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SECOND EDITION

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- ▶ **COMPLETE REVIEW OF ALL PPR DOMAINS**
- ▶ **DETAILED ANSWER EXPLANATIONS**
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- ▶ **DIAGNOSTIC TEST WITH PERSONALIZED STUDY PLAN**

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Ann Hall, Carolyn McCall, and Linda Burkhardt

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TEXES
The Texas Examination of Educator Standards
Second Edition

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Ann Hall, Carolyn McCall,
and Linda Burkhardt

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Section One

PREPARING FOR THE TEXES



CHAPTER ONE

Introducing the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES)

HOW TO PASS THE TEXES PEDAGOGY AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES EXAM

As you begin this book, we recognize that you want to pass this exam and expect this book to help you with that task. You will undoubtedly turn to the practice exams and think to yourself, “The heck with reading this entire book. I’ll just take these practice tests and then I’ll pass the real exam.” After talking to many students, we recognize that is the way most students think. However, we strongly encourage you to read each chapter and try to get an overview of the TExES exam. By doing that you will build a strong foundation for understanding why the TExES is important, its history, and its components.

State law passed by the Texas 78th legislature in 2003, H.B. 1002, states that failure *to acquire full certification voids the educator’s employment contract without any need for a termination or non-renewal hearing*. The test is required for certification and if you don’t pass the exam, the school district where you have a contract may legally void your teaching contract.

The fees for this exam are as follows: one test costs \$82, two tests cost \$164. In addition, as of October 1, 2003, all first-time applicants for an initial credential must be fingerprinted for a national criminal background check for \$45. If you are already certified from another state or country and are seeking Texas certification, there are additional fees.

A Brief History of Recent Texas Teacher Examinations

When did all of this begin? In 1981 the Texas Legislature approved legislation to test Texas teachers. The examination used was the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET). It included over 60 different tests for different certifications. Although several of these ExCET exams were discontinued in June 2003, others will be phased out between now and 2006. As the ExCETs are phased out, they are replaced by the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES). How did the TExES come to be?

In 1993, ten thousand Texas educators were surveyed to determine the important proficiencies for all educators to possess for the 21st century. Public school teachers and administrators, as well as university teacher-educators participated in the survey. Almost 95% of the proficiencies on the survey were rated by the participants as of "great importance" or "very great importance." In 1994 the Texas State Board of Education adopted these teacher proficiencies as the foundation for the preparation of all teachers.

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) was created in 1995 by the 74th Legislature to govern the standards of the education profession in Texas. SBEC approved and adopted proficiencies for teachers, administrators and counselors in 1997. These proficiencies, Learner-Centered Proficiencies for Teachers, are integrated into the educator preparation program approval process. (Source: *Learner-Centered Schools for Texas, A Vision of Texas Educators*, State Board of Educators Certification, Austin, TX, 1997.) Complete, approved standards are available at: <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us>.

Learner-Centered Proficiencies for Teachers

These proficiencies, which teachers should know and be able to do, are the foundation for Texas teachers. From them, the state has created the standards for new educators, and the TExES (Texas Examination of Educator Standards) tests new teachers on these standards.

- 1. Learner-Centered Knowledge: The teacher possesses and draws on a rich knowledge of content, pedagogy, and technology to provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences for all students.**

The state of Texas is saying that in order to be certified in Texas, teachers must focus on the learner, not on the content. Teachers should be well-versed in the subject matter, how to teach (pedagogy), and technology in order to deliver meaningful instruction to each learner at the appropriate instructional level.

- 2. Learner-Centered Instruction: To create a learner-centered community, the teacher collaboratively identifies needs and plans, implements and assesses instruction using technology and other resources.**

Teachers in Texas are expected to collaborate with other professionals and use technology and other resources to create an environment that is focused on each learner. Assessment is necessary in order to plan appropriate instruction for each learner. Once the appropriate level of instruction is determined, teachers in Texas must know how to deliver meaningful instruction in ways other than “stand and deliver.” The state wants classrooms to use methods of learning, such as cooperative and inquiry learning, as well as direct instruction, to actively involved students in constructing new knowledge.

- 3. Equity in Excellence for All Learners: The teacher responds appropriately to diverse groups of learners.**

As the demographics of Texas change, so do the demographics of the school. Teachers must learn about all students and strive to provide a quality education to all, regardless of the differences. These differences include, but are not limited to, language, ethnicity, learning ability, and gender.

- 4. Learner-Centered Communication: While acting as an advocate for all students and the school, the teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.**

The teacher communicates well when speaking and writing. The teacher is aware of verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. Teachers are expected to communicate clearly when teaching students, working with the school districts, and interacting with families of students.

- 5. Learner-Centered Professional Development: The teacher, as a reflective practitioner dedicated to all students' success, demonstrates a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity.**

Texas teachers are expected to continue to learn after graduation from college. In addition to professional development provided by the school district, teachers should reflect on their teaching and strive to find ways to become a better teacher and improve the teaching profession in general. At all times, teachers are bound by the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators* [see Appendix B] which includes professional ethical conduct, practices and performance, ethical conduct toward professional colleagues, and ethical conduct toward students.

What is the TExES (Texas Examination of Educator Standards)?

The Texas Education Code 21.048 requires successful performance on educator certification examinations in order to become a certified teacher in Texas. Since 1997, SBEC has developed specific standards that specify what educators should know and be able to do. These standards are based on the state-required curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), for kindergarten through grade 12. The TEKS for all grade levels are available at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/>. If you are not familiar with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), we suggest that you go the website above and learn about the state curriculum.

The content of the TExES Examinations is based on the TEKS. This state-required curriculum and the related standards for new educators provide vertical alignment for kindergarten through college. This alignment of kindergarten through grade 16 is an effort to provide newly certified teachers with the essential knowledge and skills to teach the appropriate TEKS for their assigned classrooms. See the appendix for a listing of all the TExES exams that are currently offered in Texas and the dates for future tests that are being developed.

All the TExES Exams are organized the same way. The framework of each exam is organized around the broad areas of content covered called domains. Each domain contains competencies that define the domain in more detail. Each competency is composed of two parts. First, the competency statement broadly explains what an entry-level educator should know and be able to do. Following the competency statement are the descriptive statements explaining in greater detail the knowledge and skills that may be tested. Specific domains, competencies, and descriptive statements will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

This particular study guide is limited to the TExES exam that measures educators' entry-level knowledge and skills about how to teach—the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam. Other TExES exams cover specific subject matter content.

Kaplan Tip: This test does not test your knowledge of content or subject matter. It covers only pedagogy, classroom management, the role of assessment, diversity, working with families, and professional development. For this reason, by taking any of the four practice tests you will be practicing pedagogical concepts that are the same at all teaching levels.

Who takes the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR)?

Everyone seeking an initial certificate in Texas must pass a pedagogy test (PPR) and content-area requirements. There are four different pedagogy tests in the new TExES. The grade level of pedagogy must correspond to the grade level of the initial content-area certificate sought. The content-area test, not the pedagogy test, determines the certificate and its levels. See the table below.

Initial Certificate Being Sought	Acceptable TExES Pedagogy Tests (PPR)
Early Childhood–Grade 4 (EC-4)	PPR EC-4 or PPR EC-12
Grade 4–Grade 8 (4-8)	PPR 4-8 or PPR EC-12
Grade 8–Grade 12 (8-12)	PPR 8-12 or PPR EC-12
Early Childhood–Grade 12 (EC-12)	PPR EC-12

What is a passing score and what happens if I fail?

For all TExES tests, the scaled score range is 100–300. The minimum passing scaled score is 240. Students not passing a test may retake the test at any subsequent test administration date.

When are the tests given?

The TExES is typically given multiple times each year. The TExES tests are given each month in the calendar year. The registration brochure will provide you with specific dates, registration deadlines, and test locations. Additionally, the EC-4 PPR and the Generalist EC-4 may be taken on computers at specially equipped computer test centers across the state. These computer administered tests are appropriately named TExES Computer-Administered Tests (TExES CAT). The TExES CAT costs \$82 for each test.

Where can I find information about registering for the TExES?

Current registration information is available at <http://www.texas.nesinc.com> or by calling 1-800-523-7088.

Why is it important to study for the TExES?

Teacher assessments must ensure that teachers can demonstrate higher-order thinking; that the purposes of instruction relate to real-world outcomes; and that the interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum, rather than isolated skills and knowledge, is the focus of instruction. Teachers must be prepared to use new technologies so that students will be prepared to enter a high-tech world as they leave the school system. Today's teachers must demonstrate flexibility and creativity in solving the problems they face in their classrooms. The teaching role has expanded to communicating within the larger school organization and local community. To this end, the TExES tests measure an individual's preparedness to deal with changing roles and expectations that teachers face in Texas public schools.

As previously discussed, the TExES tests are based on broad domains and specific competencies that are tied to the TEKS and current standards. The state is interested in determining if entry-level teachers know how to teach and know subject matter content. For this reason, it is important to realize that the test is biased. The state is saying, "If you remove all obstacles and excuses, will this teacher know best practice?" This means that you must not let prior experiences or current opinions interfere with knowing what is "best practice." Your teacher training may have covered all the domains and competencies; however, our experience from previous test-takers indicates that reviewing the domains and important concepts improve test scores. For example, many of the test questions have two answers that seem correct. Those students who study for the test are better informed of what competencies the state values and which "buzz word" will assist you in finding the correct response. Chapter 2 will provide you with specific strategies for choosing that correct response.

How will I find out how I did on the TExES?

You will receive your official test results by mail approximately four weeks after taking the exam. Unofficial scores are reported on the Internet by 5:00 PM Central Standard Time on the day official scores are mailed.

About the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Tests

There are four PPR tests offered in the TExES. They are EC-4 (Early Childhood through 4th grade), EC 4-8 (4th grade through 8th grade), EC 8-12 (8th grade through 12th grade), and EC-12 (Early Childhood through 12th grade). Each test covers the same domains and competencies. Each test is composed of 80 multiple-choice questions and about 10 questions that are on the test for field-testing to use on future exams. Our practice tests in this book contain 80 multiple-choice questions that reflect the balance of the domains as they would appear on the real test.

Each test is a criterion-referenced test, which means that the test measures your performance against specific criteria rather than comparing your score to others taking the test. For example, your score report will indicate your performance in each domain as well as your proficiency in answering each question based on the competencies. It should be noted that Domain I and Domain III each comprise 31% of the exam for all four tests. Domain IV is 23% of the test and Domain II is 15%. These percentages will not change from test to test, but the weight of each competency within the domains will. For example, the 4-8 test may have 9 questions about a particular competency while the 8-12 test may have only 5 questions about the same competency.

How the PPR is scored

There is not a penalty for guessing on the TExES exams. You should answer every question.

How Do I Register?

Be sure to refer to the appropriate text or web site to find current information about the TExES dates, times and deadlines. Here is a list of web sites that you will find helpful:

State Board of Educator Certification

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/>

Registration Bulletin for the TExES

<http://www.texas.nesinc.com>

Educator Standards

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/standtest/educstan.asp>

Test Frameworks

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/standtest/testfram.asp>

Test Dates

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us>

Study Guides and Preparation Manuals

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/standtest/guidprepman.asp>

Test Scores and Reports

<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/standtest/scorept.asp>



CHAPTER TWO

TE_xES Test-Taking Strategies

This chapter provides information that will allow you to apply a strategy to every question you encounter on the TE_xES. The suggestions, strategies, and test-taking tips offered in this chapter are the result of our experience over the past five years of providing reviews to students taking the exam that focuses on teaching and professionalism. Feedback from former students who had been unsuccessful on the test has taught us how best to prepare students to take the exam. Many of these students returned to us after having taken the test numerous times and told us how the strategies had or had not helped them. From this feedback, we have developed these new strategies. We encourage you to study the examples provided, utilize the strategies as you work on practice items, and apply them consistently so they will become second nature to you. We believe the use of these strategies will make the difference for YOU!

The State of Texas is known for cowboys, rodeos, hot peppers, and roping events. To keep this study guide within that genre, you will see analogies to these and other Texas symbols. As we describe the strategies to you, we will use terms such as “cowboy whispers” to remind you to use self-talk, or whispers, as you analyze each question. We will ask you to watch out for lariat words. These are words that may clue you to a correct answer. Because a lariat is used to capture something, we want you to capture the concepts with the lariat words we identify for you. You will also be reminded to be alert to the “red pepper words.” These are words that should be a clue to you that you may want to avoid the selection of a particular answer that contains one of these words. But check out the “green pepper words” and consider these closely as possible clues for narrowing your answer choices.

So let’s “giddy-up” and head to the corral to prepare for the test.

As we round the bend to get to the corral, we see a line of stars containing important information about the TExES. . . we'll call these the **13 Stars of TExES**. They are:

1. Human development
2. Diversity
3. Designing effective instruction and assessment
4. Learning theory; factors impacting learning; planning instruction and assessment
5. Classroom climate and environment
6. Classroom organization and management
7. Communication
8. Student engagement
9. Technology
10. Assessment and feedback
11. Family involvement and communication with families
12. Professional growth and interactions
13. Legal and ethical requirements of education in Texas

These 13 stars are quick ways to familiarize yourself with the 13 TExES competencies and are described in detail in Chapters 4–7.

As you approach each question, help yourself understand what you are being asked by using “cowboy whispers” or “private speech.” We tend to think that as adults we should read only silently, but we would like to share with you a tool that will be very useful when you are taking the TExES examination. We call it “private speech.” We have been taught since our youth that moving our lips or reading aloud is inappropriate. We would like to change that perception by telling you that in moving your lips while you read, you are discovering a way to absorb concepts. To answer the TExES questions correctly, it is important that you internalize the information conveyed in the scenarios and questions. As you move your lips, you are engaging your brain at a different level and are acquiring a new study skill.

As you analyze each question, you will begin to see words and phrases that are related to the competencies in that they reflect important ideas and concepts that the State of Texas wants you to utilize in teaching. We call these your “**Lariat Words and Phrases.**” Get your lariat around these ideas and make them meaningful by thinking of how they fit within the context of your teaching and your students’ learning. These **Lariat Words and Phrases** are listed as follows:

Lariat Words and Phrases	Competency Source
Lifelong learning	001
Positive environment	001
Developmentally appropriate	001
Self-esteem	001
Diversity	002
Appropriate accommodations	002
Integrated learning	003
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)	003
Age appropriate	003
Student reflection and self-assessment	003
Active learning	004
Instructional planning	004
Approaches to learning (auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic)	004
Cooperative learning	004
Prior knowledge	004
Teacher as facilitator	004
Student as active learner	004
Modeling	004 & 006
Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS)	004 & 007
High academic expectations	005
Equity in learning	005
Productive classroom environment	005
Collaboration	005
Teacher enthusiasm	005
Safe, nurturing environment	005
Classroom arrangement	005
Active student engagement	005
Organizational skills	006
Routines and procedures	006
Managing student behavior	006
Inquiry	007
Critical thinking	007
Discovery and exploration	007
Problem-solving	007
Open-ended questioning	007

Appropriate and effective communication	007
Skilled questioning	007
Motivational strategies	008
Appropriate use of technology	009
Ongoing assessment and feedback	010
Involvement with families	011
Professional development	012
Professional relationships	012
Teacher reflection and self-assessment	012
State code of ethics	013

As you go through the test (and throughout your studying), you may notice some words that often indicate a wrong answer. Although this may not ALWAYS be the case, watch out for these “**red pepper words.**” Don’t let them burn you!

List

Handout

All students

Predetermined

Precisely

Concrete (this could be ok, but may not be)

Worksheets

Lecture

Confront

The list of words on the previous page is intended to give you some “warnings” along the way that these may not be your best choices; however, you will often find some words that will assist you in focusing on the correct answer! We call these words “**green pepper words.**” Like the previous list, these “green pepper words” may not ALWAYS indicate a correct response, but we believe that they will OFTEN serve as an indicator to point you to the correct choice. Some of these words and phrases include:

- Most likely**
- Most appropriate**
- Except**
- Best illustrates**
- Best describes**
- First step**
- Primary purpose**
- Not**
- Higher-order thinking**
- Model**
- Foster**
- Compare-contrast**

Now you have some ideas to help you as you get ready to take the actual test. Before moving on with a “tried and true” strategy, let’s sum up the things you need to do as you approach the test.

1. Use your “cowboy whispers” as you quietly move your lips while reading each scenario and question.
2. Familiarize yourself with the lariat words and phrases as a method for keeping the main idea of each competency in mind.
3. Remember to think about the red and green pepper words to help you know what may or may not be an appropriate choice.

With all this in mind, we now give you a strategy to apply as you approach each test item. We call it the **TEXAS procedure** and here is how it works. Read each question and think through it using this format:

T – Take control. In this step, you should formulate a picture in your mind of exactly what is happening in the information presented. Is there a teacher? Who is it? What is the teacher doing? What is happening in the classroom? Who are the students? You may want to actually DRAW what is happening!

REMEMBER: Taking control does NOT mean that you are the sheriff wearing the star! Instead, you are the teacher creating the stars. Best practice for teachers in Texas includes **guiding** students, not directing them; **enabling** students, not forcing them to do things “your” way; **facilitating** their learning, not forcing it.

As you quietly move your lips while reading the information provided in the test, visualize what you have just read. Then ask yourself the following questions:

- What grade level is it?
- What is the subject matter being presented?
- What is the teacher doing?
- What are the children doing?
- Is there someone else in the classroom? If so, who is it? Is it someone from the school? Is it someone from the community? In what way might that person affect the dynamics of the classroom situation?
- Is it a diverse classroom?
- Are the students behaving (according to the test information presented)?
- What time of day is it or do you know?

Good. . . now you have immersed yourself in the classroom and you are ready to move on to the next step:

E – Examine the question. Put the question in your own words. Be sure you know what is being asked. Is it asking about the teacher? Is it asking about classroom management? Is it asking about the students?

X – X-ray the choices. Which choice really answers the question? Do any of the lariat words help you narrow down your choices? Delete those responses that you know are wrong. If the question asks about the teacher, make sure the answer relates to the teacher.

You may think you have found the answer immediately, and you may have, but rather than make your choice at this point, choose instead to delete choices that you know are not the correct ones. Most of the time, you will be able to narrow your choices down to two.

A – Assimilate knowledge. Ask yourself, “Am I selecting this answer choice based on knowledge gained from classes I have taken, from the lariat words and phrases, and from the competencies?” Then remind yourself, “I should NOT visualize the classroom where I teach or observe.”

REMEMBER: In the case of the TEExES, experience is not always the best teacher.

S – Scrutinize your decision. Look closely at your answer choice. Does it really answer the question? Is it consistent with what you know from the lariat words and phrases and from the competencies? When it is, grab your branding iron and mark it!

Kaplan Tip: Even though you will take only one PPR test that matches your chosen certification level, studying questions from all test levels will help establish what the State of Texas considers “best practice.”

Before practicing the TEXAS strategy, here are a few reminders about the test itself.

- Each PPR test will include 80 scorable multiple-choice items and approximately 10 nonscorable items. These 10 items are typically items that the state test writers are “field testing.” You will not know which items these are as you take the test; however, if you find questions that seem to cover an area that is very different from the competencies you have studied, these may be the “field test” items. In the practice tests included in this study guide, you will find only 80 items which are all focused on the TEExES competencies.
- Three types of multiple-choice questions will be included on each PPR test:
 - **Single Item.** In these questions, there will be a short question stem with four possible choices. You should apply the TEXAS strategy to select the best choice.
 - **Clustered Items.** In these questions, you will find the question preceded by stimulus material that relates to the question. This stimulus material may include examples of teacher notes, student work, or descriptions of classroom situations. In these cases, you will typically be given information followed by an event to analyze, a problem to solve, or a decision to make.
 - **Teacher Decision Sets.** In these questions, you will start with a stimulus regarding situations such as a classroom occurrence, a field trip, or a parent-teacher conference. There will be one or more questions related to that stimulus, then additional stimuli will be added that lead to additional questions. A typical Teacher Decision Set includes two or more stimuli and 3–12 questions that may represent competencies from all four domains of the test.

PRACTICE OF THE TEXAS PROCEDURE

Now that you have familiarized yourself with the TEXAS procedure, you will find practice exercises for grade levels EC-4, 4-8, and 8-12 that reflect the types of questions you will encounter on the actual TExES PPR tests. Notice the single-item, clustered items, and decision set types of questions as you work through these exercises.

EC-4 Questions

Single Item

1. It was the third day of school and five-year-old Kolby sat in the corner crying. When his teacher asked him what was wrong, he said, “I don’t understand you.” As she questioned him about what he meant, she realized he was talking about the directions she had just given the class about changing to a different activity. What is the primary consideration a kindergarten teacher should keep in mind when presenting information to the students?
 - A. As the children sit in the circle first thing in the morning, review the day’s activities so the teacher does not have to interrupt the students when they are changing from one activity to another.
 - B. Focus on one thing at a time and keep instructions and expectations clear and simple when talking about directions, procedures, and routines.
 - C. Provide a nurturing environment by asking the students to learn the routine and then tell each other the assignments for the day because children love to learn from their peers.
 - D. Using a flannel board or similar device, have pictures of what the students are to do and then remind them of the procedures and routines.

T–Take control:

Remember to say to yourself, “What is this question asking me, and what should I be thinking?” Let’s mentally picture what is happening. We have a five-year-old boy sitting in the corner crying. The teacher recognizes Kolby is having a problem and discovers that he didn’t understand her. She is able to get him to verbalize his concerns. We do know the teacher has just given instructions or directions so it might have something to do with that.

E—Examine the question:

Remember to put the question in your own words. So in your own words, the question, “What is the *primary* consideration a kindergarten teacher should keep in mind when presenting information to the students?” is asking about a kindergarten teacher and the primary thing the teacher has to keep in mind when explaining, instructing, or guiding students at this age level. Does that mean the question is going to be about the teacher or about the students? In this case, the teacher is presenting information to the students, so you need to know something about this age level.

X—X-ray the choices:

Remember to look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *As the children sit in the circle first thing in the morning, review the day’s activities so the teacher does not have to interrupt the students when they are changing from one activity to another.* Well, this sounds good, but if you remember correctly from the study of human growth and development, do you think students at this age could remember all the details if everything were mentioned at one time? In fact, as adults we can’t remember everything so why would we expect a kindergarten student to be able to? We’ll go on to the next choice.
- B. *Focus on one thing at a time and keep instructions and expectations clear and simple when talking about directions, procedures, and routines.* This sounds pretty good because children at this age level do have to focus on one thing and the teacher would want to make the instructions clear and precise.
- C. *Provide a nurturing environment by asking the students to learn the routine and then tell each other the assignments for the day because children love to learn from their peers.* Wait a minute! Here we are now reading about a nurturing environment so we’d better not be too hasty in thinking that B is the choice. Whoops, now the choice is talking about having students tell each other something about the assignment and we thought the question was asking about the teacher. We’d better move on.
- D. *Using a flannel board or similar device, have pictures of what the students are to do and then remind them of the procedures and routines.* The flannel board idea sounds great, but what if children are easily distracted and need verbal reinforcement?

A—Assimilate knowledge:

We know we are to use the Lariat Words when we assimilate knowledge, so *developmentally appropriate* comes to mind along with *positive environment*.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Let's see how we did: In this particular case, Kolby is upset and his teacher questions him to find out what the problem might be. She is able to determine that he didn't understand her. Children at this age need clear, precise instructions that focus on one thing at a time. If the teacher were to do as (A) suggests, some of the more advanced students might be able to remember the day's requirements, but the majority of children would get lost trying to focus on so many things at one time. Once the instructions have been given in a clear manner, it is perfectly appropriate for the teacher to ask a student what she just said to clarify if her instructions were clear, but not to rely on the students to teach their peers about routine as (C) suggests. Using a flannel board, as in (D), is also a permissible idea once the routines are established, but it should not be used until these procedures are well in mind and even then, the daily activities will need explicit instructions. Answer (B) looks the best because it does answer the question and it is consistent with what we have been taught.

The answer to the question is (B) and addresses information from PPR Competency 001. The teacher understands human development processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their developmental characteristics and needs.

Good job!

You are now ready for the next group of questions. Just in case you need help, look back at the strategies provided, the lariat words, and the competencies. Note that "Clustered Items" appear before the questions, which means that all of the questions will be pertaining to the same scenario and you must be aware that there will be additional information you may need to use to answer them.

Clustered Items

1. Mr. Hammes learns that a student who is hearing-impaired, Megan, will be joining his fourth-grade English class. After attending an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting he realizes there are many modifications he should make. All of the following *except* one are practices he should incorporate either before instruction or during the delivery of the lesson.
 - A. Provide small-group interaction to help Megan’s involvement with students who have no difficulty hearing.
 - B. Arrange to have Megan always seated in the front of the room.
 - C. Present lessons using a variety of instructional formats to make sure Megan has every opportunity to learn.
 - D. Speak distinctly and clearly using a normal voice.

T–Take control:

You must remember to say to yourself, “What is this question asking me, and what should I be thinking?” You are supposed to get a picture in your mind as to what is happening. You have a fourth-grade classroom and a new student who is hearing-impaired. You know there has been an IEP meeting and modifications have been made. You also realize that you have a situation here that is talking about “exceptionality” so it must have something to do with diversity (Competency 002).

E–Examine the question:

You next need to put the question in your own words. The question, “All of the following *except* one are practices he should incorporate either before instruction or during the delivery of the lesson,” is asking you to look for the one thing the teacher would not consider as best practice when teaching or giving instructions.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong or in this case that are right. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Provide small-group interaction to help Megan’s involvement with students who have no difficulty hearing.* You know that cooperative learning is an excellent choice when working with students in diverse situations, so keep this choice for now.
- B. *Arrange to have Megan always seated in the front of the room.* You know a student who is hearing-impaired should be close to everything that is going on. What if teaching occurs in the back of the room, or the side of the room? This choice may have to wait until you look at the rest; besides, you saw the red-pepper word, “always.”

- C. *Present lessons using a variety of instructional formats to make sure Megan has every opportunity to learn.* This one looks good too, because teachers should provide as many formats as possible to help a diverse student group. For now, keep this choice.
- D. *Speak distinctly and clearly using a normal voice.* Keep this choice as well because all teachers are encouraged to speak distinctly and in a normal voice when addressing their students in a classroom. In addition, by using the term “normal voice,” it means that teachers should not elevate their voices.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The Lariat Words to note here are cooperative learning and a variety of formats. The question on diversity talks about accepting students with diverse needs and planning learning experiences, and the Lariat Words also mention appropriate accommodations.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) was definitely plausible because of the cooperative learning, and (C) talked about variety so this is one you want to keep. Choice (D) also makes perfect sense for a person who is hearing-impaired. The answer to the question is (B) and addresses information from PPR Competency 002. The teacher understands student diversity and knows how to plan learning experiences and design assessments that are responsive to differences among students and that promote all students’ learning.

2. Megan’s parents made an appointment with Mr. Hammes to voice their concerns about recent incidents that occurred at school. It seems as though several students in the room were making fun of Megan by pretending to use sign language. How should Mr. Hammes respond to the concerns of Megan’s parents?
 - A. Mr. Hammes can invite Megan’s parents to observe the class so they can see that the students are a nice group of boys and girls and meant no harm to Megan.
 - B. Mr. Hammes should have the students send a letter of apology to the parents telling them they were only trying to get Megan to feel like a member of the class.
 - C. Mr. Hammes should talk to Megan and her parents and see if she would agree to share some basic sign language gestures with the class.
 - D. Mr. Hammes can send a letter home to all the other parents explaining there is a new student who is hearing-impaired in the class in hopes the parents will instruct their own children on how to accept children who are different.

T—Take control:

Say to yourself, “What is this question asking me, and what should I be thinking?” Students in Mr. Hammes’s class are making fun of Megan by pretending to use sign language and Megan’s parents are obviously upset over the incidents.

E—Examine the question:

Next put the question in your own words. The question, “How should Mr. Hammes respond to the concerns of Megan’s parents?” is asking what Mr. Hammes, as a teacher, should do to let the parents know he understands the seriousness of the situation.

X—X-ray the choices:

Remember to look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Mr. Hammes can invite Megan’s parents to observe the class so they can see that the students are a nice group of boys and girls and meant no harm to Megan.* It certainly is permissible to invite Megan’s parents to class, but he can’t think that just having the parents in the class will rectify the situation.
- B. *Mr. Hammes should have the students send a letter of apology to the parents telling them they were only trying to get Megan to feel like a member of the class.* At this point, don’t completely rule out this answer choice, although it doesn’t seem like something a teacher would do.
- C. *Mr. Hammes should talk to Megan and her parents and see if she would agree to share some basic sign language gestures with the class.* This is a good solution, because instead of making fun of Megan, the students would learn to communicate with her and she would feel more involved in the school community.
- D. *Mr. Hammes can send a letter home to all the other parents explaining there is a new student who is hearing-impaired in the class in hopes the parents will instruct their own children on how to accept children who are different.* This choice isn’t as good as the others because sending a letter home doesn’t solve the problem for several reasons. The teacher does not have a guarantee that the letter will make it home, it may never be addressed, it singles out a particular student, and it leaves the instructing and problem solving with the other children’s parents.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The Lariat Words to note here are involvement with families. In addition, teachers should make an effort to educate the students who do not have a hearing problem, and understand and assist the student who is hearing-impaired.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) doesn't seem appropriate because Megan would feel very uncomfortable having her parents visit the class. It would be as if they were waiting to "catch" the other students in the act of humiliating her. (B) is also putting Megan on the spot. Choice (D) is incorrect because the question asks how the teacher will respond to Megan's parents. If her parents are willing to come to the class and teach basic sign language, then the teacher needs to notify the parents of this occurrence, but just sending a letter to parents and hoping the parents will talk to their children is not the best choice.

Mr. Hammes can visit with Megan and her parents and explain how he would like Megan to get more involved in the class and in small group activities. If students in the class were taught some familiar American Sign Language (ASL) signs or were able to fingerspell letters, then the hearing-impaired student would be able to convert the disability into a positive experience. In using basic sign language, the students in the class would be better able to communicate with Megan and help create a more positive classroom environment. This, in turn, would help alleviate the parents' concerns.

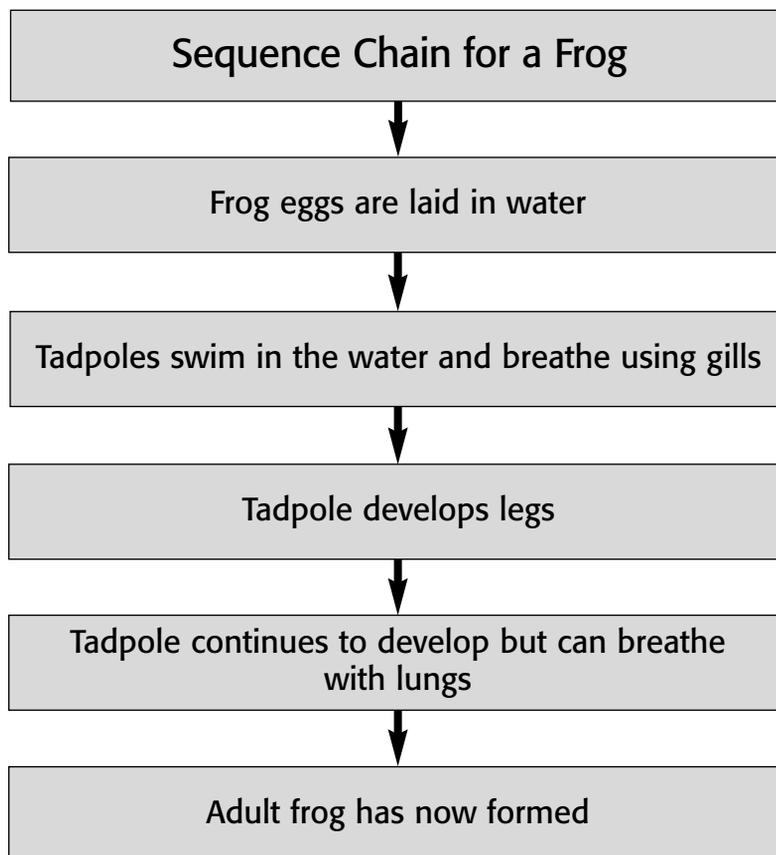
The answer to the question is (C) and addresses information from PPR Competency 011. The teacher understands the importance of family involvement in children's education and knows how to interact and communicate effectively with families.

Note that the next group of questions is a decision set. That means the questions will all pertain to the same information.

Decision Set

Mr. Beck and the first-grade-level team began organizing an interdisciplinary unit focusing on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) science concepts in which students are expected to observe and record changes in the life cycle of an organism. The team selected frogs as a means of meeting this goal and prepared to discuss the unit and the process of metamorphosis. The teachers wrote age-appropriate goals and objectives. They also made decisions on the unit time frame and student-center activities such as appropriate books, projects, Internet sites, and unit extensions.

Mr. Beck delighted in teaching the class, and the students could sense his enthusiasm. He began the unit relating the concept of change to prior lessons in which the students learned about changes that occurred in weather. He then presented a video on the metamorphosis of a tadpole as well as the following chart.



1. Mr. Beck's primary reason for using a video and the chart is that:
 - A. He wanted to make sure those students who have never seen frogs will now have been exposed to the chance to see what one looks like.
 - B. He wanted to meet the district's objectives of using charts and visuals.
 - C. He wanted to effectively communicate the concepts of change and provide varied formats in which to do so.
 - D. He wanted to show his use of technology in the everyday planning of units and lessons.

T—Take control:

We have a first-grade-level team organizing an interdisciplinary activity in which students are expected to observe and record changes in the life cycle of an organism during the process of metamorphosis. The teachers made decisions and explored activities. Mr. Beck began the unit by relating the concept of change to changes that occur in weather and presented a video and chart on the metamorphosis of a tadpole.

E—Examine the question:

Put the question in your own words. The question, "Mr. Beck's *primary* reason for using a video and the chart is..." is asking what the main reason Mr. Beck used the video and chart is.

X—X-ray the choices:

Remember to look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *He wanted to make sure those students who have never seen frogs will now have been exposed to the chance to see what one looks like.* This choice is acceptable but it isn't the primary reason Mr. Beck uses a video and a chart as the question mentions. It will reinforce a visual image of frogs, but he really wants to include a variety of formats when he teaches.
- B. *He wanted to meet the district's objectives of using charts and visuals.* Well, the state wants technology incorporated into the program, and visuals are excellent for all students, but would this be the primary reason?
- C. *He wanted to effectively communicate the concepts of change and provide varied formats in which to do so.* This choice sounds much more plausible because both the video and the chart show the concept of metamorphosis, and Mr. Beck used various formats.
- D. *He wanted to show his use of technology in the everyday planning of units and lessons.* If Mr. Beck really wanted to demonstrate the use of technology, he'd probably use the internet or CD-ROM, rather than a video.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The Lariat Words to note here are variety of contexts and effective communication. In addition, because children respond to learning in different ways, remember to present information in a variety of formats.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) will help reinforce what frogs and tadpoles look like and the process of metamorphosis, but it isn't a strong enough reason. Choices (B) and (D) talked about satisfying school and district goals, and even though those are important reasons for goal setting, this probably wasn't his primary reason. Choice (C) addresses effective communication and differentiating instruction in a regular classroom as well as providing a wide variety of learning strategies. Because Mr. Beck wanted to communicate the concepts of change effectively and provide varied formats, he found the video that would address the visual as well as the auditory learner, and the chart would help students who needed organization for the new information they were receiving.

The answer to the question is (C) and addresses information from PPR Competency 007. The teacher understands and applies principles and strategies for communicating effectively in varied teaching and learning contexts.

2. Using a long strip of paper for an art activity, Mr. Beck next divided the students into teams of two for a mural project. Each team was given colored markers and assigned an area on which to work. He allowed the students to move around in the classroom and to look at books and magazines as they researched ideas. In addition, he accepted a productive level of noise and activity as they designed their portion of the mural. By allowing students a certain freedom of movement while they worked, Mr. Beck understood that:
 - A. children need a time to bond, and working on a mural and in teams provides a perfect opportunity to meet this important objective.
 - B. parents will accept the fact that the students used markers if they find less evidence on the students' clothing.
 - C. a mural of this size and caliber would never fit on the students' desks even if they moved several together.
 - D. first-grade students' need for physical activity ultimately affects how Mr. Beck instructs and how the students learn.

T—Take control:

Students are working on a mural and have been divided into teams of two, and there is movement and activity as the students create.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “By allowing students a certain freedom of movement while they work, Mr. Beck understood that...” is asking you to put yourself in Mr. Beck’s place and to discern why he is giving students the latitude of being so mobile in the room.

X—X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Children need a time to bond, and working on a mural and in teams provides a perfect opportunity to meet this important objective.* Well, this choice makes a point of building community among students, but is this why Mr. Beck has chosen this activity and format for students to express themselves?
- B. *Parents will accept the fact that the students used markers if they find less evidence on the students’ clothing.* Now this makes sense, but doesn’t have much to do with the question.
- C. *A mural of this size and caliber would never fit on the students’ desks even if he moved several together.* This one makes some sense as well, but doesn’t have much to do with the question.
- D. *First-grade students’ need for physical activity ultimately affects how Mr. Beck instructs and how the students learn.* Mr. Beck is taking the characteristics of the students into account.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

Lariat Words to focus on here are active learning, appropriate learning, and cooperative learning. In addition, children in early childhood, kindergarten, and first grade have short attention spans and require activities that address their needs for physical activity.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) talks about bonding but is this why Mr. Beck has allowed the movement during a learning activity? Choice (B) sounds like a parent would think this is agreeable but again, it doesn’t address teaming and working together. Choice (C) doesn’t address the research the students are conducting or the productive noise level. Choice (D), however, does address learning processes and factors that affect learning. Children have been given an opportunity to quietly, yet productively, look for information and transfer that information to a mural. They are active learners in the classroom working in a cooperative learning format, and research tell us that cognitive development is connected to physical development because movement provides a way for children to learn about themselves and what is going on in the classroom.

The answer to the question is (D) and addresses information from PPR Competency 004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

3. At the beginning of the year, Mr. Beck contacted the biology department at the local university for assistance in developing an observational outdoor center that, when finished, would include a large pond. University students designed the center so that plants and fish could live in the pond, which would allow children to study an ecosystem. Mr. Beck worked with the local fish hatchery as well as the university biology department to obtain appropriate pond plants. The university students made sure the plants were well established before frogs arrived to lay spawn. Mr. Beck's *main* reason in contacting the local university and community resources was to:
- A. take the initiative in the development of the outdoor learning project as he wanted to receive an excellent evaluation and knew it would require going above and beyond the usual lesson format.
 - B. be an advocate for his students and school by interacting with the university and community.
 - C. show he understands diversity in the community and effectively wants to show knowledge and support.
 - D. interact appropriately with support systems to address students' needs to enhance involvement in student learning.

Take control:

Picture what is happening. Mr. Beck contacted the local university and fish hatchery for assistance in developing an outdoor center.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “Mr. Beck's *main* reason in contacting the local university and community resources was to...” is asking you the reason that Mr. Beck contacted the local community resources.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Take the initiative in the development of the outdoor learning project as he wanted to receive an excellent evaluation and knew it would require going above and beyond the usual lesson format.* This might give him a few extra points on his evaluation, and it shows initiative on his part, but would this be his main reason?
- B. *Be an advocate for his students and school by interacting with the university and community.* By making contacts with the community, Mr. Beck would certainly be building a relationship for future transactions.
- C. *Show he understands diversity in the community and effectively wants to show knowledge and support.* Although there is most likely a representative diverse culture in the classroom, does this choice show diversity?
- D. *Interact appropriately with support systems to address students' needs to enhance involvement in student learning.* Now this choice sounds more like it.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

Support systems are Lariat Words. In addition, in utilizing the support of local resources, Mr. Beck was building a sense of trust. It is important to develop a partnership that reaches out beyond the public schools and in turn produces the shared responsibility of educating our children as a common goal.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) talks about the teacher's evaluation and the question is discussing community building. Choice (B) suggests Mr. Beck is advocating for the students. He is building a relationship. Choice (C) talks about support and knowledge, but is he really understanding diversity in the community because he contacts the local resources? Choice (D) has Mr. Beck interacting with support systems, involving the community, and enhancing student learning. This choice says it all, because the schools cannot act entirely alone in educating the children. Everyone must share in the responsibility and take pride in the accomplishments of the students.

The answer to the question is (D) and addresses information from PPR Competency 012. The teacher enhances professional knowledge and skills by effectively interacting with other members of the educational community and participating in various types of professional activities.

4. During the unit, Mr. Beck arranged to have the students in his class visit the pond at different intervals so they could witness first hand the stages of frog development. In math class, students predicted how long it would take for the tadpoles to develop into adult frogs and charted their growth. Mr. Beck combined music and dance to further extend the unit on frogs and let students move to a song he developed. Students discussed different types of frogs and where many of the frogs were found in the United States. He provided a tape recording of frogs and asked the students to identify different frogs based on their “croak.” In addition to the above activities, which of the following would show Mr. Beck realizes the importance of providing students with effective and appropriate opportunities to explore content?
- A. Mr. Beck shows the class a video of a frog being dissected and discusses the important contributions frogs have made to the field of science.
 - B. Mr. Beck guides the writing of a class book titled, “The Little Frog That Couldn’t Hop.”
 - C. Mr. Beck asks the students to draft a letter to the National Wildlife Federation asking the organization for additional information on ecosystems.
 - D. Mr. Beck provides the students with an activity that requires coloring a picture of a tadpole and a frog in their natural environment.

T–Take control:

Note that during the course of the unit, Mr. Beck has arranged for a variety of activities to actively engage the students in learning.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “In addition to the above activities, which of the following would show Mr. Beck realizes the importance of providing students with effective and appropriate opportunities to explore content?” is asking you to select one of the choices that will indicate Mr. Beck realizes the importance of having his students use inquiry learning to increase their knowledge about frogs and metamorphosis.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Mr. Beck shows the class a video of a frog being dissected and discusses the important contributions frogs have made to the field of science.* The question specifically mentions an activity that is age appropriate, and watching a frog dissection probably wouldn't be considered suitable for this age group.
- B. *Mr. Beck guides the writing of a class book titled, "The Little Frog That Couldn't Hop."* This choice seems more congruent with what first-grade students would be able to accomplish.
- C. *Mr. Beck asks the students to draft a letter to the National Wildlife Federation asking the organization for additional information on ecosystems.* The teacher could draft the letter with the students' help, but the choice doesn't indicate this to be the case—the students are to write it themselves.
- D. *Mr. Beck provides the students with an activity that requires coloring a picture of a tadpole and a frog in their natural environment.* Coloring is not considered higher-ordered thinking.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

Age appropriate and integrated learning are Lariat Words in this question. In addition, up to this point, all the descriptions of Mr. Beck's involvement, students, and classroom have focused on providing an integrated curriculum, involving students working on projects, and providing students with opportunities to explore nature.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) talks about dissection and even though students are encouraged to reflect on other points of view and engage in the learning process, there would probably be students, administration, and parents who would consider the strategy inappropriate for the age group. Choice (C) is a good idea, but the activity would be designed to meet the needs of older students. Choice (D) discourages inquiry learning and students being actively engaged. Choice (B) has the students involved and engaged in the learning experience by putting together a class book. If the students are going to write something about frogs, then they will need to use the knowledge they have gained through their field trip, charts, videos, and other integrated resources to adequately portray a frog.

The answer to the question is (B) and this question addresses information from PPR Competency 003. The teacher understands procedures for designing effective and coherent instruction and assessment based on appropriate learning goals and objectives.

5. Mr. Beck extended the unit by incorporating technology whereby students would learn to appreciate the ways frogs contribute to the environment. A resource he found most helpful with this endeavor was the National Wildlife Federation website, <http://www.nwf.org>. In addition, he discovered educational software the students could use in conjunction with the other activities in the unit. When selecting technology that will enhance a lesson or support instructional strategies, which of the following would NOT be one of Mr. Beck's primary considerations?
- A. Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is designed to meet the state goals and objectives and meet the needs of the students.
 - B. Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is fun and attractive so the students will want to be actively engaged in learning.
 - C. Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is consistent with the goals and objectives he is using and is in tune with the way he teaches and presents information.
 - D. Mr. Beck should carefully examine the technology to make sure the information presented is accurate, involves the learner, and is of high educational value.

T–Take control:

Note that Mr. Beck has explored Internet possibilities and discovered useful websites. He has also looked for appropriate software for his students.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “When selecting technology that will enhance a lesson or support instructional strategies, which of the following would NOT be one of Mr. Beck’s primary considerations?” is asking you to decide which of the choices should Mr. Beck NOT consider.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong, in this case that are right. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is designed to meet the state goals and objectives and meet the needs of the students.* This is a good choice because as a teacher, Mr. Beck should incorporate technology when he plans lessons, teaches, or evaluates his instruction.
- B. *Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is fun and attractive so the students will want to be actively engaged in learning.* Even though Mr. Beck wants his students to enjoy learning, selecting technology that is fun and attractive shouldn't be the primary consideration. The words “fun” and “attractive” are distractors.
- C. *Mr. Beck should carefully select technology that is consistent with the goals and objectives he is using and is in tune with the way he teaches and presents information.* Mr. Beck has taken into consideration his own objectives for the lessons as well as the state's goals and objectives. Sounds like a good choice.
- D. *Mr. Beck should carefully examine the technology to make sure the information presented is accurate, involves the learner, and is of high educational value.* This choice is good because it suggests that Mr. Beck has examined the selected technology to make sure it is accurate and appropriate for the students.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

In this scenario, appropriate use of technology is a Lariat Phrase. In addition, children in early childhood, kindergarten, and first grade have short attention spans and require activities that address their needs for physical activity. Research tells us that cognitive development is connected to physical development because movement provides a way for children to learn about themselves and activities that occur in the classroom.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) talks about selecting software that meets the needs of the students, and a teacher knows this is not a matter of choice but sound educational principles. Choice (C) mentions selecting software that provides information that is congruent with the way Mr. Beck teaches. This seems to be important because the information, the vocabulary, and the content would coincide with what Mr. Beck is already teaching. Choice (D) also suggests the student needs to be involved and that the information is correct, which is something every teacher should consider when selecting software. Choice (B) describes a situation in which the students require software to be fun and attractive, but this should not be a major consideration.

The answer to this question is choice (B) and addresses information from PPR Competency 009. The teacher incorporates the effective use of technology to plan, organize, deliver, and evaluate instruction for all students.

4–8 TEST QUESTIONS

Single Item

1. At the back-to-school parent night, the seventh-grade teacher is explaining to parents that he plans for the classroom to be a “community of learners.” One parent asked, “I’m not sure I understand what you mean by that term. Can you define it or provide some examples?” The teacher did NOT include which of the following:
 - A. Students make positive contributions to the class discussions and do not take away from the instruction through their actions or words.
 - B. Students effectively communicate ideas so that others can understand.
 - C. Students work independently on projects and learn to be self-disciplined.
 - D. Students are respectful of one another and the teacher in the ways that they exchange ideas.

T–Take control:

Picture what is happening: At the back-to-school parent night, the seventh-grade teacher talks to parents about the classroom becoming a “community of learners.” Parents are not sure what he means by that term.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “Can you give me some examples of what that means?” is asking you to provide examples of what “community of learners” means.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Students make positive contributions to the class discussions and do not take away from the instruction through their actions or words.* This choice promotes community in the classroom. Sounds like a good choice to keep.
- B. *Students effectively communicate ideas so that others can understand.* This choice suggests that students communicate in a positive way. This also appears to be a good option.
- C. *Students work independently on projects and learn to be self-disciplined.* This is a tall order to fill. The teacher will have to step in from time to time.
- D. *Students are respectful of one another and the teacher in the ways that they exchange ideas.* The idea of a cohesive, respectful classroom is one we would all enjoy! Keep this choice.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

Community of learners and active learners are appropriate Lariat Words here. In addition, the way a class is organized affects the learning process, so the teacher must arrange the class and provide instruction that meets the needs of all students.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) supports the idea that in a community of learners, students feel free to express themselves and share a feeling of connectedness. Choice (B) also suggests an openness among students where the participants in discussions genuinely like each other and work together. Choice (D) provides an atmosphere of trust and being open to listening to others. If students are working independently and using self-discipline, they are missing out on the advantages of working together. Reasoning behind the community of learners suggests that if students learn to work together as a “community of learners” in a classroom setting, they will carry this over to their adult lives. They will experience hands-on problem-solving, exploration, and risk-taking while working together.

The answer to this question is choice (C). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

Clustered Items

1. The eighth-grade team of teachers—language arts, social studies, science, and math—are planning together to provide students with excellent instruction and interdisciplinary teaching. They want to work very hard this year on teaching eighth graders to do research. All of the teachers recall how difficult doing a research paper was even in college and agree that research papers were assigned but that the research process was rarely taught. Before teaching the students, the team should:
 - A. ask the students if they are interested in learning to write research papers.
 - B. analyze the specific skills required to complete a research project and teach these specific skills to the students.
 - C. create a rubric for the students to follow.
 - D. determine topics that will interest the students and plan to research those topics themselves.

T–Take control:

Note that the eighth-grade team of teachers is planning on teaching students how to write research papers.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “Before teaching the students, the team should...” means prior to teaching the students how to write a research paper, what must the teachers do?

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Ask the students if they are interested in learning to write research papers.* It is doubtful the teacher would get a positive response.
- B. *Analyze the specific skills required to complete a research project and teach these specific skills to the students.* This sounds like an excellent, direct teaching approach.
- C. *Create a rubric for the students to follow.* The rubric doesn’t sound like the right assessment tool for a research paper.
- D. *Determine topics that will interest the students and plan to research those topics themselves.* Research is not always completed on subjects the students like.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

Teacher as facilitator and modeling are Lariat Words here. In addition, teachers are going to impart their knowledge on how to write research papers. They will need to agree on format, approach, acceptable materials, word processing, and final product.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) leaves the decision making with the students and we know the teachers are meeting prior to working with the students and modeling expectations. Choice (C) suggests using a rubric. Rubrics are evaluative tools with benchmarks. In this case the teachers are not setting performance levels for the research paper, but formulating specific skills that all students must meet. Choice (D) recommends teachers complete the research for the students.

The team wants to plan effective, engaging lessons in which the teacher not only lectures but also facilitates the learning process and in which students become active participants in this process. The teacher will need to teach students the steps in research, model good note taking skills, and establish checkpoints throughout the writing of the paper.

The answer to this question is choice (B). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

2. To assist the students in learning time-management skills and facilitate the projects being completed by the due date, the team decides to:
 - A. post the grading scale and the number of points to be deducted for each day the project is late.
 - B. have students work on the project for the entire semester so that the slowest learners will not be rushed.
 - C. post signs outside each classroom door reminding the students that the research projects are due on a certain date.
 - D. create a research project calendar showing what day the project begins and specific dates for sections of the project to be completed.

T–Take control:

Picture what is happening: The eighth-grade team of teachers is facilitating how to write research papers and teaching time-management skills.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “To assist the students in learning time-management skills and facilitate the projects being completed by the due date, the team decides to...” means the team must teach time-management skills so students learn to work within a deadline.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Post the grading scale and the number of points to be deducted for each day the project is late.* This is a negative approach to learning.
- B. *Have students work on the project for the entire semester so that the slowest learners will not be rushed.* This wouldn’t be fair to the students who pace themselves and have already established good study habits.
- C. *Post signs outside each classroom door reminding the students that the research projects are due on a certain date.* This choice may not be enough, as students don’t always pay attention to notices.
- D. *Create a research project calendar showing what day the project begins and specific dates for sections of the project to be completed.* This choice teaches students how to manage their time.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

Modeling and facilitating are Lariat Words in this scenario. In addition, teachers are going to teach students time-management skills. They will need to provide a product and model what is expected.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) suggests points taken off. Students will need to have some idea of what happens if their papers are submitted after the deadline, but this is a negative approach and doesn't teach time-management skills. Choice (B) suggests using the entire semester to enable students who do not work at a faster pace. This is an excellent reason to teach time-management skills. Choice (C) only gives students deadline dates and doesn't provide students with a model for time-management skills or organizational knowledge.

The team wants to prepare the students to pace themselves on a class project. The students will be unfamiliar with the requirements, so the teachers will need to model and monitor age-appropriate skills such as keeping the papers together, taking notes, and organizing the information collected for the paper. They will also need to instruct students on how to write an acceptable research paper and make the students' learning meaningful.

The answer to this question is choice (D). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

Decision Set

The sixth-grade teacher, Ms. Campos, is looking forward to beginning her first year of teaching. She is fluent in both English and Spanish. Each year the principal at the school notifies teachers of the students in each class who are receiving assistance through special education or bilingual education prior to the beginning of the school year so that teachers can begin planning. The principal has sent Ms. Campos the following note:

Ms. Campos,

The following students will be in your class this year and are also receiving the following special services:

Tammy Cab Special Education

Ricardo Aviles Special Education

Ho Phan English Language Learner (ELL)/first language is Vietnamese

1. Ms. Campos plans to become certified as a bilingual or ESL teacher but is not sure what she must do to get certified. For this year she wants to get assistance in ways that she can *best* meet the needs of an ELL student who speaks a language that she does not speak. How might she *best* get information about working with Ho Phan?
 - A. Contact the university and see if a conversational Vietnamese class is offered.
 - B. Contact the district's bilingual coordinator and ask for assistance.
 - C. Contact the fifth-grade teacher and discuss the student's needs.
 - D. Call the family and arrange for a home visit to meet the child and the family.

T—Take control:

Note that Ms. Campos plans to become certified as a bilingual or ESL teacher and she wants to get assistance so she can meet the needs of an ELL student who speaks a language that she does not speak.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “How might she best get information about working with Ho Phan?” means, what is the best way to find out how to assist the new student?

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Contact the university and see if a conversational Vietnamese class is offered.* This choice is probably not the quickest method of adapting to the needs of the student.
- B. *Contact the district's bilingual coordinator and ask for assistance.* A good option, but there's a chance no one there will speak Vietnamese.
- C. *Contact the fifth-grade teacher and discuss the student's needs.* This sounds like an informative, productive option.
- D. *Call the family and arrange for a home visit to meet the child and the family.* This would be counterproductive, because if Ms. Campos can't speak English, the student will be left to translate.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

Professional relationships are Lariat Words in this situation. In addition, the teacher is working with a student from a diverse culture and needs help in meeting the student's needs. The teacher wants to make the experience in her room meaningful and provide as much support as possible.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) suggests that the teacher should learn conversational Vietnamese but the student in her class will need more immediate assistance. Choice (B) suggests going to the district bilingual coordinator for assistance and this is a valid choice, but not if there isn't anyone who speaks the language. Choice (D) will not provide the teacher with language-appropriate materials and ideas.

In contacting the fifth-grade teacher and discussing strengths and weaknesses, Ms. Campos will discover the type of student Ho Phan was in her class the year before, the extent to which she required help, and the best way to make learning effective and meaningful.

The answer to this question is (C). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 012. The teacher enhances professional knowledge and skills by effectively interacting with other members of the educational community and participating in various types of professional activities.

2. Ms. Campos has worked with Spanish-speaking ELL students during student teaching. She was able to communicate with the families and wants to do all that is possible to communicate effectively with Ho Phan’s family. She knows that there are other Vietnamese families in the school and thinks that a good way to involve all families is to plan an all-school event. As part of a sixth-grade interdisciplinary unit on “Borders,” Ms. Campos suggests to her principal an all-school event in which each class chooses a different culture to study. For a culminating activity, there will be cultural food fair that parents, students, and teachers prepare. Ms. Campos does NOT expect this event to:
- A. involve families in meaningful school activities.
 - B. allow families, students, and teachers to learn about other cultures.
 - C. use diversity in the classroom as a way to enrich all students’ learning experiences.
 - D. improve relationships among campus, state, and local educational components.

T–Take control:

Picture what is happening: Ms. Campos wants to do all that is possible to communicate effectively with Ho Phan’s family. Plans are developed for an all-school event and for a culminating activity. There will be a cultural food fair that parents, students, and teachers prepare.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “Ms. Campos does NOT expect this event to…” means, what is the one thing that Ms. Campos does not think will happen as a result of having the culminating activity?

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Involve families in meaningful school activities.* This will most likely occur.
- B. *Allow families, students, and teachers to learn about other cultures.* This is also most likely to occur.
- C. *Use diversity in the classroom as a way to enrich all students’ learning experiences.* This would be a very positive outcome.
- D. *Improve relationships among campus, state, and local educational components.* Since state and local components weren’t mentioned, this is the one thing that probably will not occur.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The Lariat Words here are involvement with families, diversity, and enhance one’s own diversity knowledge. In addition, when planning an all-school event, the positive factors include everyone working together. This sounds like a beneficial experience because students from different cultures will have an opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) is excellent because one of the goals is to engage families in the various aspects of the educational program. Choice (B) shows that Ms. Campos understands the importance of learning about others’ diverse backgrounds and needs. Choice (C) provides an opportunity for everyone to grow from the experience.

The all-school activity would allow students, teachers, and parents an opportunity to share in an experience that ultimately will promote better relationships and contribute to students’ learning. Choice (D), which mentions improving relationships among campus, state, and local educational components, would not be a factor.

The answer to this question is choice (D). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 011. The teacher understands the importance of family involvement in children’s education and knows how to interact and communicate effectively with families.

3. Ms. Campos meets all of her students and begins the school year successfully. Tammy Cab is a student with attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity (ADHD). Ms. Campos reads Tammy’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) and notes that the IEP requires that Tammy be permitted to move about the classroom to do her work. She may work at her desk, standing at a table, or other places in the classroom as long as she does not disturb others. Ms. Campos knows that all sixth graders are at a developmental stage of rapid growth and physical change and all like to move about. She knows that effective instructional planning must include:
 - A. strict behavior management plans to prevent the students from becoming too active in the classroom.
 - B. lessons that include opportunities for students to move about the classroom for activities such as role-playing and simulations.
 - C. lessons that are not focusing on higher-order thinking because at this active stage of development, students do not need to function at that level.
 - D. lessons that ask students to think abstractly and to do tasks requiring the stage of thinking Piaget termed “formal operational.”

T–Take control:

Note that Ms. Campos has a student with attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity (ADHD) and the IEP requires that Tammy be able to move about.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “She knows that effective instructional planning must include...” means, what is the best way to work with the student using what she knows about ADHD and the developmental characteristics of a child of this age?

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Strict behavior management plans to prevent the students from becoming too active in the classroom.* “Strict” management would go against what Ms. Campos knows about the students.
- B. *Lessons that include opportunities for students to move about the classroom for activities such as role-playing and simulations.* This choice would allow for fun, educational opportunities that take into account all students.
- C. *Lessons that are not focusing on higher-order thinking because at this active stage of development, students do not need to function at that level.* This statement is untrue.
- D. *Lessons that ask students to think abstractly and to do tasks requiring the stage of thinking Piaget termed “formal operational.”* This concept might be beyond this age group.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are developmentally appropriate and positive environment. In addition, the teacher is going to be working with an ADHD student and the IEP suggests moving around so long as the student doesn’t bother others. The teacher is aware of the age group and must plan accordingly.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) suggests a strict behavior management plan and this is not what the student will require to function in the classroom. Choice (C) suggests working at a lower level of achievement, and just because the student is ADHD does not mean the student shouldn’t be challenged with inquiry learning and effective learning experiences. Choice (D) is not totally out of the question, but instructional plans need to take into consideration activities in which the student can freely move around.

The student needs an instructional plan that allows learning to take place and choice (B) demonstrates that the teacher has the knowledge to set goals for the student and prepare effective lessons.

The answer to this question is (B). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 001. The teacher understands human development processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their developmental characteristics and needs.

8–12 QUESTIONS

Single Item

1. After looking over your students' work on a recent test in government, you realize that they have many misconceptions about the way the judicial system works. You previously covered the information by having them work in cooperative groups and jigsaw the different court systems in the state. As time is limited and you want to present specific information about the court systems, the *best* approach would be to:
 - A. plan a direct instruction lesson for the individuals who did not score well on the test.
 - B. have the students return to their textbooks and reread the chapter about the judicial system.
 - C. have the students work in pairs to find the information online.
 - D. repeat the jigsaw activity with only the students who did poorly on the exam.

T–Take control:

Note that the teacher has previously used cooperative learning as a means of engaging students. However, after surveying the results of a test, the teacher realizes some students did not grasp the concepts and the teacher's time is limited.

E–Examine the question:

The question, "As time is limited and you want to present specific information about the court systems, the *best* approach would be..." is asking you what is the best approach in disseminating information to students when there is a limited amount of time.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Plan a direct instruction lesson for the individuals who did not score well on the test.* This seems like a specific way to address the issue.
- B. *Have the students return to their textbooks and reread the chapter about the judicial system.* The students might not be able to process the information on their own.
- C. *Have the students work in pairs to find the information online.* This is not a very direct method of accomplishing the teacher’s objectives.
- D. *Repeat the jigsaw activity with only the students who did poorly on the exam.* If time were not a factor, then the activity would actively engage the students, but because the teacher’s goal is to impact learning, this just seems repetitive.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are teacher–student interactions, instructional planning, and teacher as facilitator. In addition, the teacher has analyzed the situation and realizes that time is a factor. Previously used cooperative groups were successful, but in this situation, not for all students. The teacher understands that expectations, choice, and type of instructional strategies affect learning.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (B) suggests that the students should reread the information from the textbook. There are several things to look at. To begin with, the students might not have read the assignment in the first place; second, the students who were not as successful on the test might have a processing problem when it comes to reading. Choice (C) recommends the students work in pairs and online. This activity assumes the students will find the appropriate websites and that the information will address the areas of concern. Choice (D) has several problems. The students didn’t comprehend the material in the first place using the jigsaw approach, and the jigsaw method of cooperative learning requires careful consideration when organizing the members of each group. In this case there might not be enough time, and time is a factor. Choice (A) mentions a direct teaching approach. The teacher can address the students’ needs in a small-group situation and focus on specific areas of concern.

The answer to this question is choice (A). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

Clustered Items

During the faculty workshop prior to the start of the school year, the faculty at University High School discusses school-wide goals for the year. One of the goals selected is to maximize the instructional time available and minimize the time spent on administrative tasks. The teachers examine how a day is structured and see that one hour a day is spent during passing periods. Another large amount of time is spent with administrative tasks such as returning papers, writing notes to parents, going over tests, and taking roll.

1. Which of the following is the *best* way for teachers to maximize instructional time and minimize administrative tasks?
 - A. Use prewritten notes to send home to parents where the appropriate concern is checked rather than taking the time to write notes about behavior or grades.
 - B. Set up each class on the computer so that attendance and other tasks can be done quickly.
 - C. Use assigned seating to be able to check for absences quickly.
 - D. Have students grade a peer's paper to save the teacher time for instruction.

T—Take control:

Note that at a school-wide workshop, the faculty discusses goals and realizes administrative tasks take up a lot of a teacher's time. They want to maximize time.

E—Examine the question:

The question, "Which of the following is the best way for teachers to maximize instructional time and minimize administrative tasks?" is asking you what the best approach is to maximizing the time set aside for teaching and reducing the amount of time spent on administrative tasks.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Use prewritten notes to send home to parents where the appropriate concern is checked rather than taking the time to write notes about behavior or grades.* This would certainly save time, but a personal note would be more productive.
- B. *Set up each class on the computer so that attendance and other tasks can be done quickly.* This seems like an efficient way to use technology to accomplish the teacher's goal.
- C. *Use assigned seating to be able to check for absences quickly.* This choice won't help teachers tackle administrative tasks besides taking attendance.
- D. *Have students grade a peer's paper to save the teacher time for instruction.* The goal is not to use the students to save the teacher's time.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are technological tools for administrative tasks. In addition, teachers are to look at the way they structure their day and try to make adjustments. They are also encouraged to use technological tools to perform administrative tasks.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) mentions the use of a checklist and prewritten notes. This practice would be extremely impersonal. Even though it would save time, it would not provide appropriate feedback for the parents. Choice (C) suggests assigned seating, but doesn't take into account the individual differences in teaching style and student requirements. Choice (D) suggests having students grade each other's papers. In some situations students can learn by engaging in this practice, but the goal should be to involve the student in the process, not to save the teacher time. Choice (B) suggests using technology for administrative purposes which would address faculty goals.

The answer to this question is choice (B). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 006. The teacher understands strategies for creating an organized and productive learning environment and for managing student behavior.

2. A second goal selected is to improve teaching skills. The teachers discuss various ways to do this and decide that the *best* way for teachers to improve teaching skills quickly is to:
 - A. attend the annual Texas State Reading Conference in order for all teachers to assist students who have reading problems.
 - B. subscribe to magazines such as *The Instructor* and read about other teachers and schools.
 - C. use appraisal results to set personal goals for improvement and work with a mentor.
 - D. use online resources to read about recent research in teaching and try new strategies.

T–Take control:

Picture what is happening: At a school-wide workshop, the faculty discusses how to improve teaching skills.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “The teachers discuss various ways to do this and decide that the best way for teachers to quickly improve teaching skills is...” is asking you what teachers can do to improve teaching skills quickly.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Attend the annual Texas State Reading Conference in order for all teachers to assist students who have reading problems.* This choice doesn’t seem to have much to do with improving teaching skills.
- B. *Subscribe to magazines such as The Instructor and read about other teachers and schools.* This could be a place for teachers to gain insight.
- C. *Use appraisal results to set personal goals for improvement and work with a mentor.* This would provide teachers with an immediate plan.
- D. *Use online resources to read about recent research in teaching and try new strategies.* This could also be a place for teachers to gain insight.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are teacher reflection, self-assessment, and professional development. In addition, teachers are always looking to improve, and in this case the faculty has gathered to discuss how it can quickly improve its teaching strategies.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) would give a teacher ideas, but it would be neither the quickest nor the best way to do this. Choice (B) suggests using a professional magazine such as *The Instructor*, but I think this would give ideas for teaching and not necessarily strategies for improvement. Choice (D) suggests online resources, which don't allow for a personal approach. However, looking at appraisal results as choice (C) suggests would provide teachers with immediate ideas, focusing on areas of concern with someone who can support objectives and help set personal goals.

The answer to this question is choice (C). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 012. The teacher enhances professional knowledge and skills by effectively interacting with other members of the educational community and participating in various types of professional activities.

Decision Set

The biology teacher is planning a unit on wildflowers for the spring. The teacher wants students to visit the Wildflower Center in Austin to view actual wildflowers and to study the ecological systems in place, such as the rainwater collection system. She has several sections of biology and wants to take all of the students to the Wildflower Center for a field trip.

1. District policies require teachers wanting to take field trips to complete a form requesting a field trip and necessary transportation. Because this teacher is new and has never taken a field trip, she is not aware of the district policies on field trips. She should:
 - A. ask a parent volunteer to find out the procedure and file the necessary paperwork.
 - B. decide that students can go in their own cars and not worry about getting buses.
 - C. call the transportation director and arrange for two buses on the designated date.
 - D. go to her immediate supervisor for information and assistance.

T—Take control:

Picture what is happening: A teacher wants to take her classes on a field trip but is unaware of district policies.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “Because this teacher is new and has never taken a field trip, she is not aware of the district policies on field trips. She should...” is asking you what this teacher should do to follow school district policies for field trips.

X—X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Ask a parent volunteer to find out the procedure and file the necessary paperwork.*
The parent would follow up on the teacher’s request, but this seems to be the responsibility of the teacher.
- B. *Decide that students can go in their own cars and not worry about getting buses.*
This is not for the teacher to decide.
- C. *Call the transportation director and arrange for two buses on the designated date.*
A teacher would never be able to do this without the principal’s permission.
- D. *Go to her immediate supervisor for information and assistance.* This choice could provide the teacher with valuable information.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are knowledge of state educational system. In addition, when teachers are responsible for students on a field trip, they need to follow school district policy.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) would put the responsibility on the parent volunteer and the teacher is the one assuming the responsibility. In this case, the teacher needs to obtain appropriate paperwork, read it carefully, and sign it. Choice (B) is an inappropriate answer because of the teacher's and school's liability. Choice (C) would certainly get the teacher into trouble for not following protocol. The teacher needs to ask for help from the principal and then find out other policies on parental approval, students' absences from other classes, cell phone policies, funds required, routes to take, and late arrivals.

The answer to this question is choice (D). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 013. The teacher understands and adheres to legal and ethical requirements for educators and is knowledgeable of the structure of education in Texas.

2. Austin is too far from the school and the costs for this trip are excessive. The request for the trip is denied. The biology teacher is disappointed and frustrated. The teacher decides to discuss this again with the principal. What is the best procedure for her to schedule this meeting?
 - A. After considering all of the options, she sends an e-mail to the principal requesting the meeting and listing the curricular areas that she believes will be addressed on this trip and why it is beneficial to students.
 - B. Frustrated, she decides to call the curriculum director and explain to her the value of the trip and asks the curriculum director to call the principal and request a meeting with the three of them.
 - C. She goes to all of the faculty members along her hallway and asks about field trips they have taken. She then writes a letter to the principal explaining that other teachers have taken trips similar to this one and requests a meeting.
 - D. She examines the costs and prepares a proposal for the principal that lists the objectives, rationale, and requirements of the trip. She then proposes ways that the students might raise the money to supplement the cost of the trip and requests a meeting with the principal.

T—Take control:

Note that a teacher wants to take her classes on a field trip but the request has been denied because of the expense involved.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “What is the best procedure for her to schedule this meeting?” is asking how the teacher goes about scheduling a meeting.

X—X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *After considering all of the options, she sends an e-mail to the principal requesting the meeting and listing the curricular areas that she believes will be addressed on this trip and why it is beneficial to students.* A face-to-face meeting seems like a good way to reverse a decision.
- B. *Frustrated, she decides to call the curriculum director and explain to her the value of the trip and asks the curriculum director to call the principal and request a meeting with the three of them.* This choice has some merit, and maybe the teacher is thinking the more professionals asking for the request, the better chance they have of getting the request approved.
- C. *She goes to all of the faculty members along her hallway and asks about field trips they have taken. She then writes a letter to the principal explaining that other teachers have taken trips similar to this one and requests a meeting.* This field trip is independent of what other teachers did in the past.
- D. *She examines the costs and prepares a proposal for the principal that lists the objectives, rationale, and requirements of the trip. She then proposes ways that the students might raise the money to supplement the cost of the trip and requests a meeting with the principal.* This seems like a systematic, feasible option.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are ethical requirements and knowledge of state educational systems. In addition, the teacher has been turned down and is now trying to persuade the principal. Possibly if the teacher had applied these procedures prior to the first request, the field trip would not have been denied.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) suggests an e-mail, but the teacher really needs to make an appointment and present a case so the field trip will still have a chance. Choice (B) suggests bringing in another person. It would certainly be appropriate for the teacher to discuss the field trip with the curriculum director, particularly because the teacher is new, and see if there are suggestions. Choice (C) would not be a suggested procedure as the rest of the faculty would certainly disapprove, plus the field trip this teacher wants to take has nothing to do with the field trips taken by other classes. The teacher needs to know how to work with supervisors and address issues. By preparing a proposal that lists the objectives, rationale, and requirements of the trip and then proposing ways that the students might raise the money to supplement the costs, the teacher understands appropriate protocol.

The answer to this question is choice (D). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 013. The teacher understands and adheres to legal and ethical requirements for educators and is knowledgeable of the structure of education in Texas.

3. Unfortunately, the teacher is not able to take her classes on the trip. She has planned the unit around the trip and now must make other plans. What is the *best* way for the teacher to use productivity tools to communicate information about the Wildflower Center for her unit?
 - A. Have the students go online and look at the Wildflower Center website.
 - B. Visit the Wildflower Center herself and make a video of the tour she takes.
 - C. Have students create computer presentations using photographs they take of local wildflowers.
 - D. Provide students with brochures from the Wildflower Center.

T—Take control:

Picture what is happening: A teacher wants to take her classes on a field trip but the request has been denied and now she must find other ways to communicate information concerning the Wildflower Center.

E—Examine the question:

The question, “What is the best way for the teacher to use productivity tools to communicate information about the Wildflower Center for her unit?” is asking how the teacher can give the students information about the Wildflower Center using resource tools.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Have the students go online and look at the Wildflower Center website.* If the website has a virtual tour, this could be a viable option.
- B. *Visit the Wildflower Center herself and make a video of the tour she takes.* Sounds good if this is allowed.
- C. *Have students create computer presentations using photographs they take of local wildflowers.* Sounds fun, but it wouldn't take the place of the tour.
- D. *Provide students with brochures from the Wildflower Center.* This is a good suggestion, but not as interactive as a tour.

A–Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are appropriate use of technology. In addition, the teacher has been turned down and now is trying to provide and replicate the information that would have been gained by visiting the center. I do remember reading something about productivity tools and communicating information by using a variety of resources.

S–Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) suggests a virtual tour and if there were no other choices available, this could work. Choice (C) recommends using the computer and producing photographs of local wildflowers. This method won't necessarily educate the students as to what the flowers *are*. Choice (D) suggests a brochure. Students would benefit by looking at the brochure, but it in no way replaces an actual trip or video presentation. If the teacher visits the Wildflower Center herself and making a video of the tour she takes, students will have an opportunity to experience the trip through the eyes of their teacher.

The answer to this question is Choice (B). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 007. The teacher understands and applies principles and strategies for communicating effectively in varied teaching and learning contexts.

4. In an effort to have students apply their knowledge beyond the school setting, become reflective thinkers, apply abstract reasoning, and become self-directed learners, the teacher will use which of the following activities as a culminating event?
 - A. Select a community project to complete, such as delivering wildflowers bouquets to local nursing homes.
 - B. Plant Texas bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush along the curbs of the main street that runs through the town following the directions from the National Wildflower Center.
 - C. In small groups, plan and present a Texas wildflower garden for local businesses incorporating perennial wildflowers and evergreen shrubs included on the National Wildflower Center database.
 - D. Complete a wildflower notebook that includes pressed species and digital images from the National Wildflower Center image file.

T–Take control:

Picture what is happening: A teacher wants her students to become reflective thinkers and use this knowledge outside the school setting.

E–Examine the question:

The question, “In an effort to have students apply their knowledge beyond the school setting, become reflective thinkers, apply abstract reasoning, and become self-directed learners, the teacher will use which of the following activities as a culminating event?” is asking what event will provide students opportunities to apply abstract reasoning and become self-directed learners.

X–X-ray the choices:

Look at each choice before deciding on an answer and delete the choices that you know are wrong. The choices for this question are:

- A. *Select a community project to complete such as delivering wildflowers bouquets to local nursing homes.* How would students apply abstract thinking here?
- B. *Plant Texas bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush along the curbs of the main street that runs through the town following the directions from the National Wildflower Center.* This might be difficult to execute.
- C. *In small groups, plan and present a Texas wildflower garden for local businesses incorporating perennial wildflowers and evergreen shrubs included on the National Wildflower Center database.* Students would need to utilize several skills in order to carry this out.
- D. *Complete a wildflower notebook that includes pressed species and digital images from the National Wildflower Center image file.* Good idea, but not for reflective thinking.

A—Assimilate knowledge:

The relevant Lariat Words here are developmentally appropriate, lifelong learning, and reflective thinkers. In addition, the teacher wants students to use abstract thinking, which means the activity needs to focus on higher-order thinking and opportunities to seek information and justify responses.

S—Scrutinize your decision:

Choice (A) is a wonderful suggestion and students would benefit from the philanthropic activity, but the activity would not extend nor support the teachers goals and objectives. Choice (B) suggests supporting the beautification program already established in Texas, but again, the strategy would not focus on the development of the learner. Choice (D) would provide experience working with the computer and certainly make the students more knowledgeable about technology issues, but it too lacks the reference to reflective thinking. In using small groups, planning and presenting a Texas wildflower garden for local businesses provides the students with opportunities to apply knowledge outside the school setting and use abstract thinking and reasoning.

The answer to this question is choice (C). This question addresses information from PPR Competency 001. The teacher understands human development processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their developmental characteristics and needs.

The preceding section has attempted to provide you with a specific strategy to apply as you take the TExES certification exam. The following section is intended to provide you some “Pistol-Packing Tips” for hitting the TExES bullseye!

Pistol-Packing Tips

The following tips will offer you some practical suggestions for preparing yourself to be a successful test taker.

- **Review.** Spend time learning the important concepts from each competency.
- **Practice.** You have several practice tests available in this study guide, as well as those provided at the NES website (www.texas.nesinc.com). Spend time practicing with these materials and attempting to understand why each answer is what it is. Team up with fellow students and form study groups. After each session, treat yourself to an enjoyable activity. Take advantage of review sessions provided by your university or a nearby Educational Service Center.
- **Prepare yourself.** In addition to practicing for the test, there are several things to remember as you get ready for the important test date.
 - Take several well-sharpened No. 2 lead pencils and an eraser that does not smudge.
 - Take a photo ID to show at the door of the testing center.
 - Take your admission ticket for the test.
 - You may want to take mints, hard candy, or gum for a quick energy boost.
 - You may want to take earplugs if you are easily distracted by ambient sounds.
 - Take a watch and monitor your time. Divide your time into segments with a goal of completing a reasonable number of test items in small time blocks.
 - Plan your week preceding the test so that you will be rested and in top mental and physical condition on the day of the test. Get a good night's sleep the night before the test, have something to eat before you leave for the test site, and dress in layers to allow you to stay comfortable, no matter what the temperature in the testing center.
- **Pace yourself by marking the half-way point of your test before you begin.** When you reach that point, if you have less than half your allotted time remaining, you will need to work through the remaining items at a faster pace.
- **Analyze each question.** Temporarily skip any item that seems difficult and time consuming. Mark on your scantron or in your test booklet the items to which you should return, then move on. Don't stress yourself unnecessarily by spending too much time on one question when you can move forward with items you DO know. Remember, there is no penalty for guessing, so use your strategies and make an informed "guess."
- **Think before responding.** Earlier in this chapter, an extensive explanation was provided for utilizing the TEXAS procedure. Use this strategy as you think through each question.

- **Answer every question.** If you find you are running behind near the end of the time limit, quickly mark each remaining item with a response of your choice. There is no penalty for incorrect answers, so leave no answer blank. However, sequentially marking several items without considering the appropriate answer could result in low domain scores, since items could be clustered in some areas. In addition, some questions are weighted more heavily than others for a given domain area, so answering every question ensures a better chance of a better score in each domain.
- **Stick with your answer.** Unless you are absolutely sure you made the wrong choice initially, do NOT change an answer. Overanalyzing often causes you to choose the second best answer.
- **Watch your “bubbles.”** As you record your answers on your scantron form, periodically check to make sure you are bubbling on the corresponding item number as the one you are looking at in the test booklet. As you answer your questions, mark them in the booklet as well as on the scantron. If you do find that you have mismarked your sheet, this will assist you in quickly correcting the error.

With plenty of preparation, you are now ready to be a successful test taker. Go into the test with confidence. Good luck as you move through the process of becoming a certified teacher in Texas and as you begin this new and exciting career.



CHAPTER THREE

How to Use the Tests in This Book

This book has five practice tests. The purpose of this chapter is to suggest ways for you to use each of the tests as you begin to prepare for your specific TExES PPR exam. Our recommendation is that if you score 80% or better on each test you will be well prepared to pass the actual test. The actual test has a scaled score with some questions scaled as harder than others and 10 questions that are not graded as they are being field-tested.

When taking any test in the book keep in mind that the actual TExES exam is assuming the “ideal world.” Don’t read your own biases into the test. Answer each question as if it were set in an ideal world. In an ideal world, all parents cooperate with the school and with the teachers. All school districts have enough money. All students want to learn. All teachers have mentors. You must leave your mental backpack at the door. This means, don’t answer the questions based on what you know about schools from observing in a classroom or from your field experience (what you carry around in your brain like a backpack). The state of Texas wants to know, if the world were an ideal place, do you know what best practice is? Don’t think of reasons why something won’t work; instead say, “In an ideal world, what is best practice?”

The first test in the book is the Diagnostic EC–4 Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Test. This test has 40 questions (one half the number of questions that are graded on the real TExES PPR). The questions on this test include early childhood through fourth grade, fourth grade through eighth grade, and eighth grade through twelfth grade. Even if you are getting certified in only one of those areas, all of the tests cover the same 13 competencies. By taking the diagnostic test you can ascertain in a short amount of time which competencies are your strengths and which competencies you need to review further.

After you have taken the diagnostic test, read all of the detailed answers in order to understand why specific answers were wrong. A score of 32 out of 40 would be 80% correct.

Next, go to the diagnostic answer sheet sorted by competency found after the answer explanations for each test. This last sheet will have the answers grouped by domain and competency. By analyzing your results, the diagnostic test shows which domains and competencies you need to review or relearn before taking any other tests. Chapters 4–7 cover each of the domains and competencies and will provide you with a complete review. These chapters also suggest additional websites and resources if you require more detailed studying.

The second test you should take is the test for your specific certification area. If you are getting certified EC–4, take one of the two EC–4 practice tests. After scoring the test, read the detailed answer section. Then, analyze the domains and competencies that need additional work by recording your errors on the EC–4 answer sheets sorted by competency. If you are getting certified 4–8 do the same with the 4–8 test and if you are getting certified 8–12 do the same with the 8–12 test.

If you are getting certified at all levels, the five tests will provide you with practice at all of the levels. If you are getting certified EC–4 or 8–12, there may not be a question about the Texas Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) on the EC–4 or 8–12 practice tests. By taking the 4–8 practice test, you will have a question about the PDAS. The EC–4 tests will cover indicators that are not covered on the 8–12 test. Likewise the 8–12 and 4–8 tests will cover indicators not covered on other tests. Taking all of the tests will provide you with additional knowledge about specific indicators that may be tested on the actual TExES exam. The content is different for each level but the pedagogy, which is what this test assesses, is the same for all certification levels.

The purpose of these practice tests is really threefold. First, the diagnostic test is a self-assessment instrument. It will show you which domains and competencies are strengths and which are weak areas. You can study your weak areas in Chapters 4–7. Second, you can test yourself on the specific test for your certification level to determine strengths and needs. Finally, you will continue to learn about competencies and indicators that you may not know about by taking the remaining tests and reading the detailed answer sheets.

Kaplan Tip: Take all of the tests. Read all of the detailed answer explanations. Analyze your strengths and needs on the answer sheets that are sorted by item number and sorted by competency. Study those domains and competencies that are your weak areas.

Section Two

TE_xES DOMAINS



CHAPTER FOUR

Domain I: Designing Instruction and Assessment to Promote Student Learning (Includes Competencies 001–004)

The content in Domain I represents 31% of the questions on any of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility (PPR) exams. The focus of this domain is the teacher's ability to create appropriate instructional methods as well as the ability to implement effective assessment procedures in order to impact students' learning.

The information represented in these questions is intended to capture the teacher's knowledge regarding the following concepts:

Competency 001—The teacher understands human developmental processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their developmental characteristics and needs.

In Other Words:

This competency focuses on the teacher's understanding and application of milestones in a student's growth and development as important features in planning effective instruction and the assessment of the instruction.

Teachers understand the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional developmental characteristics of students in different age groups. They must also apply their understanding of these varying characteristics by implementing appropriate instructional and assessment procedures to ensure student learning.

Specific emphasis for grade **EC–4** teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of:

- the role that each of the following have on the child’s development and learning
 - nutrition
 - sleep
 - prenatal conditions
 - family conditions
 - emotional and physical contact with caregivers
 - play and its role in normal development
 - developmental stages of cognitive growth

Specific emphasis for grade **4–8** teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of:

- the physical changes associated with later childhood and early adolescence and how these impact other domains
- how development in one domain impacts other domains

Specific emphasis for grade **8–12** teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of:

- physical changes associated with adolescence and how these impact other domains
- how development in one domain impacts other domains

The teacher plans lessons that reflect an understanding of students’ developmental characteristics and needs.

The teacher adapts lessons to address students’ varied backgrounds skills, interests, and learning needs, including the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs).

The teacher uses effective approaches to address varied student learning needs and preferences.

Specific emphasis for grade **EC–4** teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of:

- spontaneous activities or observations to promote learning

Specific emphasis for grade **4–8** teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of:

- students’ interest in peers
- the importance of not singling out students

Specific emphasis for grade **8–12** teachers may include the teachers' understanding of:

- making use of students' focus on peer relationships
- students' growing awareness of and engagement with the world beyond school

The teacher plans instruction that motivates students to want to learn and achieve.

The teacher understands the implications of students' developmental characteristics for planning appropriate instruction.

Specific emphasis for grade **EC–4** teachers may include the teacher's understanding of:

- the lifelong impact of experiences provided in early childhood through fourth grade on individual development and on society
- the wide range of developmental differences (resulting from different rates of development in different domains) and the implications for instructional planning
- how developmental characteristics of EC–4 children (attention span, need for physical activity, and movement) impact learning and performance
- the importance of helping EC–4 children apply decision making, organization, and goal-setting skills (selecting learning centers, putting materials away, completing a self-initiated project)
- young children's reliance on concrete thinking, motor and sensory input, and direct experiences for development of skills and knowledge and the implications for instructional planning and assessment
- how to use developmental characteristics and needs of EC–4 children to plan meaningful integrated and active learning and play experiences that promote the development of the whole child

Specific emphasis for grade **4–8** teachers may include the teacher's understanding of the:

- rationale for and structure of middle-level education
- middle years as transitional years when students may exhibit characteristics of younger or older children
- importance of developing crucial attitudes such as working and getting along with others, respecting diversity, making a commitment to continued schooling
- range of individual development and the implications of this for instructional planning
- challenges for students in the middle years (self-image, physical appearance, eating disorders, feelings of rebelliousness, and ways to address these challenges)
- ways involvement in risky behaviors (gangs, drugs, and alcohol) impacts development and learning
- effects of social and emotional factors (peer interactions, search for identity, questioning of principles and expectations, parental divorce, homelessness) on student development and on teaching and learning

- developmental characteristics of middle level students and how the impact of these characteristics affect learning and performance and how to use this knowledge to plan effective learning experiences and assessments
- importance of helping middle-level students apply decision-making, organizational, and goal-setting skills

Specific emphasis for grade 8–12 teachers may include the teacher’s understanding of the:

- importance for students to learn and apply life skills (self-direction, decision-making, goal setting, workplace skills) to promote lifelong learning and participation in society
- wide range of individual development, the differences at this age, and the implications for instructional planning
- typical challenges of adolescence and young adulthood (self-esteem, physical appearance, eating disorders, identity formation, educational and career decisions) and effective ways to address these challenges
- ways involvement in risky behavior (gang involvement, drug and alcohol use) impacts learning and development
- importance of peers, peer acceptance and conformity to peer group norms and expectations for adolescents and the significance of peer related issues for teaching and learning
- effects of social and emotional factors (interacting with the larger community, building relationships, questioning values, exploring long-term career and life goals, parental divorce, homelessness) on student development, teaching, and learning
- ability to use knowledge of cognitive changes in 8–12 students (refinement of abstract thinking and reasoning, reflective thinking, focus on the world beyond the school setting) to plan instruction that promotes learning and development
- impact of developmental characteristics of students in grades 8–12 on learning and performance and how to use this knowledge to plan effective learning experiences and assessments

Where to find other study resources for information regarding theories of human growth and development, developmental stages, and how these apply to teaching:

<http://www.theshop.net/boatman/edtheory.htm>

This site provides a nice overview of theories of learning, theorists, and resources for each of the major theorists and their theories.

<http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/cogsys/piaget.html>

This site provides a thorough overview of the theory, processes, and stages of cognitive development.

www.ncac-hsv.org/stages.html

This site provides a comprehensive list of developmental characteristics and stages of children, age birth through 18.

<http://tip.psychology.org/>

This site is intended to make learning and instructional theory more accessible to educators. The database contains brief summaries of 50 major theories of learning and instruction.

<http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/>

This site provides information on how to help children and adolescents reach their full potential as they grow and develop.

Competency 002—The teacher understands student diversity and knows how to plan learning experiences and design assessments that are responsive to differences among students and that promote all students' learning.

In Other Words:

This competency focuses on the teacher's understanding of how to design appropriate lessons and assessments for the many different students being taught. Teachers must understand the differences in children's background, ethnicity, learning styles, and motivations in order to provide effective instruction.

The teacher understands the characteristics and instructional needs of students with varied backgrounds, skills, interests, and learning needs.

The teacher understands the different approaches to learning that students may exhibit and what motivates students to become active, engaged learners.

The teacher understands the cultural and socioeconomic differences and the significance of these differences for instructional planning.

The teacher understands appropriate strategies for instructing English Language Learners (ELLs).

The teacher acknowledges and respects cultural and socioeconomic differences among students when planning instruction.

Where to find other study resources for information about diversity and how to design appropriate instruction for students presenting differences in background, ethnicity, learning styles, and motivations:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/teachdive/manylanguages.htm>

This site provides advice about working with all children and families, fostering bilingualism, and encouraging tolerance and self-esteem.

<http://oncampus.richmond.edu/academics/as/education/projects/webunits/diversity/diversity.html>

This website provides information about pieces of literature that can be used within the classroom to help children learn more about diversity. Its goal is to increase awareness and help children become more open-minded to differences with special emphasis on children with special needs and children from multicultural backgrounds.

www.ri.net/gifted_talented/character.html

This site provides characteristics and behaviors of gifted children.

<http://everythingesl.net>

This site provides resources, teaching tips, and lesson plans for teachers of ESL students.

www.ced.appstate.edu/projects/partnership/student/diversity98/diversity.htm

This site is designed to help teachers become more aware of diversity and have a better understanding of what it is and how to deal with it in the classroom. It provides information and activities for incorporating diversity into the classroom.

www.nichcy.org

This site provides extensive information on disabilities in children.

www.kidsource.com/NICHCY/learning_disabilities.html

This site provides information about learning disabilities including the definition, incidence, characteristics, educational implications, and additional resources.

<http://ericec.org/faqs.html>

This site provides a significant collection of ERIC sites regarding disabilities and gifted education.

Competency 003—The teacher understands procedures for designing effective and coherent instruction and assessment based on appropriate learning goals and objectives.

In Other Words:

This competency focuses on the teacher’s understanding of the state curriculum of Texas (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills—TEKS), how to use the curriculum to plan instruction, and the importance of selecting appropriate instructional goals and objectives.

Content and Pedagogy

The teacher understands the importance of the state content and performance standards as outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

The teacher understands relevant content of the discipline being taught, including concepts, principles, relationships, methods of inquiry, and key issues.

The teacher understands the significance of the vertical alignment of content, including prerequisite knowledge and skills.

The teacher understands how lesson content and skills connect with other disciplines and within the discipline.

The teacher understands current research on best pedagogical practices.

The teacher uses the TEKS to plan instruction.

The teacher exhibits appropriate knowledge of a subject to promote student learning.

The teacher demonstrates awareness of common student misconceptions or likely sources of student error in relation to particular content.

The teacher plans instruction that reflects an understanding of important prerequisite relationships.

The teacher plans instruction that makes connections within the discipline and across disciplines.

The teacher uses a variety of pedagogical techniques to convey information and teach skills.

Specific emphasis for **EC–4** teachers may include:

- hands-on exploration and guided discussions

Specific emphasis for **4–8** teachers may include:

- cooperative learning groups and whole class discussions

Specific emphasis for **8–12** teachers may include:

- self-directed inquiry

Selection of Instructional Goals and Objectives

The teacher understands the importance of developing instructional goals and objectives that are clear, relevant, meaningful, and age-appropriate.

The teacher understands the importance of developing instructional goals and objectives that can be assessed.

The teacher understands the importance of developing instructional goals and objectives that are suitable for students with varied learning needs.

Special emphasis for **4–8** teachers may include:

- students who think concretely in some contexts but can reason abstractly in others
- students with varying academic backgrounds

Special emphasis for **8–12** teachers may include:

- students with different levels of skills in abstract thinking and reasoning

The teacher understands the importance of aligning instructional goals with campus and district goals.

The teacher develops instructional goals and objectives that are clear, relevant, meaningful, and age-appropriate.

The teacher develops instructional goals and objectives that are able to be assessed.

The teacher develops instructional goals and objectives that reflect students' age, developmental level, prior skills and knowledge, background, and interests.

The teacher develops instructional goals and objectives that reflect different types of student learning and skills.

Special emphasis for the EC–4 teacher may include:

- learning to cooperate with others
- understanding cause-and-effect relationships

Special emphasis for the 4–8 teacher may include:

- collaborating with peers
- developing logical arguments

Special emphasis for the 8–12 teacher may include:

- workplace skills
- self-direction

Where to find other study resources for information about designing effective instruction using appropriate instructional goals and objectives:

www.tea.state.tx.us/teks

This site provides the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, the curriculum required for children in Texas public schools.

www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/ced.html

This site provides links to various areas of curriculum for students in Texas.

www.adprima.com/lesson.htm

This site provides excellent resources for designing appropriate and effective instruction.

<http://my.execpc.com/~dboals/k-12.html>

This site provides ideas for planning effective instruction for students grade K-12.

Competency 004—The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.

In Other Words:

This competency focuses on the teacher’s understanding and use of appropriate resources to engage students in effective learning as well as the teacher’s ability to understand and apply effective assessment models in order to guide instructional planning.

Resources

The teacher understands the use of appropriate materials and resources for preparing instruction, presenting lessons, and assessing learning.

The teacher understands the importance of knowing when to integrate technology into instruction and assessment.

The teacher understands the use of resources beyond the campus to help students meet academic and nonacademic needs.

The teacher uses various types of materials and other resources to aid in preparing and implementing instruction.

The teacher uses technological tools to promote learning and expand instructional options.

The teacher uses resources available outside the school (e.g., museums, businesses, community members) to enhance students' learning opportunities.

Designing Coherent Instruction

The teacher understands the importance of designing instruction that reflects the TEKS.

The teacher understands features of instruction that maximize students' thinking skills.

Special emphasis for the 8–12 teacher may include:

- posing problems that develop students' higher-order and abstract thinking

The teacher understands the importance of planning lessons and structuring units so that activities progress in a logical sequence.

The teacher understands how materials, technology, and other resources may be used to support instructional goals and objectives and engage students in meaningful learning.

The teacher understands the benefits of designing instruction that integrates content across disciplines.

The teacher understands the importance of engaging in continuous monitoring and self-assessment of instructional effectiveness.

The teacher plans instructional activities that progress sequentially and support stated instructional goals based on the TEKS.

The teacher selects instructional resources that support instructional goals, enhance student achievement, and engage students in learning.

The teacher uses varied activities and instructional groupings to engage students in instructional content and meet instructional goals and objectives.

The teacher allocates time appropriately within lessons and units, including providing adequate opportunities for students to engage in reflection and closure.

Special emphasis for the **EC–4** teacher may include:

- awareness of attention spans of students in grades EC–4

Special emphasis for the **4–8** teacher may include:

- exploring content by presenting thematic units that incorporate different disciplines, grouping students in study teams, providing multicultural learning experiences, and prompting students to consider ideas from multiple viewpoints

The teacher provides students with opportunities to explore content from many perspectives.

Special emphasis for the **EC–4** teacher may include:

- exploring content by providing an integrated curriculum, employing plan as one learning mode, permitting student choice of activities when appropriate, involving students in working on projects, designing instruction that supports students' growing ability to work cooperatively and to reflect upon other points of view

Special emphasis for the **8–12** teacher may include:

- exploring content by providing intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary instruction encouraging students' application of knowledge and skills to the world beyond the school, designing instruction that reflects students' increasing ability to examine complex issues and ideas

Assessment of Student Learning

The teacher understands the role of assessment in guiding instructional planning.

The teacher understands the importance of creating assessments that are congruent with instructional goals and objectives.

The teacher understands the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of various assessment methods and strategies.

The teacher understands the role of technology in assessing student learning.

The teacher understands the benefits of and strategies for promoting student self-assessment.

Special emphasis for the **8–12** teacher may include:

- the importance of using ongoing self-assessment in young adulthood

The teacher understands the connection between the Texas statewide assessment program, the TEKS, needs, and instruction.

The teacher understands how to analyze data from local, state, and other assessments using common, statistical measures.

The teacher uses a variety of assessment methods, including technology, that are appropriate for evaluating student achievement of instructional goals and objectives.

The teacher communicates assessment criteria and standards to students.

The teacher designs assessments, where appropriate, that reflect real-world applications of knowledge and understanding.

The teacher promotes students' use of self-monitoring and self-assessment.

The teacher analyzes assessment results to aid in determining students' strengths.

The teacher uses assessment results to help plan instruction for groups of students or individuals.

Although the TE_xES exam will not ask questions specifically about developmental theorists, the teacher is expected to know these theories and how they apply to teaching. As a review, these websites are listed as references at the end of the book.

Where to find other study resources for information about engaging and motivating students in effective learning and about utilizing appropriate assessment measures:

<http://lucas.tea.state.tx.us/PAI/TTB/1,3498,20,00.html>

This site allows users to browse lists of lesson plans and resources which have been chosen to enrich and support teaching and learning in the classroom.

www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed351150.html

This site provides teachers with information regarding portfolios and their use with young children.

www.eric.ed.gov/archives/pba.html

This site provides a copy of the brochure "What Should Parents Know about Performance Assessment."

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/assessment/studentprogress.htm#standardized>

This site provides information about measuring student progress.