

# NYSTCE Multi-Subject: English Language Arts (ELA) Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

- 1. Which skill encompasses understanding the physical aspects and functions of texts?**
  - A. Reading Comprehension**
  - B. Print Concepts**
  - C. Literary Awareness**
  - D. Textual Analysis**
- 2. What is the term for the mental process of focusing on a specific stimulus?**
  - A. Observation**
  - B. Attention**
  - C. Awareness**
  - D. Concentration**
- 3. Which of the following is NOT a mnemonic technique?**
  - A. Method of loci**
  - B. Acrostics**
  - C. Interference theory**
  - D. Keywords**
- 4. Which task involves evaluating new information against existing knowledge?**
  - A. Creating**
  - B. Justifying**
  - C. Applying**
  - D. Analyzing**
- 5. What is the focus of teaching phonics and spelling in early literacy development?**
  - A. Comprehension**
  - B. Word Recognition**
  - C. Phoneme Segmentation**
  - D. Fluency**

- 6. What is a word that is immediately recognized as a whole and does not require word analysis for identification?**
- A. Sight-word recognition**
  - B. Phonetic word**
  - C. Compound word**
  - D. Root word**
- 7. What is the purpose of running records in reading assessment?**
- A. To evaluate writing progress**
  - B. To determine students' mathematical skills**
  - C. To observe and analyze students' reading behaviors**
  - D. To assess phonetic awareness**
- 8. What concept involves the activation of one node leading to the activation of another connected node?**
- A. Priming**
  - B. Production system**
  - C. Spreading activation**
  - D. Conditional knowledge**
- 9. How are diphthongs characterized in phonetics?**
- A. As single vowel sounds**
  - B. As a smooth transition between two vowel sounds**
  - C. As distinct consonant sounds**
  - D. As soundless letters in a syllable**
- 10. What does elaborative rehearsal involve?**
- A. Simply repeating information**
  - B. Making connections with known information**
  - C. Testing oneself on the material**
  - D. Writing information down multiple times**

## **Answers**

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1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. A
7. C
8. C
9. B
10. B

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which skill encompasses understanding the physical aspects and functions of texts?**

**A. Reading Comprehension**

**B. Print Concepts**

**C. Literary Awareness**

**D. Textual Analysis**

The correct choice is centered on the foundational knowledge about how texts are organized and function in a physical and structural sense. Understanding print concepts includes recognizing that print carries meaning, knowing how to orient a book (e.g., front and back cover), identifying the parts of a text such as the title, headings, and paragraphs, and grasping concepts like spaces between words. This knowledge is essential for developing proficient reading skills, as it lays the groundwork for further comprehension and analysis. Reading comprehension, while vital, primarily focuses on understanding the meaning of text rather than the physical characteristics. Literary awareness encompasses an understanding of various genres, styles, and themes but does not deal specifically with the physical properties of texts. Textual analysis typically involves examining and interpreting the content, techniques, and deeper meanings within a text, which again goes beyond just understanding its physical aspects. Thus, Print Concepts is the most accurate skill that aligns with understanding how texts function physically.

**2. What is the term for the mental process of focusing on a specific stimulus?**

**A. Observation**

**B. Attention**

**C. Awareness**

**D. Concentration**

The term for the mental process of focusing on a specific stimulus is attention. Attention refers to the cognitive process that enables individuals to selectively concentrate on certain aspects of their environment while ignoring others. This is essential in various contexts, such as during learning, reading, or any activity requiring focus. By engaging attention, individuals can effectively process information and respond to their surroundings in a more efficient manner. It involves the ability to filter out distractions and allocate mental resources to relevant stimuli, making it a fundamental aspect of cognitive functioning. This ability to concentrate on specific stimuli allows for better comprehension and retention of information in various situations.

### 3. Which of the following is NOT a mnemonic technique?

- A. Method of loci
- B. Acrostics
- C. Interference theory**
- D. Keywords

The correct answer is interference theory because it is not a mnemonic technique; rather, it is a concept related to memory that deals with how existing memories can hinder the retrieval of new memories or the recall of previously learned information. In contrast, the method of loci is a well-known mnemonic device that involves associating items to be remembered with specific locations, thereby creating a mental map for easier recall. Acrostics are mnemonic aids that use the first letter of each word to form a memorable phrase or sentence, which can help in recalling a list of terms or concepts. Similarly, the keywords technique involves associating new vocabulary words with familiar words to create a mental link that enhances memory retention. Interference theory, however, does not function as a method for enhancing memory retention but rather as an explanation of a common obstacle in memory processes, making it distinct from the other options listed.

### 4. Which task involves evaluating new information against existing knowledge?

- A. Creating
- B. Justifying**
- C. Applying
- D. Analyzing

The task that involves evaluating new information against existing knowledge is best represented by justifying. Justification requires an individual to assess and validate claims or assertions based on previously established beliefs, principles, or information. When justifying, a person critically examines new ideas or facts and determines their validity or relevance in relation to what they already know. This process entails reasoning and providing evidence to support conclusions, thereby solidifying their understanding or challenging their prior knowledge. In contrast, creating would focus on generating new ideas or products rather than evaluating. Applying involves taking knowledge or skills and using them in particular contexts, which doesn't necessarily require evaluating new information. Analyzing is the process of breaking down information into its components to understand its structure or meaning, rather than a direct evaluation against existing knowledge. Each of these tasks has its significance, but justifying specifically captures the essence of evaluating new information against what one already understands.

**5. What is the focus of teaching phonics and spelling in early literacy development?**

**A. Comprehension**

**B. Word Recognition**

**C. Phoneme Segmentation**

**D. Fluency**

The focus of teaching phonics and spelling in early literacy development is primarily on phoneme segmentation. Phonemic awareness, which includes phoneme segmentation, is a critical skill that involves breaking down words into their individual sounds, or phonemes. This skill enables young learners to understand how sounds form words, which is essential for decoding unfamiliar words when reading. By mastering phoneme segmentation, children develop a foundational understanding of the relationship between sounds and letters, which supports both phonics and spelling. This knowledge facilitates their ability to sound out words as they encounter them in reading and helps improve their spelling as they learn to associate specific sounds with their corresponding letters. Consequently, focusing on phoneme segmentation strengthens a child's overall reading and writing skills, making it a central element in early literacy instruction.

**6. What is a word that is immediately recognized as a whole and does not require word analysis for identification?**

**A. Sight-word recognition**

**B. Phonetic word**

**C. Compound word**

**D. Root word**

The term "sight-word recognition" refers to words that are recognized instantly by a reader, without the need for decoding or word analysis. These words are typically high-frequency words that appear frequently in written texts and are often memorized by emerging readers. This recognition allows for smoother reading and helps with overall fluency. Sight words enhance a reader's ability to quickly understand text, as they do not need to sound the words out phonetically. In contrast, phonetic words require phonemic awareness and decoding skills, compound words consist of two smaller words combined, and root words may need additional morphemes for full understanding. Thus, sight-word recognition is specifically designed for immediate identification, making it the correct choice.

**7. What is the purpose of running records in reading assessment?**

- A. To evaluate writing progress**
- B. To determine students' mathematical skills**
- C. To observe and analyze students' reading behaviors**
- D. To assess phonetic awareness**

Running records are a tool used in reading assessment to closely observe and analyze students' reading behaviors. They involve having a student read a passage aloud while the teacher takes notes on various aspects of the reading process, including accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. This method allows educators to identify specific reading strengths and areas needing improvement, tailored to each student's needs. Through running records, teachers can gain insights into how students cope with various texts, their problem-solving strategies when encountering unfamiliar words, and their overall engagement with the material. This data is crucial for driving instruction, enabling teachers to provide appropriate support and interventions that enhance reading skills effectively. Thus, the primary purpose of running records centers on understanding and supporting the reading development of students.

**8. What concept involves the activation of one node leading to the activation of another connected node?**

- A. Priming**
- B. Production system**
- C. Spreading activation**
- D. Conditional knowledge**

The concept of spreading activation involves the process where the activation of one node in a network activates related nodes that are connected to it. This idea is often associated with cognitive psychology and models of memory, where concepts are represented as nodes in a network. When a specific node is activated—perhaps by recalling a specific word or idea—it can trigger the subsequent activation of other related nodes. For example, if the concept of "dog" is activated, related concepts such as "pet," "animal," or "bark" may also be activated, facilitating easier access to those related ideas. This mechanism highlights how interconnected our knowledge structures are and illustrates the way information is retrieved from memory. Spreading activation is fundamental to understanding how we make connections between ideas and access information efficiently in cognitive tasks.

## 9. How are diphthongs characterized in phonetics?

- A. As single vowel sounds
- B. As a smooth transition between two vowel sounds**
- C. As distinct consonant sounds
- D. As soundless letters in a syllable

Diphthongs are characterized in phonetics as a smooth transition between two vowel sounds. This means that when a diphthong is produced, the speaker starts at one vowel sound and glides into another within the same syllable. This blending creates a single, complex vowel sound that differs from a simple vowel, where the sound remains steady without any transition. The movement between the two vowel qualities is what defines a diphthong, making it particularly distinctive in spoken language. Recognizing this characteristic helps in understanding how certain vowel combinations function in speech, contributing to pronunciation and accent variation.

## 10. What does elaborative rehearsal involve?

- A. Simply repeating information
- B. Making connections with known information**
- C. Testing oneself on the material
- D. Writing information down multiple times

Elaborative rehearsal involves making connections with known information. This technique enhances understanding and retention of new material by integrating it into existing cognitive frameworks. When individuals connect new information to their prior knowledge or personal experiences, they create a richer, more meaningful context for the material. This process helps facilitate deeper learning, as it encourages active engagement with the content, leading to improved recall and comprehension. For instance, if a student learns about a new concept in science, related it to a real-world application or a previously learned topic can significantly enhance their grasp of the subject. This strategy contrasts with rote memorization, which relies primarily on repetition without establishing meaningful associations.