

## Description

This test was developed to enable students to earn basic level college credit at the associate degree level for demonstrating mastery of content knowledge equivalent to that which is learned in a full semester, 100 level college course in Early Language and Literacy Development. There are no pre-requisite courses required and all individuals with an interest in Early Language and Literacy Development are eligible to take this test.

The topics found on this exam cover the ways in which children from birth through the preschool years develop language and literacy skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing, and the school/home environments, curricula, and adult interactions with young children that help them become effective language and literacy users.

The student should demonstrate a knowledge, understanding, and application of the sources of early language and literacy development, the creation of a literacy-rich environment, the curriculum choices, and the teaching strategies that foster this development. The test contains 100 multiple-choice items, and each item has a single correct or best answer.

Listed below are the topics covered by the exam. Percentages indicate the emphasis placed on the topics and reflect the proportion of items on the test in each content area.

## Content Outline

- I. Oral Language Development in Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers (30%)
  - a. Components of Oral Language (i.e., pragmatic, morphology, semantics, syntax, and phonology)
  - b. Typical/Atypical Behavior
    - i. Infants
    - ii. Toddlers
    - iii. Preschoolers
  - c. Strategies and Techniques for oral language development
    - i. Working with Infants
    - ii. Working with Toddlers
    - iii. Working with Preschoolers
  - d. Typical/Atypical Behaviors for infants, toddlers and preschoolers – 2<sup>nd</sup> Language Learners
  - e. Techniques/Strategies for Working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers – 2<sup>nd</sup> Language Learners
- II. Establishing a Literacy Rich Environment (15%)
  - a. Reading and Visual Literacy (receptive) – e.g., signs and labels, books throughout the room, charts, etc.
  - b. Writing (expressive) – e.g., components of writing centers, writing materials throughout room, etc.
  - c. Speaking (expressive) – e.g., dramatic play area, props, puppets, rhyming and poetry
  - d. Listening (receptive) – e.g., components of listening centers, musical instruments, etc.

- III. Literacy in the Curriculum (50%)
- a. Planning the Curriculum – e.g., literacy goals, curriculum models
  - b. Language Experience Approach and the Alphabetic Principle (the Sound-Symbol Connection)
  - c. Choosing and Using Books
    - i. Types of literature (e.g., fiction, informational, wordless, poetry)
    - ii. Authors and illustrators, and awards (e.g., Caldecott, Newbery)
    - iii. Choosing appropriate books (knowledge of important books and authors for young children)
    - iv. Read aloud strategies
    - v. Talking about books
    - vi. Culturally diverse books
    - vii. Reading extension activities
    - viii. Nursery rhymes
    - ix. Children as readers
  - d. Writing/Print Awareness
    - i. Stages of writing development
    - ii. Environmental print (e.g., cereal boxes, stop signs, anything in print in environment)
    - iii. Writing opportunities (e.g., notes, shopping list)
    - iv. Functions of print
    - v. Teacher modeling
    - vi. Children as authors
    - vii. Child dictation
  - e. Phonological Awareness (e.g., rhyme, alliteration, syllabication, listening and onset)
  - f. Supporting Language and Cultural Differences
    - i. Auditory Acuity
    - ii. Speech and Language Disorders
    - iii. Standard English and Dialects
    - iv. Second Language Learners
    - v. Scaffolding
  - g. Dramatic Play and Story Telling (including flannel stories, recall/retell, re-enactment and finger play)
  - h. Group Time (e.g., music, discussions, questioning, etc.)
    - i. music
    - ii. discussions
    - iii. questioning
- IV. Home/School Connection (5%)
- a. Literacy activities in the home
  - b. Creating take home materials
  - c. Involving primary care-givers in classroom literacy activities
  - d. Communication between teachers and caregivers

## **Learning Outcomes**

Listed below are the learning outcomes tested by this examination and the percentage of questions addressing each outcome.

Knowledge (remembering previously learned material): 20%

Comprehension (grasping the meaning of material): 20%

Application (using information in concrete situations): 40%

Analysis (breaking down material into its parts): 20%

## Sample Questions

1. You hear a baby repeatedly say “bab ba ba ba” over and over. This is an example of:
  - a. babbling
  - b. cooing
  - c. telegraphic speech
  - d. overextension
2. What living condition puts children at the greatest risk for poor performance in school?
  - a. Family Poverty
  - b. Home language not English
  - c. Large extended family
  - d. Single-parent family
3. What should be done if a child is still stuttering at five-years-old?
  - a. Coach child to slow down his speech
  - b. Nothing, just ignore it.
  - c. Refer child to child psychologist
  - d. Refer child to speech pathologist
4. What can teachers of preschoolers expect when there is a new child in the class who does not speak English?
  - a. They will be easily accepted by the other children in the class
  - b. They will become more animated and louder while speaking their home language
  - c. They will become quiet once they realize their home language does not work for them
  - d. They will gravitate toward large groups of children
5. When classroom books become tattered or torn, what should be done?
  - a. Book should be removed, discarded, and replaced
  - b. Books should be removed by children, repaired with children, and returned
  - c. Books should be removed, repaired by teacher, and then returned
  - d. Books should be sent home with children for their home libraries and replacements should be obtained
6. Which describes the main difference between informational books and storybooks?
  - a. They have a different organizational structure.
  - b. Their illustrations are less important.
  - c. They are more difficult for children to understand.
  - d. They do not relate to young children’s experiences.
7. While dramatizing *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, a preschool child creates an ending in which Goldilocks receives a lecture on respecting private property. What is most likely prompting this addition?
  - a. The teacher suggested this ending.
  - b. The child thought it would be amusing.
  - c. The child has forgotten how the story ends.
  - d. The child is activating prior experience.
8. A child asks the teacher about a letter the child sees on the class schedule chart. What does this behavior reveal about the child’s emerging literacy?
  - a. The child wants to read the chart.
  - b. The child knows the alphabet letters.
  - c. The child is developing print awareness.
  - d. The child knows letter sounds.
9. When requested to write a child’s name on a piece of art, the teacher printed it in the upper left corner. Why?
  - a. The teacher wants to separate the writing from the art.
  - b. The teacher is demonstrating where writing begins.
  - c. The teacher is showing how to write the name.
  - d. The teacher is sitting on the child’s left.
10. A preschool teacher asks children why they think Peter Rabbit went into Mr. McGregor’s garden despite his mother’s warning. Which story comprehension skill is the teacher helping the children develop?
  - a. Connecting to previous texts
  - b. Predicting story outcomes
  - c. Sequencing plot elements
  - d. Determining cause and effect

11. The *Gingerbread Boy* provides children with an example of which kind of text structure?
  - a. Rhyming
  - b. Poetic
  - c. Formal
  - d. Cumulative
12. Which will most likely result in the greatest gains in young children's language development?
  - a. Hearing many different kinds of books
  - b. Hearing many different nursery rhymes
  - c. Hearing many predictable books
  - d. Hearing many concept books
13. A child brings in a book unknown to the teacher and asks the teacher to read it aloud. What is the best way for the teacher to respond?
  - a. Call a group of children together to hear the book read aloud.
  - b. Tell the child books from home are not read aloud in class.
  - c. Tell the child the teacher wants to read the book alone first.
  - d. Read the book one-on-one with the child.
14. What recommendation should teachers give parents about reading aloud with a child who has lost attention after a few pages?
  - a. Ask the child questions about what you have been reading
  - b. Give the child a short "time-out" and then begin where you left off
  - c. Start again at the beginning of the book
  - d. Stop reading and ask if the child would prefer a different book

## Study Tips and References

### **Study Tips:**

Begin with a textbook such as Jeanne Machado's *Early Childhood Experiences in Language Arts: Early Literacy* to obtain an overview of all the aspects of oral language and literacy development in young children and the ways in which teachers and caregivers can support these skills both in the classroom and in the home. The text also has a companion website that will aid your study and application of the material. Once you have a basic understanding of the behaviors exhibited by young children as they develop their language and literacy skills and the ways to foster this development, you can obtain an even deeper level of learning by studying the texts that focus on a specific aspect of early language and literacy.

If you are more of a visual learner, supplement what you are reading about in the textbooks by investigating some of the DVDs listed below that focus on different aspects of oral language and literacy development in young children. Colleges in your area will likely have additional titles. In addition, the Internet abounds with texts, articles, and visual materials related to early language and literacy development. The websites listed below are only a sampling.

**In general, you should expect to spend about the same amount of time preparing for this exam as you would devote to a three-credit, college level course in Early Language and Literacy Development. You should consider preparation to average between 144 and 180 hours.** Setting up a regular time during the week to read and study is an approach that works well for many. Others find that forming a study group that meets on a regular basis to discuss the material in a particular chapter or unit not only enhances their learning through discussion but keeps them on track!

### **Textbooks:**

The following textbooks contain information on the topics covered by the examination. Some books focus on a particular aspect of early language and literacy development, discussing in detail the behaviors indicative of that particular early language or literacy skill and appropriate strategies teachers can use to help young children foster this aspect of literacy. Others cover the entire range of early language and literacy development in young children, with one or more chapters devoted to each topic.

## **References:**

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- Davidson, Jane (1996). *Emergent literacy and dramatic play in early education*. Delmar Publishers.  
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- Fields, Marjorie V., Lois A. Groth & Katherine L. Spangler. (2004). *Let's Begin Reading Right: A Developmental Approach to Emergent Literacy - 5th Edition*. Pearson Prentice Hall, New Jersey.  
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- Vukelich, Carol & Christie, James (2004) *Building a Foundation for Preschool Literacy: Effective Instruction for Children's Reading and Writing Development*, International Reading Association, Newark, DE

## **Websites and Other Reference Sources**

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2003). Taking delight in words: Using oral language to build young children's vocabularies. Pp 1-12. [http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american\\_educator/spring2003/words.html](http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/spring2003/words.html)

CT Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks (Connecticut State Department of Education, 1999): Articulates what children should know and be able to do as a result of a high quality preschool experience. The

learning outcomes in this framework are recognized nationally as comprehensive and consistent with research in child development and early childhood education.

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Early/Preschool\\_framework.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Early/Preschool_framework.pdf)

Language Development Video: This is a marvelous video that demonstrates the introduction and reinforcement of new vocabulary through a theme study. It can be obtained by going to the following Web site:

[www.uth.tmc.edu/circle](http://www.uth.tmc.edu/circle)

Nurturing Oral Language in Infants and Young Children: Describes ways to help young children develop their oral language skills. [http://www.ldonline.org/ld\\_indepth/speech-language/lda\\_oral\\_lang.html](http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/speech-language/lda_oral_lang.html)

Reading and Books | Recommended Reading: 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know. This website lists the books that every teacher of young children should know and be familiar with themselves; they are books that inspire young children to become adult readers. <http://kids.nypl.org/reading/recommended2.cfm?ListID=61>. The New York Public Library On-Lion for Kids site also offers many other resources:

<http://kids.nypl.org/reading/index.cfm>

Selman, R. (2001). Talk time: Programming communicative interaction into the toddler day. *Young Children*. 56 (3): 15-18. Provides examples of teachers involving toddlers in conversation.

Using Language to Learn: Provides many activities to help preschool children develop language skills.

<http://www.ed.gov/Family/RSRforFamily/preschol.html>

Weitzman, E. (1992). *Learning language and loving it*. Toronto: The Hanen Centre. This web site is a source for the book and also for an accompanying video. <http://www.hanen.org>

Answers to sample questions:

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. a | 8. c  |
| 2. a | 9. b  |
| 3. d | 10. d |
| 4. c | 11. d |
| 5. b | 12. a |
| 6. a | 13. c |
| 7. d | 14. d |