

Praxis Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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1. What type of feedback does formative assessment aim to provide?

- A. One-time final evaluations**
- B. Ongoing feedback for student improvement**
- C. Feedback solely for teachers' reference**
- D. Mandatory feedback from parents**

2. What role does a paraprofessional play in special education?

- A. They are primarily responsible for administrative tasks**
- B. They provide instructional support and assistance to students with disabilities**
- C. They lead all special education classes**
- D. They assess student progress**

3. What characterizes an integrated curriculum?

- A. It focuses on a single subject area for deep learning.**
- B. It emphasizes rote memorization of facts.**
- C. It draws from two or more subject areas based on a theme or concept.**
- D. It is primarily used in vocational training.**

4. Who is responsible for developing the IEP?

- A. The school principal alone**
- B. The IEP team, including parents, teachers, and specialists**
- C. The student and their friends**
- D. The school board exclusively**

5. What is the primary focus of behavioral intervention plans (BIPs)?

- A. To improve academic scores**
- B. To address and reduce challenging behaviors in students**
- C. To enhance teacher performance**
- D. To increase parental involvement**

6. Which learning theory emphasizes the role of social interaction?

- A. Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory**
- B. Skinner's Behaviorist Theory**
- C. Vygotsky's Social Development Theory**
- D. Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

7. Which federal law ensures that students with disabilities are not discriminated against in public schools?

- A. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**
- B. The Americans with Disabilities Act**
- C. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
- D. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

8. What educational principle was established by Brown vs. Board of Education?

- A. School uniforms are essential for equality.**
- B. Integrated schools promote equality.**
- C. All children should attend private schools.**
- D. Differentiated instruction is unnecessary.**

9. What defines multiple disabilities in educational contexts?

- A. One disability requiring separate education**
- B. Multiple impairments causing severe educational needs**
- C. Temporary impairments that can be cured**
- D. Single impairment with no additional challenges**

10. What purpose does supplementary curriculum serve in special education?

- A. It is optional for students with unique needs.**
- B. It is required when the traditional curriculum does not meet student needs.**
- C. It focuses exclusively on academic skills.**
- D. It enhances social skills in friendship groups.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What type of feedback does formative assessment aim to provide?

- A. One-time final evaluations**
- B. Ongoing feedback for student improvement**
- C. Feedback solely for teachers' reference**
- D. Mandatory feedback from parents**

Formative assessment is designed to offer ongoing feedback that helps students improve their learning. It is an integral part of the learning process, allowing educators to gather information about students' understanding and skills while instruction is still happening. This feedback can be specific and timely, enabling teachers to address students' needs, adjust their teaching strategies, and support learners in reaching their educational goals. By focusing on continuous improvement, formative assessments facilitate a more adaptive and responsive educational environment, promoting engagement and increased mastery of content.

2. What role does a paraprofessional play in special education?

- A. They are primarily responsible for administrative tasks**
- B. They provide instructional support and assistance to students with disabilities**
- C. They lead all special education classes**
- D. They assess student progress**

A paraprofessional in special education is primarily designated to provide instructional support and assistance to students with disabilities. This role involves working closely with teachers to implement educational plans and support the diverse needs of students in the classroom. Paraprofessionals assist in delivering individualized instruction, helping students with tasks, promoting engagement, and ensuring that students are able to participate fully in educational activities. This support is crucial in creating an inclusive learning environment where students with disabilities can thrive alongside their peers. By providing assistance, paraprofessionals help to reinforce skills taught by the teacher and adapt learning experiences to meet the unique needs of each student. Their presence also allows for a more effective teacher-student ratio, enabling a more personalized approach to education. In contrast, the other choices do not accurately reflect the primary responsibilities of a paraprofessional. Administrative tasks, leading classes, and assessing student progress are typically roles reserved for certified educators or those in formal teaching positions, highlighting the distinct function of paraprofessionals as supportive instructional aides rather than primary educators or administrators.

3. What characterizes an integrated curriculum?

- A. It focuses on a single subject area for deep learning.
- B. It emphasizes rote memorization of facts.
- C. It draws from two or more subject areas based on a theme or concept.**
- D. It is primarily used in vocational training.

An integrated curriculum is characterized by its approach to teaching and learning that connects multiple subject areas to provide a cohesive educational experience. By drawing from two or more subject areas based on a common theme or concept, it allows students to see the relationships among different disciplines, thereby enhancing their understanding and retention of knowledge. This method encourages interdisciplinary thinking and fosters skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, as learners are able to apply concepts from various domains to real-world situations. For instance, a project on environmental science might incorporate elements of biology, chemistry, and social studies, enabling students to explore a topic from multiple perspectives and understand its complexity. This integrated approach contrasts with a curriculum that focuses solely on a single subject or emphasizes rote memorization, which often does not promote a deeper comprehension of the material.

4. Who is responsible for developing the IEP?

- A. The school principal alone
- B. The IEP team, including parents, teachers, and specialists**
- C. The student and their friends
- D. The school board exclusively

The development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a collaborative process that involves a team of individuals who bring various perspectives and expertise to the table. The IEP team typically includes the child's parents or guardians, special education teachers, general education teachers, school administrators, and relevant specialists—such as psychologists, speech therapists, or occupational therapists. This team approach ensures that all aspects of a child's needs are considered, including their academic requirements, skills development, social-emotional needs, and specific accommodations or modifications necessary for their learning success. This collaborative model is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which emphasizes the importance of involving parents in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. The collective input from team members allows for a well-rounded and comprehensive educational plan tailored to the individual student, making it a crucial element of special education planning.

5. What is the primary focus of behavioral intervention plans (BIPs)?

- A. To improve academic scores**
- B. To address and reduce challenging behaviors in students**
- C. To enhance teacher performance**
- D. To increase parental involvement**

Behavioral intervention plans (BIPs) are primarily designed to address and reduce challenging behaviors in students. These plans are developed based on thorough assessments of the student's behavior, including Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs), which help identify the underlying causes or functions of the behaviors. The goal of a BIP is to implement strategies and interventions tailored to the specific needs of the student, aiming to modify behavior in a positive way. By focusing on the behaviors that disrupt learning or social interactions, BIPs not only help improve the student's overall learning environment but also encourage the development of more appropriate behaviors. Interventions may involve teaching replacement behaviors, modifying the environment, or using reinforcement strategies to increase desired behaviors, ultimately fostering a more conducive educational experience.

6. Which learning theory emphasizes the role of social interaction?

- A. Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory**
- B. Skinner's Behaviorist Theory**
- C. Vygotsky's Social Development Theory**
- D. Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

Vygotsky's Social Development Theory is centered around the idea that social interaction is crucial for cognitive development. According to Vygotsky, learning is inherently a socially mediated process; children learn through their interactions with more knowledgeable others, such as peers and adults. This theory introduces concepts such as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which highlights the potential for learning that occurs when children engage in collaborative dialogues or tasks that are slightly beyond their current capabilities, supported by guidance from those with more experience. In this way, social contexts significantly influence cognitive growth, marking a key distinction from other theories that may focus more on individual learning processes or innate capabilities. This emphasis on social interaction fosters a collaborative learning environment, acknowledging that understanding develops through participation in shared activities and dialogues.

7. Which federal law ensures that students with disabilities are not discriminated against in public schools?

- A. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**
- B. The Americans with Disabilities Act**
- C. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
- D. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is the federal law that specifically addresses discrimination against students with disabilities in public schools. This law prohibits any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from discriminating against individuals based on their disability. Under Section 504, schools must provide accommodations to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to education and school activities. This includes ensuring that their educational needs are met as adequately as those of students without disabilities. In context, while the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act focuses on providing individualized education programs (IEPs) for children with disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act extends civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities in various settings (including schools), Section 504 is particularly clear in its anti-discrimination mandate within educational settings. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, on the other hand, deals primarily with student privacy and the confidentiality of education records, rather than specifically addressing discrimination. Thus, Section 504 is the most directly relevant law for ensuring that public schools do not discriminate against students with disabilities.

8. What educational principle was established by Brown vs. Board of Education?

- A. School uniforms are essential for equality.**
- B. Integrated schools promote equality.**
- C. All children should attend private schools.**
- D. Differentiated instruction is unnecessary.**

The principle established by Brown vs. Board of Education focuses on the importance of integrated schools promoting equality. This landmark Supreme Court decision in 1954 ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional, marking a significant shift in educational policy and civil rights. The court determined that "separate but equal" educational facilities were inherently unequal, which violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This ruling emphasized that all students, regardless of their race, should have access to the same quality of education within inclusive and integrated environments. It laid the foundation for desegregation and was a catalyst for the civil rights movement, reinforcing the belief that diverse learning environments contribute to a more equitable educational experience for all children. Integration is essential in promoting equality not just in educational settings but also in fostering a sense of community and understanding among diverse populations.

9. What defines multiple disabilities in educational contexts?

- A. One disability requiring separate education
- B. Multiple impairments causing severe educational needs**
- C. Temporary impairments that can be cured
- D. Single impairment with no additional challenges

Multiple disabilities in educational contexts are defined as the presence of two or more impairments that significantly affect an individual's educational needs. This often results in severe challenges that require specialized and tailored educational interventions. Individuals with multiple disabilities typically face compounded challenges that go beyond what might be addressed by accommodating a single disability. For example, a student with both a physical impairment and intellectual disability may require a unique combination of resources and strategies that address both areas simultaneously, which is essential for effective learning and support. The complexity of their needs often necessitates a multidisciplinary approach to education, encompassing various therapeutic and instructional methods to fulfill their unique requirements. Considering the other options, the first choice suggests a single disability that necessitates separate education, which does not align with the definition of multiple disabilities. The third option refers to temporary impairments that can be cured, which does not accurately describe the perennial and layered nature of multiple disabilities. Lastly, the fourth option speaks to a single impairment without additional challenges, which contrasts sharply with the concept of having multiple disabilities. Thus, identifying multiple disabilities fundamentally revolves around addressing the severity and complexity that arise from having more than one impairment.

10. What purpose does supplementary curriculum serve in special education?

- A. It is optional for students with unique needs.
- B. It is required when the traditional curriculum does not meet student needs.**
- C. It focuses exclusively on academic skills.
- D. It enhances social skills in friendship groups.

Supplementary curriculum plays a crucial role in special education by ensuring that students with unique needs receive the support necessary to access the general education curriculum effectively. This approach is essential when the traditional curriculum is not adequately designed to accommodate all learners, particularly those with disabilities or specific learning challenges. Supplementary materials and strategies are tailored to address these diverse needs, helping to create an inclusive educational environment where all students can thrive. By providing additional resources, differentiated instruction, or targeted interventions, supplementary curriculum serves to fill the gaps that might exist in the standard curriculum. This ensures that students can engage with the content and meet educational goals, ultimately leading to a more equitable educational experience. The other options do not accurately capture the primary function of supplementary curriculum. While it may enhance social skills or focus on various areas, those are not its main objectives. Additionally, claiming that it is optional undermines the necessity of these supports for many students whose learning cannot be effectively achieved through the traditional curriculum alone.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://praxis5355.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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