



Sample Test Questions

Special Education



SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

The sample test questions in this document are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in the Washington Educator Skills Tests—Endorsements™ (WEST-E™). They represent the various types of questions you may expect to see on an actual test in this test field; however, they are *not* designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strength or weakness or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

Work through the sample questions carefully before referring to the answer key that follows. The answer key provides the correct response for each question and lists the objective within the test framework to which each question is linked. When you are finished with the sample questions, you may wish to review the test objectives and descriptive statements provided in the test framework for this test field.

In addition to reading and answering the sample questions, you should also utilize the following preparation materials available on the WEST Web site:

- Read **WEST-E Test-Taking Strategies** to understand how test questions are designed to measure specific test objectives and to learn important test-taking strategies for the day of the test.
- Review the **Test Summary and Framework** for your test field to familiarize yourself with the structure and content of the test. This document contains general testing information as well as the percentage of the total test score derived from each content domain described in the test framework.

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SAMPLE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. In typical human development, which of the following gross-motor skills is usually developed *last*?
 - A. hopping
 - B. catching a ball with two hands
 - C. skipping
 - D. climbing stairs

2. A teacher works with a kindergartner who is occasionally disfluent. When the student is excited about a topic, he often has short pauses and repetitions of sounds in his speech. Which of the following observations would be most indicative that the student should be referred to a speech-language pathologist for an evaluation?
 - A. The student's disfluencies often occur when he speaks at a faster rate than he normally speaks.
 - B. The student is more disfluent with specific types of words, such as new vocabulary and compound words.
 - C. The student's speech tends to include more disfluencies at the end of the day than at the beginning.
 - D. The student demonstrates other behaviors, such as eye blinking or throat clearing, when he is disfluent.

3. Compared to a young child with normal vision, a young child with a visual impairment is likely to find it significantly more challenging to:
 - A. develop a sense of identity.
 - B. acquire incidental information from the environment.
 - C. maintain positive peer relationships.
 - D. comprehend concrete concepts through direct instruction.

4. Which of the following activities would likely be most difficult for an eight-year-old student with a mild intellectual disability?
 - A. recognizing the letters within his or her first name
 - B. following basic two-step oral directions
 - C. using a previously learned skill in a new setting
 - D. matching two similar objects together



5. Which of the following practices will best prevent the spread of illnesses such as the common cold and the flu within an elementary school special education classroom?
- A. encouraging students not to bring in food from home to share with classmates
 - B. providing students with individual boxes of tissues to keep at their desks
 - C. assigning students a specific area in the classroom for storing their personal belongings
 - D. having students wash their hands properly on a regular basis throughout the day
6. A student who has an emotional behavioral disability is likely to have the most difficulty with which of the following aspects of communication development?
- A. interpreting a speaker's feelings from his or her tone of voice
 - B. producing fluent speech that is free of articulation errors
 - C. understanding new vocabulary words in context
 - D. using syntax patterns that are grammatically correct
7. A special education teacher works with a student who has epilepsy involving generalized tonic-clonic seizures. If the student has a seizure in class, the teacher should *first*:
- A. attempt to gently restrain the student to minimize muscle jerks.
 - B. remove objects located around or near the student that could possibly cause injury.
 - C. call or locate the school nurse to attend to the student.
 - D. place an object such as a belt or wallet in the student's mouth to keep the airway open.
8. Which of the following factors causes Down syndrome?
- A. chromosomal abnormality
 - B. prenatal exposure to high amounts of alcohol
 - C. oxygen deprivation during the birthing process
 - D. neural tube defects



9. An elementary school student with severe physical disabilities requires adult assistance with feedings. Which of the following information would be most important for the student's special education teacher to know in this situation?
- A. whether the student is able to partially hold eating utensils or cups
 - B. how much food and liquid the student commonly consumes at home
 - C. whether the student has demonstrated preferences for certain foods
 - D. what type of consistency the student's foods and liquids should be
10. Which of the following factors has the most significant influence in fostering self-advocacy and independence in children who have mild to moderate intellectual disabilities?
- A. establishing friendships with peers both with and without special needs
 - B. becoming a member of an advocacy group for individuals with disabilities
 - C. receiving positive support from parents/guardians who believe in their potential
 - D. obtaining instruction in inclusive settings with experienced educators
11. A twelfth-grade student with a physical disability has experienced two severe episodes of depression within the past year and is currently taking an antidepressant medication. As the student approaches graduation and the transition from high school to college, it would be most important for the student to:
- A. reconsider whether going to college is a realistic goal.
 - B. develop friendships with peers who have similar disabilities.
 - C. rely more on family members regarding important decisions.
 - D. learn how to access counseling services as needed.



12. Eliza is a ninth-grade student who will soon return to school after suffering a moderate traumatic brain injury (TBI) in a bicycle accident. While in a rehabilitation center, Eliza received speech-language, physical, and occupational therapies. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team is developing an IEP for her to support her as she returns to school. Which of the following best describes the educational implications of Eliza's TBI?
- A. Eliza's condition will prevent her from taking college preparation classes.
 - B. Eliza's academic course load should be modified or reduced as she transitions back into the school environment.
 - C. Eliza will likely require speech-language, physical, and occupational therapies for the remainder of high school.
 - D. Eliza will likely require instructional services at home in addition to those she receives at school.
13. A twelfth-grade student has mild autism spectrum disorder and has received special education and speech-language services since kindergarten. Based on this information, the student is likely to have greatest difficulty with which of the following aspects of adulthood?
- A. establishing and maintaining quality interpersonal relationships
 - B. obtaining a job within a field of interest
 - C. living in an apartment or house independently
 - D. managing personal finances
14. It is important to follow the established basal and ceiling levels when administering a standardized achievement test in order to:
- A. develop the student's individualized instructional objectives.
 - B. determine the student's grade equivalency.
 - C. rank the student's abilities among peers.
 - D. focus on the student's specific range of academic skills.



15. Marcus earns a score in the 72nd percentile on a standardized achievement test. Which of the following is the best interpretation of this score?
- A. Twenty-eight students within the test's norm group scored lower than Marcus.
 - B. Marcus answered 28 of 100 test items incorrectly.
 - C. Marcus scored the same as or higher than 72 percent of the students in the test's norm group.
 - D. Marcus answered 72 of the test items correctly.
16. Which of the following factors is most important to consider when assessing the academic achievement of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?
- A. the students' prior opportunities to learn
 - B. the students' current grade level
 - C. the students' report card grades
 - D. the students' standardized district test scores
17. A curriculum-based assessment provides information primarily about a student's:
- A. eligibility for special education services.
 - B. progress in acquiring specific academic skills.
 - C. aptitude for future academic success.
 - D. ability to use assistive technology to perform academically.
18. Results from an academic screening test indicate that the reading scores of several students in a third-grade class fall below the district benchmark. According to response to intervention (RTI) procedures, which of the following steps should the classroom teacher take *first*?
- A. Continue to collect data on each student's reading performance using curriculum-based measures.
 - B. Develop a student intervention plan for differentiating small-group reading instruction for these students.
 - C. Refer each of the students for a comprehensive individualized evaluation.
 - D. Request that the special education teacher provide these students with reading instruction in the third-grade classroom.



19. Which of the following procedures must an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team follow in order to determine that a student is eligible for special education services?
- A. documenting the student's aptitude based on standardized achievement instruments
 - B. evaluating the student in all areas of suspected disability
 - C. evaluating the student's adaptive functioning abilities with behavioral rating scales
 - D. administering formal instruments in order to obtain a standardized score
20. A special education teacher will be evaluating the academic achievement of a student who is also an English language learner. Which of the following procedures should the teacher follow to ensure nonbiased assessment results?
- A. using a variety of formal and informal assessment instruments to collect information
 - B. administering assessment instruments beginning at a lower grade level
 - C. administering informal assessment instruments to the student in a familiar location
 - D. relying primarily on standardized nonverbal assessment instruments
21. A fifth-grade student who has a specific learning disability and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has begun demonstrating disruptive behavior in recent weeks. Despite various intervention efforts, the behavior has continued. The student's team decides to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA). The *first* step the team should take in conducting the FBA is to:
- A. observe the student's behavior across school settings.
 - B. identify effective behavior self-monitoring strategies.
 - C. define the student's behavior in measurable terms.
 - D. develop a positive behavior support plan.



22. A special education teacher provides reading instruction to a small group of second-grade students. Each student has Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals related to increasing their sight word vocabulary and fluency. Which of the following assessment procedures should the teacher use to monitor the students' progress toward these goals?
- A. administering an informal reading inventory to each student on a monthly basis
 - B. developing individual portfolios in which each student collects a list of mastered sight words every week
 - C. conducting an error analysis of each student's oral reading on a monthly basis
 - D. reviewing data on each student's reading accuracy and speed on a graph every week
23. An initial evaluation has been completed on a fourth-grade student who has been struggling in mathematics. Based on the student's present level of educational performance, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team finds the student eligible for special education services. Which of the following components must be included in the students IEP?
- A. a detailed plan for fully supporting the student's upcoming transition to fifth grade
 - B. a description of how the team plans to monitor the student's progress
 - C. a statement naming a designated service coordinator to implement the program
 - D. a statement reflecting the family's desired academic outcome for the student



24. Which of the following must be included in an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)?
- A. a comprehensive list of community organizations, service agencies, and support groups available to meet the family's needs
 - B. a report explaining the results of a formal psychosocial assessment of the family's functioning
 - C. a statement describing the family's concerns, priorities, strengths, and needs as these relate to their child's development
 - D. a projected list of dates for routine weekly family–teacher conferences for the purpose of monitoring the child's progress
25. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will be developing a transition plan for a ninth-grade student who has specific learning disabilities and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Which of the following steps should the team take *first* in supporting a successful transition for this student?
- A. identifying long-term postsecondary goals for the student's transition into community living
 - B. assessing the student's individual interests, preferences, and level of supports needed
 - C. determining how to measure the student's progress toward transition goals
 - D. assessing the student's need for assistive technology related to employment or postsecondary education



26. A special education teacher and a general education teacher will be co-teaching a second-grade class, and they are planning activities for the first day of school. Which of the following strategies would be most effective for the teachers to use in promoting positive interactions between students?
- A. creating questions for students to use in interviewing each other to find out specific information, then having students share the results of these interviews with the class
 - B. asking each student to bring in a favorite family photograph to post on a classroom bulletin board
 - C. pairing students who are known to be quiet with students who are known to be more outgoing to work together on various tasks and play together at recess
 - D. assigning students to write a paragraph about their likes and dislikes to read aloud to the class
27. A special education teacher works with Deng, a third-grade student with a mild intellectual disability. Deng often hugs peers and adults when he sees them, and some of his classmates have stated that they are not comfortable with hugging. The special education teacher is planning to work with Deng to reduce this behavior. Which of the following strategies would be most effective in addressing this goal?
- A. using a verbal cue (e.g., "use your words") to remind Deng not to hug others and asking other teachers to do the same
 - B. teaching Deng appropriate ways to greet others and having him practice these greetings throughout the school day
 - C. talking with Deng about his classmates' reactions to being hugged and encouraging classmates to tell him if he makes them feel uncomfortable
 - D. providing Deng with a list of appropriate verbal and physical greetings (e.g., handshake, saying "hello") to refer to throughout the day



28. A tenth-grade student with posttraumatic stress disorder will soon return to school after receiving six weeks of inpatient psychiatric care. The student is stabilized, but unrelated stressors have the potential to trigger angry outbursts and symptoms of depression. Which of the following strategies should the special education teacher implement *first* to prevent the student from experiencing unnecessary anxiety?
- A. meeting with the student and reviewing the school's code of conduct
 - B. requesting that the student's parents meet with their son each morning to review his daily schedule
 - C. establishing a predictable routine for the student with advanced notice of changes
 - D. providing a quiet area in the school where the student can go to calm down
29. A sixth-grade student with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is having significant difficulty getting started on a long-term writing assignment given by her English language arts teacher. The student tells her special education resource room teacher that she feels overwhelmed by the assignment, cannot find any information about the topic, and thinks she might not write the report. Which of the following responses from the special education teacher would likely be most effective in this situation?
- A. asking the library media specialist to research and locate information for the student on her assigned writing topic
 - B. working with the student and the English language arts teacher to break down the assignment into smaller, more manageable parts
 - C. scheduling a meeting with the student and her parents to discuss her negative attitude toward the assignment
 - D. suggesting that the English language arts teacher provide the student with a different topic for the writing assignment



30. A middle school English language arts (ELA) teacher comes to the special education teacher for advice about Gina, a student with a learning disability in writing. The ELA teacher says that while Gina writes fluently and has many original ideas, her inattention to punctuation makes her work difficult to read. The special education teacher has worked with Gina on punctuation and seen significant improvement on exercises and drills in the resource room. The special education teacher's best response would be to suggest that the ELA teacher:
- A. send Gina to the resource room to review final drafts for punctuation errors before submitting her work.
 - B. set a short period of time aside each day for Gina to work on punctuation exercises.
 - C. hold Gina accountable for punctuation errors when grading her work, as articulated in the IEP.
 - D. have Gina and a classmate exchange final drafts and correct each other's punctuation errors.
31. A special education teacher meets twice a week with Carla, a ninth grader who has a learning disability. When reviewing the notes Carla has taken in preparation for a geography report, the teacher sees that they are excessively detailed and do not distinguish between major ideas and minor points. The teacher's best response in this situation would be to:
- A. show Carla how to use a more telegraphic style when she takes notes.
 - B. provide Carla with index cards to limit the amount of space available for taking notes.
 - C. remind Carla that she can use a photocopier for sections of a source that require extensive notetaking.
 - D. teach Carla how to use text headings and subheadings to focus her notetaking on key concepts.
32. Which of the following is a key component of all tiers of response in a response to intervention (RTI) model?
- A. curriculum-based measurement
 - B. small-group instruction
 - C. shortened classroom assignments
 - D. one-on-one tutoring



33. Lee is a first-grade student with cerebral palsy who uses a communication board with speech output. He will soon begin receiving instruction in a general education classroom for part of each school day. Which of the following steps should Lee's special education teacher take *first* to promote his communication skills within the new classroom environment?
- A. assigning the students in the general education class to write questions about Lee's communication board and having him answer the questions on his first day in class
 - B. asking the general education teacher to discuss with the class different ways in which people communicate, including using communication boards
 - C. having Lee introduce himself to the general education class and explain how and when he began using the communication board
 - D. ensuring that the general education teacher understands how Lee uses the communication board before his transition into the class
34. A special education teacher who works in a high school resource room overhears students making disparaging remarks about themselves and their ability to obtain jobs in the future. The teacher wishes to increase students' self-confidence so that they will be more likely to experience successful transitions from high school into the workplace. Which of the following strategies would most effectively meet the teacher's goal?
- A. pairing each student with a successful adult mentor who has a similar disability who can serve as a positive role model
 - B. assigning each student to research a particular career and present an oral report about it
 - C. having each student interview several adults to obtain information about the positive and negative aspects of each person's job
 - D. encouraging students to obtain a part-time job while still in high school



35. A student with special needs who attends a fourth-grade general education class has been having difficulty during quiet work times. The student often disturbs peers by engaging in behaviors such as tapping his pencil loudly on his desk, humming, or stomping his feet on the floor. The teacher has discussed these behaviors with the student. Which of the following strategies should the teacher use *next* to increase the student's self-management skills during quiet work times?
- A. creating a behavior chart to tally how often the student engages in distracting behaviors and providing a reward as he reduces these behaviors
 - B. developing a visual cue to use with the student to help increase his awareness of when he is engaging in distracting behaviors
 - C. having the student move his desk to work in a separate area of the classroom when he becomes distracting to others
 - D. meeting with the student each morning to review the behaviors he needs to reduce and providing him with feedback about his progress at the end of each day
36. A middle school special education teacher who works in a self-contained classroom has recently discovered that the primary leisure activities of most of her students involve watching television, playing on the computer, and playing video games. The teacher would like to increase the students' participation in different types of leisure activities. Which of the following strategies would best meet this goal?
- A. having students conduct a survey to determine the types of leisure activities in which their same age-peers most commonly participate
 - B. inviting guest speakers from various school clubs and extracurricular activity groups to present information to the students
 - C. assigning students to research various types of leisure activities and having them each present the information to the class
 - D. integrating time into the weekly schedule on a consistent basis for students to participate in various types of leisure activities



37. A special education teacher who works with three high school students in a life skills class would like to promote the students' food preparation skills. Which of the following strategies would best address this goal?
- A. asking students to choose a meal they would like to prepare and working with them to write out the steps involved in preparing each food
 - B. providing direct instruction to students by planning opportunities for them to prepare various foods in school on a consistent basis
 - C. arranging for students to observe cafeteria staff while they are preparing food for lunch and meeting with the students to discuss their observations
 - D. sending a note to students' parents/guardians requesting that students become involved in food preparation activities at home
38. An elementary school is implementing a positive behavioral support program for all students, including students with special needs. The basis for this type of educational practice has its foundation in which of the following principles of behavior theory?
- A. modeling
 - B. extinction
 - C. reinforcement
 - D. shaping
39. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has had which of the following effects upon special education practice?
- A. ensuring that each student receives a free and appropriate education
 - B. mandating that schools collaborate with community agencies when planning transition services
 - C. holding schools accountable for the learning of all students
 - D. providing funding for educational services for young children with disabilities



40. Darin is a sixth-grade student who has just completed an initial evaluation. During the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, the team informs Darin's parents that he has a specific learning disability in reading comprehension. The team recommends pull-out services three times a week in the resource room. Darin's parents disagree, and the team cannot reach an agreement during the meeting. According to federal law, which of the following best describes the next step in this process?
- A. Darin begins to receive the IEP team's recommended services until an agreement is reached.
 - B. Darin's parents initiate due process and take the issue to mediation.
 - C. Darin is reevaluated independently by a community-based psychologist who reports the results to the team.
 - D. Darin's parents and their attorney take the issue to a fair hearing.
41. A fourth-grade teacher is concerned that an English language learner's academic achievement is significantly below grade level. The prereferral team decides to try providing the student with an aide to translate assignments. The teacher is also asked to keep anecdotal records regarding the student's informal verbal interactions with classmates. The prereferral team's actions are likely to be most useful for providing information about:
- A. whether the student's academic difficulties are related to language differences.
 - B. whether the student is motivated to achieve in school.
 - C. whether the student's learning style is compatible with the teacher's instructional style.
 - D. whether the student is exhibiting a delay in social-emotional development.



42. A high school special education teacher will be leading Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings that involve numerous service providers within the school and community. Which of the following collaborative approaches would likely be most effective for the teacher to use in facilitating these team meetings?
- A. monitoring team members' interactions closely to minimize conflicts
 - B. assigning specific tasks to each team member to complete before each meeting
 - C. organizing meetings so that each member has a set time limit for presenting information to the team
 - D. listening actively to clarify and summarize team members' input during discussions
43. A second-grade teacher is notified that a new student will be joining the class. The student has a specific learning disability and has severe asthma that requires medication several times per day. In preparation for the student's arrival, the second-grade teacher, the special education teacher, and the school nurse meet to discuss the student's needs. Which of the following best describes the second-grade teacher's primary role?
- A. modifying the content of the general education curriculum
 - B. creating specialized educational materials
 - C. providing expertise concerning the general education curriculum
 - D. monitoring the implementation of support services



44. A paraeducator is assigned to a general education classroom that includes several students with learning disabilities. Which of the following best describes a responsibility of the paraeducator in this setting?
- A. assisting the students with learning disabilities during small-group instruction
 - B. scheduling related support services for the students with learning disabilities
 - C. planning weekly lessons and activities for the entire class
 - D. administering formal classroom assessments to the entire class
45. An elementary special education teacher holds monthly group meetings for students' parents/guardians to share information and discuss their concerns. Several parents/guardians have asked the teacher to speak to the group about ways they can support their children's learning at home. Which of the following guidelines would be most important for the teacher to keep in mind when developing suggestions for the parents/guardians?
- A. Each task should be accompanied by a simple way to measure and document progress.
 - B. Activities should provide remedial practice in skills that students are learning at school.
 - C. Each task should be designed so that families will need to work together for several weeks to complete it.
 - D. Activities should be meaningful and should fit easily into the family's daily schedule.



46. A special education teacher is collaborating with a fifth-grade general education teacher. Four of the students in the class have disabilities. Several times in the past month, the special educator has noticed that the general education teacher does not actively involve the students with disabilities in class activities. Which of the following steps should the special educator take *first* in addressing this situation?
- A. Discuss the concerns with the general education teacher.
 - B. Convene the students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams to discuss a change in placement.
 - C. Ask the school psychologist to observe in the classroom.
 - D. Report the general education teacher's behavior to the administrator.
47. A special education teacher has recently heard about a new instructional method for teaching problem-solving skills to students with learning disabilities in mathematics reasoning. Which of the following resources would contain the most reliable research-based information on this instructional method?
- A. a mission statement posted by the Web site of a company that publishes materials based on the new instructional method
 - B. a peer-reviewed article about the new instructional method published in a special education journal
 - C. testimonials by teachers at a state-wide conference who have used the new instructional method in their classrooms
 - D. postings about the new instructional method on a listserv for special education teachers



48. A new paraeducator has just begun working with a student with multiple disabilities who attends a general education sixth-grade class. The special education teacher is responsible for overseeing the work of three other paraeducators in the school. Which of the following would be the special education teacher's best strategy for monitoring the services the new paraeducator is providing to her assigned student?
- A. meeting with the paraeducator at the beginning and end of each week to conduct planning and debriefing sessions
 - B. asking the four paraeducators to spend some of their free time observing one another to provide mutual advice and support
 - C. scheduling a weekly meeting with the four paraeducators to conduct a comprehensive discussion of their activities and concerns
 - D. enlisting the help of the general education teacher in planning and supervising the work of the new paraeducator
49. Which of the following organizations was founded to advocate for the rights and full participation of all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities?
- A. Council for Exceptional Children
 - B. Project HOPE
 - C. The Arc of the United States
 - D. Make-A-Wish Foundation



50. A special education teacher has noticed that a student with a cognitive impairment regularly shows considerable academic regression during breaks in the school schedule. The teacher is becoming increasingly concerned that the student may experience significant setbacks over summer vacation. Under these circumstances, the teacher could best advocate for the student by:
- A. referring the student's parents or guardians to tutors they could engage to work with their child in the summer.
 - B. meeting with the student's assigned teacher for the next year to recommend ways to help the student make up for lost ground.
 - C. providing the student's family with materials and activities designed to help the student maintain the skills learned in the current year.
 - D. making a recommendation that the student receive extended educational services during the upcoming summer.



ANSWER KEY

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective
1	C	0001
2	D	0001
3	B	0001
4	C	0002
5	D	0002
6	A	0002
7	B	0002
8	A	0002
9	D	0002
10	C	0003
11	D	0003
12	B	0003
13	A	0003
14	D	0004
15	C	0004
16	A	0004
17	B	0004
18	A	0005
19	B	0005
20	A	0005
21	C	0005
22	D	0005
23	B	0006
24	C	0006
25	B	0006

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective
26	A	0007
27	B	0007
28	C	0007
29	B	0007
30	C	0008
31	D	0008
32	A	0008
33	D	0009
34	A	0009
35	B	0009
36	D	0009
37	B	0009
38	C	0010
39	C	0010
40	B	0010
41	A	0010
42	D	0011
43	C	0011
44	A	0011
45	D	0011
46	A	0011
47	B	0012
48	D	0012
49	C	0012
50	D	0012