community personnel (e.g., social workers, case workers, psychiatrists/psychologists) in providing services to students with special needs, including transition services
- demonstrating an understanding of how to communicate and work effectively with community members (e.g., interagency collaboration, establishing relationships with advocacy groups)

0016 Understand the historical, social, legal, and ethical foundations of education for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating an understanding of models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for special education practice and the beliefs, traditions, and values underlying them
- demonstrating knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of students, parents/guardians, teachers, other professionals, and schools as they relate to individual learning needs
- recognizing and analyzing due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement
- demonstrating knowledge of health and safety issues related to the definition and provision of special education services
- demonstrating knowledge of ethical practices in instruction and other professional activities (e.g., interactions with students, use of copyrighted educational materials, use of information technology) related to the education of students with disabilities

0017 Understand the professional foundations of education for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of how to advocate effectively for students with disabilities and for the special education program
- demonstrating knowledge of the standards and policies of the profession (e.g., the codes of ethics of the Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] and other organizations)
- demonstrating the ability to exercise objective professional judgment
- identifying ways to address one's own cultural biases and differences to ensure positive regard for the culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation of individual students
- identifying professional activities, including self-reflection and self-assessment, to improve one's own effectiveness in providing services to individuals with disabilities and their families
- recognizing strategies for establishing and maintaining ongoing communication and collaboration with other professionals in the field

SUBAREA IV—PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY: CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT

The content to be addressed by the constructed-response assignment is described in Subarea II, Objectives 06–13.

■ MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION

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

Three pieces of information are presented for each test question:

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

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

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

SAMPLE TEST DIRECTIONS FOR MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

DIRECTIONS

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

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

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

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

1. (A) (B) ● (D)

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

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

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

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

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



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

■ SAMPLE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS, CORRECT RESPONSES, AND EXPLANATIONS



Objective 0001

Understand characteristics of individuals with disabilities.

1. A nonverbal student with autism frequently has screaming episodes at school. In response to this behavior, it would be most important for the student's teachers to:
 - A. communicate to the student unambiguously that the behavior is not acceptable and must stop.
 - B. treat the episodes as communication attempts and take steps to interpret their meaning.
 - C. develop a behavior contract with the student to reduce the incidence of such episodes.
 - D. recognize that the student may not be able to control such behavior until he or she learns appropriate social skills.

Correct Response: B. Autism significantly affects a student's verbal and nonverbal communication skills. A nonverbal student who is autistic may be unable to express his or her basic wants and needs through any means other than through vocalizations such as screaming; therefore this student's behaviors should be understood as a form of communication and addressed as such.



Objective 0002

Understand the effects of disabilities on human development and learning.

2. Of the following difficulties common to some children who have learning disabilities, which is most likely to interfere with an individual's social and emotional development?
- A. failing to retrieve important information from memory
 - B. misplacing important papers or objects
 - C. misinterpreting the language and behaviors of others
 - D. resisting transitions from one activity to another
-

Correct Response: C. A child's social and emotional development occurs primarily in response to interacting and communicating with others. If a child is unable to interpret the language and behavior of others accurately, the lack of successful interaction and communication will interfere with that child's social and emotional development.



Objective 0003

Understand types and characteristics of assessment instruments and methods.

3. A *criterion-referenced test* would be most useful in providing information about:
- A. how a student's performance compares to that of his or her peers.
 - B. the types of problem-solving strategies a student employs.
 - C. a student's level of mastery of specific learning objectives.
 - D. attitudinal factors that affect a student's learning.
-

Correct Response: C. Criterion-referenced tests are designed to assess an individual's mastery of specified content. A score on a criterion-referenced test provides information about the student's knowledge and skills with respect to that content. Each score is independent of the scores of other students.



Objective 0004

Understand purposes, methods, and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and evaluating their progress.

4. Use the Achievement Test results below to answer the question that follows.

Subtest	Standard Score	Percentile Rank
Reading	89	24
Math	90	30
Written Language	83	14
Knowledge	85	13
Skills	84	15

Which of the following is an accurate interpretation of the percentile scores shown?

- A. In Reading, the student answered 24% of the questions correctly.
 - B. In Math, the student scored the same or lower than 30% of the students in the norm sample.
 - C. In Written Language, the student scored 14% higher than students of his or her age in the norm sample.
 - D. In Knowledge, the student scored the same or higher than 13% of the students in the norm sample.
-

Correct Response: D. A percentile rank is the percentage of scores in a distribution of scores that is equal to or below the actual score received. The Knowledge subtest results indicate that the student scored in the 13th percentile. Thus, this student's score is equal to or higher than 13% of all the students who took the same subtest.



Objective 0005

Understand procedures for developing, implementing, and amending Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities.

5. The contents of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of a student with disabilities must be:
 - A. accessible to all staff serving the student.
 - B. restricted to instructional staff designated by the student's parents.
 - C. restricted to members of the student's IEP team.
 - D. accessible to all administrative staff in the student's school district.
-

Correct Response: A. In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, a student's educational records, including an Individualized Education Program, may be viewed by school personnel who have a legitimate educational interest in that student. Therefore, such records must be made available to all staff members serving that student.



Objective 0006

Understand methods of planning and managing teaching and learning environments for individuals with disabilities.

6. Mei, a student with moderate mental retardation, attends Mr. Novak's special education class. During a life skills lesson, Mr. Novak plans to have the class practice making change. Students will rotate purchasing items from a classroom store and working as a clerk. According to the principle of partial participation, which of the following activities would be most appropriate for Mei during this lesson?
- A. working with an aide to count sums of money
 - B. ringing a bell to signal students to switch roles
 - C. working with an aide to write the numbers 1–10
 - D. observing the other students making change
-

Correct Response: A. According to the principle of partial participation, even if a student cannot do all the steps in a task or assignment, he or she can likely learn at least one step and thereby maximize his or her participation in the overall activity. Counting sums of money with an aide is the only activity listed that is a step in the common learning process for the class.



Objective 0007

Understand principles of curriculum development and instructional planning for students with disabilities.

7. Before the beginning of the school year, a general education teacher is conferring with a special education teacher about how best to plan instruction for a boy with mild mental retardation. In general, which of the following would be the best guideline to follow in planning instruction for this student?
- A. The general education teacher should present the general curriculum but have alternate activities for the student to do whenever the material becomes too difficult.
 - B. The special education teacher should monitor the student's progress in the general curriculum and provide extra help in the resource room as necessary.
 - C. The general education teacher should develop an individualized curriculum for the student that reflects his cognitive deficits.
 - D. The special education teacher should suggest modifications to the method of instruction based on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Correct Response: D. Federal and state legislation require that a student with special needs have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) developed by a team for the upcoming school year. Specific methods of instruction, program modifications, and testing accommodations for that student would all be included in the IEP. Thus, the IEP becomes the primary guide for adapting instruction to meet the student's needs.



Objective 0008

Understand principles and methods involved in individualizing instruction for students with disabilities.

8. When a teacher works with a student who has recently come to the United States from another country, the best way he or she can gather information about the student's life and experience is to:
- A. conduct a family interview, using an interpreter if necessary.
 - B. ask the child to do a presentation to the class about his or her neighborhood or community.
 - C. ask the parents to write a paragraph or two describing the unique attributes of their culture.
 - D. research the child's culture through books and literature.
-

Correct Response: A. To gather information about the lives and experiences of students who have recently come to the United States, the teacher would conduct interviews with the students' families. This approach demonstrates respect for the unique experiences and perspectives of both the students and the families. Ensuring that an interpreter is available, if necessary, sends a clear signal that the teacher truly wants to hear and understand what families have to say.



Objective 0009

Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' language arts skills in a variety of settings.

9. A student has difficulty following directions and understanding new concepts. These difficulties indicate that the student may have:
- A. a receptive language disorder.
 - B. a communication disorder related to fluency.
 - C. an expressive language disorder.
 - D. a communication disorder related to articulation.
-

Correct Response: A. The ability to follow directions and understand new concepts requires the ability to receive and grasp the meaning of language, either by listening or reading. Difficulty with either of these tasks typically indicates the presence of a receptive language disorder.



Objective 0010

Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' mathematics skills in a variety of settings.

10. After presenting new mathematical material, a teacher always schedules sessions for students to practice the new concepts and skills. To promote the practice sessions' effectiveness for students with mathematics disabilities, it would be most important for the teacher to ensure that:
- A. the practice sessions are conducted at the same time each day.
 - B. students are monitored as they work to prevent inadvertent reinforcement of errors or misconceptions.
 - C. the sessions focus strictly on the practical applications of the material.
 - D. assignments combine the synthesis of new concepts with the application of new rules.
-

Correct Response: B. For students to master a new skill or concept, they typically need to practice. If their application of a skill is faulty or their understanding of a concept is incomplete, they will simply reinforce errors as they practice and later have to unlearn their misunderstandings. Because this pattern is common among students with mathematics disabilities, choice B is the most important issue for the teacher to address.



Objective 0011

Understand strategies and techniques used to promote students' acquisition of functional living skills.

11. A special educator surveys students with disabilities and learns that very few of them participate in recreational or leisure activities. Which of the following strategies would be most effective in increasing students' awareness of recreational and leisure activities?
- A. providing the students' parents/guardians with a list of suggestions for recreational and leisure activities
 - B. organizing field trips for students to visit a variety of recreational and leisure activities available in their community
 - C. choosing a recreational or leisure activity for each student based upon his or her needs and strengths
 - D. ensuring that the school library contains books and magazines related to recreational and leisure activities
-

Correct Response: B. Most students, with or without disabilities, learn best from examples or lessons that are experiential and concrete. Providing students with opportunities to see the various forms of recreational and leisure activities found in their community is the most direct and concrete method for increasing their awareness of their options. Therefore, of the choices given, choice B represents the most effective strategy.



Objective 0012

Understand strategies and techniques used to improve the social competence of students with disabilities.

12. **Read the information below; then answer the question that follows.**

At the end of each week, an educator in an inclusive setting holds class meetings with students. During the meetings, students share their opinions and suggest solutions to class problems and concerns. The teacher acts as a facilitator by presenting open-ended topics and asking clarifying questions. The class has agreed that students have the right to share their opinions without being criticized by classmates.

Participating in these class meetings would be most effective for helping students with disabilities to develop an ability to:

- A. monitor their behavior.
 - B. maintain their point of view.
 - C. respond appropriately to feedback.
 - D. understand the perspective of others.
-

Correct Response: D. With its emphasis on listening, teacher clarification, and freedom from criticism, this type of meeting offers a low-risk setting in which students may express their opinions. The class has agreed that all opinions should be honored, so the teacher can monitor the group and correct those who fail to comply. Consistent use of this approach should promote the students' understanding of and appreciation for the diverse perspectives of others.



Objective 0013

Understand the development and implementation of behavior interventions.

13. A special educator is concerned by the noncompliant behaviors demonstrated in an inclusive general education setting by Miranda, a student with an emotional disorder. The educator plans to complete a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and arranges to interview the student's general educator and different members of her family. During these interviews, the special educator will most likely ask questions similar to which of the following?
- A. Does it appear to you that Miranda has many close friends?
 - B. What would you like Miranda to accomplish this school year?
 - C. At what point during the day is Miranda more likely to act out?
 - D. Do any of Miranda's peers respond inappropriately to stress?
-

Correct Response: C. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) consists of a variety of techniques used to identify the causes of a student's behavior. The information gathered in the FBA is then used to develop a strategy for modifying that behavior. Knowledge of when certain behaviors occur provides a context that may be important for understanding the causes of those behaviors.



Objective 0014

Understand how to establish partnerships with students with disabilities and their families to enhance students' ability to achieve desired learning outcomes.

14. In their collaboration with the parents of a student with disabilities, special education teachers have an ethical responsibility to:
- A. emphasize positive aspects of students' performance.
 - B. advise parents of the educational rights of their children under special education law.
 - C. maintain a written record of every contact with parents.
 - D. provide parents with representative samples of their children's classroom work.
-

Correct Response: B. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires school districts to provide parents of children with disabilities with written information about the laws pertaining to their child's education. A special education teacher has an obligation to know these laws and advise parents accordingly.



Objective 0015

Understand how to establish partnerships with educators, administrators, other school professionals, and community members to enhance learning opportunities for students with disabilities.

15. A group of special educators would like to establish a partnership with community members to enhance learning opportunities for students with disabilities. To meet that goal, which of the following would be the special educators' best first step?
- A. Create a vision that will guide partnership members as they develop and carry out group activities.
 - B. Establish realistic criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the group's activities.
 - C. Gather information about special education needs, local resources, and interested community members.
 - D. Define the respective roles of special educators and community members in the planned partnership.
-

Correct Response: C. In order to establish a partnership with community members to enhance learning opportunities for students with disabilities, the special educators must first know the specific needs of their students. Once they understand what would enhance their students' learning, they can identify the community resources that are likely to meet those needs and the people and programs in the community with an interest in such a partnership. Therefore, of the choices given, choice C is the best first step.



Objective 0016

Understand the historical, social, legal, and ethical foundations of education for students with disabilities.

16. Which of the following statements is most closely related to the core principles of the philosophy of inclusion in special education?
- A. Students with disabilities should have the opportunity to be educated as members of general education classes.
 - B. Special education services should be provided to students with disabilities in resource rooms and nonacademic classes.
 - C. General education teachers should be trained to use teaching methods that are effective for students with disabilities.
 - D. Schools must recognize that there are very few differences between special and general education processes and practices.
-

Correct Response: A. The philosophy of inclusion is based on this concept that children with and without disabilities are best educated together to the fullest extent appropriate. Of the choices listed, choice A is most closely related to the core principles of inclusion.



Objective 0017

Understand the professional foundations of education for students with disabilities.

17. When applying any disciplinary methods, it is most important that special educators ensure that they:
- A. inform students of their rights before disciplining them.
 - B. use corporal punishment only after repeated trials of other methods have failed.
 - C. always have another teacher present to witness their actions.
 - D. do nothing to undermine the dignity or fundamental human rights of students.
-

Correct Response: D. All students have fundamental human rights. Disciplining students in a manner that undermines their dignity or human rights is both illegal and unethical. Special educators have an obligation to uphold this principle with regard to their students with disabilities.

■ WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SECTION

On the following pages are:

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

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

■ SAMPLE TEST DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of a written assignment. You are to prepare a written response of about 150–300 words on the assigned topic. *The assignment can be found on the next page.* You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response to the assignment.

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

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

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

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

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

■ SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A special educator is responsible for understanding strategies and techniques used to improve the social competence of students with disabilities, including strategies for preparing students to live harmoniously and productively in a diverse society.

Sam is a student with autism. Using your knowledge of students with disabilities, identify a grade level for Sam for which you are prepared to teach, then prepare a response in which you:

- identify one other professional (e.g., general education teacher, specialist) who would typically provide services to Sam;
- recommend and describe one technique that a special educator and the professional you identified could use to prepare Sam to live harmoniously and productively in a diverse society;
- describe how the special educator and the professional you identified could collaborate to implement the technique that you recommend; and
- explain how this collaboration will meet Sam's needs and provide for effective monitoring of progress.

■ STRONG RESPONSE TO THE SAMPLE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Sam is a 14-year-old boy with autism who attends general education classes for part of the day in an academic high school. Sam is relatively high functioning academically, but struggles with areas of socialization such as transitioning, pragmatic language, and social interaction with peers and adults. Sam has particular difficulty in the Earth Science Lab class where he is expected to work cooperatively and independently with a lab partner. Specifically, he does not make eye contact and/or participate actively with his partner on assigned labs. The Earth Science teacher and the Special Education teacher have decided to work collaboratively to remediate Sam's deficits, since improving Sam's social skills would allow him to work more cooperatively with others and increase his social acceptance in the class. The technique chosen will be modeling and guided practice. To implement the technique, care will be taken to choose a lab partner for Sam who is engaging, socially sophisticated, and willing to work with Sam. Initially the Special Education Teacher will work with Sam on making and maintaining eye contact. A prompt card will be created which the Science teacher will place on Sam's lab table. It will serve as a reminder to Sam to continue to practice this skill. For example, the teacher or Sam's lab partner may point to the card to reinforce Sam's behavior. The acquisition of effective eye contact behavior will ultimately increase Sam's success in the class through increased social appropriateness.

To monitor the effectiveness of this technique, the Science teacher will complete a brief checklist, recording Sam's progress with respect to this skill, for each lab period. The Special Education teacher will complete a checklist for each resource period. In addition, Sam will collaborate with his teachers through self-monitoring on his own checklist.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS AND SCORING SCALE

Performance Characteristics

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

Purpose:	Fulfill the charge of the assignment.
Application of Content:	Accurately and effectively apply the relevant knowledge and skills.
Support:	Support the response with appropriate examples and/or sound reasoning reflecting an understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills.

Scoring Scale

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

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

■ EVALUATION OF THE STRONG RESPONSE

This response is considered a strong response because it reflects a thorough command of relevant knowledge and skills.

Purpose. The response identifies a grade level (9th) and another professional (general education science teacher) who would typically provide services. It recommends techniques (modeling and guided practice), describes collaboration (consultation), and shows how the strategies will meet Sam's needs (note card cue on lab table will reinforce desired behavior without singling him out from the group). Finally, it provides an example of effective monitoring (both teachers complete checklist and Sam keeps a self-monitoring checklist).

Application of Content. The response demonstrates accurate and highly effective application of knowledge and skills by identifying the problem areas of socialization, transitions, pragmatic language, and social interaction as well as difficulty in working cooperatively with others. It gives examples of appropriate intervention and monitoring techniques for students with autism.

Support. The response provides strong support and high-quality examples and reasoning. The process for carrying out the techniques is described and a detailed monitoring process is described.