



TEST DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK

TEST DESIGN

Special Education General Curriculum

The **Special Education General Curriculum** assessment consists of **two tests**. Each test contains a section with selected-response questions and a section with constructed-response assignments. Each section counts for a percentage of your total test score. The areas of content assessed by each test, the approximate number of selected-response questions and constructed-response assignments in each content area, and the percentage of your total test score derived from each test section are shown in the tables below. Further information regarding the content included in each subarea can be found in the test framework.

■ Test I (Test Code 081)

Subareas:	Objectives	Approximate Number of Selected-Response Questions	Constructed-Response Assignments
➤ Understanding Students with Disabilities	0001–0003	22	1
➤ Assessing Students and Developing Programs	0004–0008	38	1
TOTAL		60	2
Percentage of Test Score		80%	20%

■ Test II (Test Code 082)

Subareas:	Objectives	Approximate Number of Selected-Response Questions	Constructed-Response Assignments
➤ Promoting Student Development and Learning	0009–0012	30	1
➤ Working in a Professional Environment	0013–0016	30	1
TOTAL		60	2
Percentage of Test Score		80%	20%



Georgia Assessments for the
Certification of Educators®

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TEST FRAMEWORK

Special Education General Curriculum

UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

0001 Understand human development.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of typical and atypical human growth and development (e.g., cognitive, linguistic, physical, social, emotional)
- demonstrating knowledge of the effects of various disabilities on physical, sensory, motor, cognitive, language, social, and/or emotional development and functioning
- recognizing the similarities and differences between individuals with and without disabilities in regard to growth and development
- recognizing the roles families and environment play in the development and learning of individuals with and without disabilities

0002 Understand the various characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of types, etiologies, and characteristics of various disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of causes and effects of common medical conditions and health impairments affecting students with disabilities (e.g., diabetes, asthma, seizure)
- recognizing the educational implications of various types of disabilities (e.g., emotional/behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, physical disabilities)
- demonstrating knowledge of transfers (e.g., floor to sitting, wheelchair to stander, chair to chair) and safe, appropriate procedures for transferring and positioning students with physical disabilities



0003 Understand factors affecting learning and development of students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of the effects (e.g., on education, career, vocation, recreation) of various disabilities on learning and behavior throughout an individual's lifespan
- recognizing the impact of physical and health-related disabilities on individuals, their families, and society
- demonstrating familiarity with the uses and possible effects of various types of medications (e.g., stimulant, antidepressant, seizure) in relation to students' learning, development, and functioning
- demonstrating knowledge of the effects of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic differences on learning and development and strategies for addressing such differences
- recognizing the impact of language development and listening comprehension on students' learning
- recognizing the impact of various disabilities on auditory and information-processing skills and on expressive language skills
- demonstrating knowledge of the effects of different learning environments, classroom management strategies, and intervention techniques on students' development and learning

ASSESSING STUDENTS AND DEVELOPING PROGRAMS

0004 Understand types and characteristics of various assessments.

For example:

- recognizing basic concepts and terminology used in assessment (e.g., reliability, validity, basal, ceiling)
- recognizing the uses and limitations of various formal and informal assessments
- demonstrating knowledge of specific assessment instruments used to evaluate students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of how to collaborate with parents/guardians, classroom teachers, related service providers, and others to gather background information on students' academic, medical, and family history

0005 Understand procedures for conducting assessment activities to address the individual needs of students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of screening, prereferral, referral, and classification procedures, including procedures for early identification of young children who may be at risk for disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of how to develop, select, adapt, and modify assessment instruments and strategies for students with diverse characteristics and needs (e.g., related to culture, language, nature and severity of disabilities, communication, and response modes)
- demonstrating knowledge of how to administer nonbiased formal and informal assessments, including assessments of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- demonstrating knowledge of environmental factors (e.g., lighting, noise) that can affect the assessment of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use ecological assessments, portfolio assessments, individualized inventories, task analyses, and functional assessments (e.g., behavioral, social, communication) to accommodate the unique strengths and needs of students with disabilities

0006 Understand how to interpret and communicate assessment results.

For example:

- applying knowledge of how to interpret the results of formal and informal assessments and recommend appropriate services and interventions based upon those results
- applying knowledge of strategies for communicating assessment results to all stakeholders (e.g., students with disabilities, their parents/guardians, general education teachers, administrators, service providers)
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use formal and informal assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and monitor students' ongoing progress
- applying strategies for recommending modifications and accommodations to curriculum based upon assessment results

0007 Understand procedures for developing, implementing, and amending Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and transition plans.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of the continuum of placement and services available for students with disabilities
- applying knowledge of how to use assessment information to make appropriate eligibility, program, and placement recommendations for students with disabilities, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- recognizing strategies for collaborating with students and their families in developing and monitoring progress toward instructional, behavioral, social, career, and independent living goals
- demonstrating knowledge of how to develop and implement comprehensive, longitudinal individualized programs (e.g., IEPs, IFSPs, transition plans) in collaboration with students with disabilities, their parents/guardians, general education teachers, and other professionals
- demonstrating knowledge of how to prioritize goals and objectives within areas of the general curriculum for students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of national, state, and local content and performance standards (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards)
- demonstrating knowledge of how to sequence, implement, and evaluate short- and long-term individualized learning goals

0008 Understand uses of instructional and assistive technologies to support the communication and learning of students with disabilities.

For example:

- recognizing how to make informed decisions regarding types and levels of assistive technologies, devices, and services needed by students with various strengths and needs
- applying knowledge of procedures for selecting and implementing assistive technologies, devices, and services to facilitate students' educational achievement, communication, mobility, and active participation in educational activities and routines
- demonstrating knowledge of how to incorporate instructional and assistive technologies into IEPs
- demonstrating knowledge of the use and maintenance of various assistive technology devices
- demonstrating knowledge of how to collaborate with families, colleagues, and other professionals to facilitate students' use and independent management of assistive technologies in various settings (e.g., school, home, work)



PROMOTING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

0009 Understand strategies for managing the learning environment to create a safe, supportive, and inclusive classroom climate that promotes the development and learning of students with disabilities.

For example:

- applying knowledge of strategies for creating a safe, supportive, and positive classroom climate that fosters respect for diversity and positive interactions among all students
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for addressing common barriers to accessibility and acceptance faced by students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of how to design and adapt physical and learning environments to promote students' active participation, academic success, self-advocacy, and independence
- demonstrating knowledge of classroom management strategies, including structuring and managing daily routines (e.g., transitions between lessons or classes) to optimize students' time on task and facilitate students' effective use of instructional time
- analyzing the ways in which teacher attitudes and behaviors affect individuals with and without disabilities and recognizing effective strategies for establishing and maintaining rapport with all students
- recognizing types and transmission routes of infectious diseases and demonstrating knowledge of universal safety precautions for avoiding transmission of such diseases
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for preparing students to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world, including strategies for creating a learning environment that enables students to retain and appreciate their own and others' linguistic and cultural heritages
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use technology for planning and managing the teaching and learning environment

0010 Understand the development and implementation of effective behavior management and behavior intervention strategies for students with disabilities.

For example:

- identifying individualized expectations for the personal and social behavior of students with disabilities in given settings and identifying ways to support students' successful integration into various program placements
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use performance data and information from all stakeholders to modify the learning environment to manage behaviors
- demonstrating knowledge of ethics, laws, rules, and procedural safeguards related to planning and implementing behavior management and discipline for students with and without disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of the principle of using the least intrusive behavior management strategy consistent with the needs of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for increasing students' self-awareness, self-control, and self-management and identifying strategies for crisis prevention, intervention, and management
- demonstrating knowledge of various reinforcement techniques and strategies for planning and implementing individualized reinforcement systems and environmental modifications
- demonstrating knowledge of how to integrate academic instruction with behavior management, including knowledge of nonaversive techniques for controlling targeted behavior and maintaining the attention of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of procedures for reviewing, evaluating, and amending behavior management and intervention strategies



0011 Understand principles and methods of planning and delivering instruction for students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of how to adapt or create learning plans for students with disabilities (e.g., sensory, mobility, cognitive, behavioral) in a variety of settings (e.g., classroom, resource room, community)
- applying knowledge of how to select, adapt, and use research-based instructional methods and materials to address the strengths and needs of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for helping students with disabilities maintain and generalize skills across learning environments
- applying knowledge of strategies for teaching students with disabilities how to use self-assessment, problem solving, metacognitive skills, and other cognitive strategies to identify and meet their own needs
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for modifying classroom tests and for helping students with disabilities learn how to prepare for and take tests (e.g., development of learning strategies, study skills, and test-taking strategies)
- applying knowledge of how to modify instruction, adapt materials, and provide feedback based on formative assessment and student feedback (e.g., by modifying pacing, scaffolding instruction, providing organizational cues, integrating student-initiated learning experiences into ongoing instruction, and using multiple approaches to content)
- demonstrating knowledge of specialized materials, curricula, and resources for students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of the impact of students' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development

0012 Understand strategies and techniques for promoting the development of communication, social, and life skills of students with disabilities.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of how to support and enhance communication skills (e.g., developing vocabulary, self-monitoring oral language) of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for providing instruction to students with disabilities in the use of alternative and augmentative communication systems
- recognizing social skills needed for educational and other environments (e.g., giving and receiving meaningful feedback, engaging in conversations) and demonstrating knowledge of how to design instructional programs that enhance social participation across environments
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for enhancing the self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-esteem, self-advocacy, self-determination, and independence of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies, methods, and resources for designing and implementing life skills curricula (e.g., independent living, career, vocational, leisure, recreational), including methods for integrating life skills curricula into the general curriculum
- demonstrating knowledge of resources, techniques, and procedures for transitioning students with disabilities into and out of school, alternative programs, and postschool environments

WORKING IN A PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

0013 Understand how to communicate and collaborate with students with disabilities and their families to help students achieve desired learning outcomes.

For example:

- demonstrating familiarity with typical concerns of parents/guardians of students with disabilities and recognizing effective strategies for addressing such concerns
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for helping students with disabilities and their parents/guardians become active participants on the educational team (e.g., during assessment, during the development and implementation of an individualized program)
- demonstrating awareness of culturally responsive strategies for ensuring effective communication and collaboration among families of students with disabilities, school personnel, and representatives of community agencies
- demonstrating knowledge of family systems and the roles of families in the educational process
- recognizing the potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school



0014 Understand how to communicate and collaborate with colleagues, administrators, service providers, and community agencies to help students with disabilities achieve desired learning outcomes.

For example:

- recognizing various roles and responsibilities that school personnel, service providers, and community agencies can take in planning an individualized program
- recognizing the roles and responsibilities of the special education teacher in regard to seeking assistance from and collaborating with other professionals to support student learning
- demonstrating knowledge of various models and strategies of consultation and collaboration (e.g., coteaching, consultant teaching) and their implementation
- recognizing the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators (e.g., related to instruction, intervention, and direct services) and demonstrating knowledge of strategies and procedures for observing, evaluating, and providing feedback to paraeducators
- recognizing effective strategies for collaborating with school personnel, service providers, and community agencies to integrate students with disabilities into various settings and demonstrating knowledge of strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of collaborative activities
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for coaching general education teachers and other service providers in instructional methods, technology, and accommodations for students with disabilities
- recognizing how to communicate effectively with school personnel about the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of legal and ethical guidelines in regard to maintaining confidentiality when communicating with school personnel about students with disabilities

0015 Understand the historical, social, and legal foundations of the field of special education.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of theories and philosophies that form the foundation for special education practice
- demonstrating knowledge of the historical foundations of special education, including classic studies, major contributors, and important legislation (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act [IDEA], Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA], No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Act)
- demonstrating knowledge of current issues and trends in the field of special education (e.g., full inclusion, standards-based reforms, access to new technologies, person-centered planning)
- demonstrating knowledge of definitions and issues in the identification of individuals with disabilities, including factors influencing the overrepresentation of students from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds in programs for students with disabilities
- demonstrating knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders related to the education of students with disabilities (e.g., students, parents/guardians, teachers, other professionals, schools)
- demonstrating knowledge of laws, litigation, policies, and ethical principles related to referral, assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services for students with disabilities, including issues, assurances, and due process rights

0016 Understand the professional, ethical, and legal roles and responsibilities of the special educator.

For example:

- applying knowledge of how to uphold high standards for professional practice, including participating in professional activities and organizations that benefit students with disabilities, their families, and colleagues
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use resources (e.g., professional organizations and journals, online resources, conferences, workshops, mentors) to enhance one's own professional knowledge (e.g., current research-validated practices, information about the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities) and engage in lifelong professional growth and development
- applying knowledge of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Code of Ethics and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics for Educators
- demonstrating knowledge of laws, policies, and ethical principles related to behavior management, the provision of specialized health care in the educational setting, and mandated reporting
- applying knowledge of how to uphold high standards of competence, good judgment, and integrity when conducting instructional and other professional activities, including complying with all applicable laws, policies, and procedures (e.g., local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements)
- recognizing effective strategies for engaging in reflection and self-assessment activities for the purposes of identifying one's own personal cultural biases, improving instruction, and guiding professional growth
- demonstrating knowledge of how to advocate effectively for individual students with disabilities, their families, and the special education program in general
- recognizing appropriate procedures for creating and maintaining records regarding students with disabilities, including following legal and ethical guidelines for maintaining confidentiality