

Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (0023)

Test at a Glance

Test Name	Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education		
Test Code	0023		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120		
Format	Multiple-choice questions		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Growth and Development of Young Children Across the Spectrum of Development	24	20%
	II. Educational and Service Requirements for Children with a Range of Abilities and Special Needs	19-20	16%
	III. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for Young Children	26-27	22%
	IV. Play and Learning Environment for Young Children	24	20%
	V. Collaboration with Families and Colleagues	14-15	12%
	VI. Professionalism and Growth Through Professional Development	11-12	10%

About This Test

The Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) test is designed to measure the professional knowledge and skills of prospective teachers of young children (birth through kindergarten).

The content of the test was drawn up by experts in the field of interdisciplinary early childhood education and was confirmed as necessary for safe and effective practice and needed at the time of entry into the profession by a survey of teachers, teacher educators, and administrators. The test is aligned closely with the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) for the Council of Exceptional Children. Its development was also informed by the extensive research base on the importance of high-quality early childhood and preschool programs on children's readiness to learn.

The test is appropriate for examinees who are completing or have completed an undergraduate teacher training program in IECE and are taking this Praxis test for initial certification/licensure; are completing or have completed a graduate teacher training program in IECE and are taking Praxis for initial certification/licensure; or have a teaching certificate/license and are seeking an additional certification/licensure.

The 120 multiple-choice questions assess job-related knowledge as well as the ability to analyze problems and apply principles to specific situations. Some questions on this test may not count toward your score.

Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

I. Growth and Development of Young Children Across the Spectrum of Development

- Identify the characteristics and needs of all young children
- Analyze multiple influences on child development and learning
- Recognize how a healthy, respectful, supportive, challenging, developmentally appropriate learning environment contributes to the development of all children
- Act according to foundational theories of development of all young children
- Recognize the milestones of cognitive and perceptual development of all young children
- Recognize the milestones of physical and motor development of all young children
- Recognize the milestones of social and emotional development of all young children
- Recognize the milestones of communication and language development of all young children
- Recognize adaptive/self-help skills of all young children

II. Educational and Service Requirements for Children with a Range of Abilities and Special Needs

- Identify the characteristics of young children with a range of abilities and special needs
- Develop and implement an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Act according to major laws related to the rights of children and educator responsibilities, including but not limited to IDEA
- Plan and implement the interdisciplinary process of service delivery systems
- Determine assistive and adaptive technology appropriate to address the needs of individual children

III. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for Young Children

Curriculum and Instruction

- Design developmentally appropriate, comprehensive curriculum and instruction aligned with state standards
- Facilitate children's acquisition and integration of behavior, skills, and concepts to support learning aligned with state standards
- Adapt and individualize curriculum and instruction strategies and plans for children and families, including those with special needs and disabilities
- Select developmentally and individually appropriate strategies and resources to provide routine- and activity-based learning experiences
- Design and implement a daily schedule balanced with adult-directed and child-initiated activities
- Implement developmentally appropriate teacher-directed grouping strategies (i.e., peer-to-peer, small group, and whole group)
- Plan and provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate child-initiated activities with adult support as needed
- Encourage children's active involvement in a variety of structured and unstructured learning activities
- Design appropriate activities within the natural environment/least restrictive environment that align with the individualized service plan
- Provide learning experiences that support and expand the cultural knowledge and practices of children and families
- Provide guidance, learning cues, and positive feedback to children

Assessment

- Understand the goals, benefits, and appropriate uses of assessment
- Select appropriate observation, documentation, and assessment tools and approaches
- Create assessment partnerships with families and other professionals
- Use developmentally appropriate and authentic assessments to improve instruction, to plan individualized learning experiences, and to develop and implement IFSPs and IEPs
- Select, create, adapt, and use multiple modes and methods of assessments that are sensitive to the unique cultural and learning needs of the child and family
- Actively involve families and other team members in the assessment process
- Systematically collect, organize, record, and analyze ongoing assessment data to monitor child progress and program evaluation
- Monitor, summarize, and evaluate the acquisition of IFSP child and family outcomes and the IEP child goals
- Effectively communicate ongoing assessment results of child progress with families and other team members using everyday language, including primary language and communicative mode

IV. Play and Learning Environment for Young Children

- Create and maintain an emotionally healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging play and learning environment
- Create and maintain a physically healthy and safe environment through basic sanitation, nutrition, room ventilation, and good health practices
- Create the physical, social, and temporal environment to engage children and maximize learning aligned with state standards
- Create and maintain developmentally and individually appropriate activity-based learning environments
- Provide developmentally and individually appropriate indoor and outdoor environments, allowing for individual, cooperative, small- and whole-group activities and providing opportunities for children to play, explore, and discover
- Create environments that recognize and value diversity as a strength in children and families
- Adapt environments to support children with special needs and disabilities such as the placement of children with vision and hearing impairments, space and paths for mobility supports, children with challenging behaviors, and functional behavior assessment guidelines
- Create, evaluate, and select materials, media, and technology, including assistive and adaptive technology, to enhance the play and learning environment
- Facilitate positive interactions between children and adults including peer interaction
- Use positive guidance techniques to foster children's self-regulation, appropriate social interaction, and social competence
- Understand how to create environments that function within legal, ethical, and professional guidelines
- Understand strategies for collaboration with adults to create a positive play and learning environment
- Understand the benefit of the natural environment/ least restrictive environment as the most appropriate place for implementation of the IFSP/IEP

V. Collaboration with Families and Colleagues

- Plan for the effective involvement of team members including assistants, staff, families, and volunteers across learning environments
- Incorporate team members' (including families) knowledge of multiple disciplines and strategies
- Plan and implement center-based experiences and instruction that incorporate family strengths and resources, priorities, and concerns
- Plan and implement family-centered activities that reflect use of natural environments, the family's resources, priorities, and concerns
- Participate as an effective team member and demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills to support collaboration in early childhood settings
- Seek and encourage the participation of families as partners in promoting the child's development, making decisions, and implementing and evaluating program plans for the child
- Apply family systems theory, family dynamics, family involvement, and identifying community resources for family support

VI. Professionalism and Growth Through Professional Development

- Understand the necessity to engage in ongoing self reflection, professional development, and professional memberships to improve professional practices
- Apply professional ethics, practices, and legal mandates in early childhood settings
- Apply and function within legal, ethical, and professional guidelines
- Act according to major laws related to the rights of children and educator responsibilities, including but not limited to IDEA, confidentiality and privacy, child abuse reporting, and assessment
- Use effective advocacy strategies for children and families

Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case and fill in the corresponding lettered space on the answer sheet with a heavy, dark mark so that you cannot see the letter.

- Which of the following behaviors in a 5-month-old baby should be brought to the attention of a nurse-practitioner or family doctor?
 - Putting objects, such as toes, into the mouth
 - Pushing up, rocking, and rolling
 - Favoring a particular arm and leg
 - Crying when there is a loud noise
- Which of the following is a fine motor skill that 2-year-old children are usually able to demonstrate?
 - Going upstairs alone
 - Filling pails and funnels with sand
 - Throwing a ball three to five feet
 - Jumping in place on both feet
- Which of the following is a gross motor skill that 4-year-old children are usually able to demonstrate?
 - Turning somersaults
 - Jumping rope
 - Cutting with scissors
 - Riding a bicycle
- Two young children are working together in the art center, using a variety of materials to make a bird. Materials include Styrofoam balls, eggs, and blocks, toothpicks, feathers, sequins, beads, scraps of felt, ribbons, glue, and scissors. The students are engaged in which of the following types of play?
 - Dramatic
 - Constructive
 - Exploratory
 - Parallel
- Of the following, which would best support the development of literacy skills in the kindergarten classroom?
 - Using a commercially developed language arts curriculum aligned with national standards
 - Creating attractive bulletin boards using commercially prepared materials to reinforce language arts concepts
 - Teaching phonics, decoding, and word recognition skills using work sheets
 - Providing children with a variety of reading and writing materials and opportunities
- Which of the following placements for a child with multiple special needs is most consistent with the concept of inclusion?
 - A setting that maximizes contact with other children with special needs and that reduces exposure to mainstreamed environments
 - A traditional early childhood program in which children with special needs do not receive special services
 - The same educational program, with support services, that other children of the same age are receiving
 - An alternative education setting providing each child with a trained paraprofessional who works one-on-one with the child
- Which of the following strategies would best foster multiculturalism in the preschool classroom?
 - Playing music from different cultures during free time
 - Serving foods from various countries during snack time
 - Inviting families to share their customs with the class
 - Hanging colorful travel posters in the classroom

8. Two kindergarten children are playing with clay. When Tommy takes all of the red clay, Jess starts to cry and says to Tommy, "I really wanted to play with red clay too. Red is my favorite color." Tommy looks at the teacher, who sends the nonverbal message "It's up to you what you want to do" with just the expression on her face. Tommy pulls off a large chunk of red clay and hands it to Jess.

Which of the following statements best describes how the teacher has contributed to the interaction described above?

- (A) The teacher has served as a role model and helped the children solve a problem on their own.
- (B) The teacher has permitted crying as a healthy way for the children to express disappointment.
- (C) The teacher has encouraged the children to seek help from adults in resolving conflicts.
- (D) The teacher has established strict rules for controlling inappropriate behavior by the children.

9. Jimmy is in preschool. He has learned to take off and put on his coat without help. However, when his mother comes to pick him up, she expects that she will help him get dressed. Which of the following would be the most appropriate teacher comment in this situation?

- (A) "May I ask why are you putting Jimmy's coat on for him?"
- (B) "If you put on Jimmy's coat, he will not do it for himself."
- (C) "Jimmy can now put on his coat by himself."
- (D) "It's important that you let Jimmy take care of himself."

10. Which of the following describes a situation in which a teacher is behaving in a less than exemplary professional manner?

- (A) When speaking on behalf of an educational organization at a professional conference, a teacher voices support for several of the organization's programs and policies.
- (B) A teacher has identified a few children who would benefit from additional exposure to print and provides the names and addresses of the children to the subscription department of an educational magazine.
- (C) A teacher, concerned about a child's welfare, reveals confidential information to the school guidance counselor who may be able to act in the child's interest.
- (D) A teacher, concerned about the actions of a co-worker during the school day, meets informally with the colleague and attempts to resolve the matter collegially.

11. Which of the following best describes how a teacher might self-assess his or her classroom practices?

- (A) Taking time to regularly analyze, critique, and revise instructional decisions
- (B) Asking the preschool director to visit the classroom and provide performance feedback
- (C) Consulting with a colleague about possible responses to unpredictable classroom situations
- (D) Ensuring that professional interactions with parents are aligned with the Code of Ethical Conduct of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).



12. A 5 year old is given the sequence of shapes above and is asked to continue the pattern. The student adds the following:



Which of the following would it be most appropriate for the teacher to say at this point?

- (A) "That is not right. Would you like to try again?"
- (B) "Can you tell me why you added those two shapes?"
- (C) "There are three parts to the pattern. Do you see them?"
- (D) "Let me show you how to continue the pattern."
13. A teacher keeps a folder on each child in a class in order to assess the child's progress over time. Which of the following items are NOT likely to be found in each child's folder?
- (A) Dated work samples together with teacher notes
- (B) Anecdotal records and records of systematic observations
- (C) Checklists, rating scales, and screening inventories
- (D) Weekly classroom lesson plans and curriculum goals
14. Which of the following is an example of a skill that can be observed in a normally developing 18 month old?
- (A) Knowing what is food and what is not food
- (B) Following directions to put a toy in the toy box
- (C) Pointing to five parts of a doll when asked
- (D) Matching an object to a picture of that object
15. Which of the following is an example of how to appropriately record in an anecdotal record information about a 3-year-old child's language use during free playtime?
- (A) Mary is unable to use colors to describe the blocks.
- (B) Mary should be tested for a possible auditory difficulty.
- (C) Mary can speak in complete sentences of 3 to 5 words.
- (D) Mary's language development is below par.
16. Joshua enjoys riding the tricycle but refuses to participate in art activities for more than a few minutes at a time. The teacher makes access to the tricycle dependent on longer involvement during art time. The teacher's action is an example of the use of
- (A) contingency management
- (B) task variation
- (C) backward chaining
- (D) shaping
17. A young child with developmental delays shows a special interest in balloons. The teacher uses balloons throughout the day when targeting skills; for example, by having the child request balloons, follow directions in painting balloons, use words related to balloons, and play games with balloons. The teacher's approach best exemplifies which of the following?
- (A) Task analysis
- (B) Activity-based intervention
- (C) Incidental teaching
- (D) Environmental programming
18. Which of the following best describes the most appropriate role of the family in early intervention?
- (A) To be trained to deliver early intervention services eventually
- (B) To be equal partners and collaborators with professionals in early intervention
- (C) To be involved in determining the individuals who will provide the early intervention services
- (D) To understand what early intervention is and why the child will benefit from it
19. A teacher reads aloud *Where the Wild Things Are*, in which a boy named Max has a wild rumpus with the wild things on a faraway island. The teacher then gives the children five picture cards depicting scenes from the story and asks the children to put them in the order in which they happened in the story. Which of the following literary elements is the teacher assessing?
- (A) Setting
- (B) Character
- (C) Point of view
- (D) Plot sequence

20. When parents ask in writing to review their child's school records, the agency or provider maintaining the records must comply with the request within no more than
- (A) 14 calendar days
 - (B) 21 calendar days
 - (C) 31 calendar days
 - (D) 45 calendar days
21. A child says, "I goed to the zoo with my daddy." Which of the following best explains why the child said "goed" instead of "went"?
- (A) Paralanguage
 - (B) Productive language difficulty
 - (C) Overgeneralization
 - (D) Receptive language difficulty
22. Which of the following activities would be most effective in introducing kindergartners to the concept of water circulation within a plant?
- (A) Examining the cross section of a stalk of celery and noticing that it seems to contain little holes
 - (B) Leaving celery stalks in colored water overnight and discussing why the celery leaves turn the same color as the water
 - (C) Having the children drink water using a straw and reasoning by analogy that plants also drink water somewhat like this
 - (D) Planting celery seeds in sterile soil in paper cups, placing them under a grow light, and watering them once a week
23. Which of the following skills must be learned before a child can skip?
- (A) Hopping
 - (B) Running
 - (C) Walking backward
 - (D) Crab walking
24. After a visit to the rescue squad, Ms. Sparza works with her 3-year-old students to write a thank-you letter to the rescue squad. As the children contribute their ideas, the teacher writes them on large chart paper. Which of the following literacy skills is Ms. Sparza primarily helping the children understand?
- (A) Using upper and lowercase letters
 - (B) Spacing between words and sentences
 - (C) Expressing speech and ideas in print
 - (D) Using common sight words in writing
25. One of the activities in a literacy center has the children match pictures of objects that begin with the same sound. Which of the following aspects of phonological awareness are the children using when matching the pictures?
- (A) Phoneme substitution
 - (B) Phoneme segmentation
 - (C) Phoneme blending
 - (D) Phoneme manipulation

Answers

1. Choice C is the correct response. A parent should consult with a nurse-practitioner or doctor if a child is favoring a particular side of the body since this may be a sign of cerebral palsy. It is developmentally normal for 5 month olds to put objects into the mouth (choice A), try to push themselves up (choice B), and cry when there is a loud noise (choice D).
2. Choice B is the correct response. Fine motor skills are those that include precise thumb, finger, hand, and wrist movements. Choices A, C, and D are gross motor skills that are developmentally appropriate for 2 year olds.
3. Choice A is the correct response, according to most charts of developmental milestones. Choice C is a fine motor skill, and choices B and D are more likely to be seen in 5 year olds.
4. Choice B is the correct answer. Constructive play (choice B) encourages children's creativity and stimulates the development of skills and positive relationships. Since the children have a goal in mind (i.e., making a bird) and are using the materials to make the bird, it would be incorrect to characterize their behavior as simply exploratory play (choice C). Since the two children are working together with a shared focus (i.e., making a bird), this would not be considered parallel play (choice D). Dramatic play (choice A) may occur after the children have completed their project, but is not described in the scenario.
5. Choice D is the correct answer. Research has found that providing young children with varied opportunities to engage in the reading and writing processes stimulates their motivation and advances their literacy skills. Teaching phonics skills in isolation using work sheets (choice C) may teach letter-sound relationships, but not the literacy skills of reading and writing. There is little indication that commercial curriculums and commercially produced classroom materials (choices A and B) help children in kindergarten develop literacy skills. Choices A and B may be effective, however, in grades 1 through 3 if well implemented.
6. Choice C is the correct response. The intent of inclusion is for children to be placed in the least restrictive educational environment. IDEA mandates that children with disabilities be placed in the same educational program they would have attended had they not had special needs.
7. Choice C is the correct response. Young children construct their cultural identities primarily in relation to their own families, and thus the instructional approach in choice C is most likely to be effective. Simply providing multicultural materials will not accomplish this goal.
8. Choice A is the correct response. Promoting prosocial behavior and interpersonal problem-solving skills are two important concerns of the preschool teacher. Research has found that teachers who model prosocial and generative behavior typically have classrooms in which students internalize and adopt prosocial and empathetic behaviors.
9. Choice C is the correct response. The message quietly and graciously communicates to Jimmy and his mother his ability to function independently. Choices A, B, and D may seem overbearing and offer no encouragement to Jimmy or his mother.
10. Choice B is the correct response. The teacher violates the confidentiality of students by providing names and addresses to an outside organization (choice B) and thus is not behaving in a professional manner. Choice A, a teacher who is speaking at a conference and supporting several of the organization's programs and policies, is behaving in a professional manner. Choices C and D are appropriate actions that ensure the safety of children and the integrity of the profession.
11. Choice A is the correct response. The ability to conduct a self-assessment requires the teacher to examine continually and critically what he or she is doing. A teacher who takes time to analyze and critique instruction and student understanding is self-assessing his or her classroom practices.
12. Choice B is the correct response. The child may see a pattern the teacher does not see and should therefore be asked to explain his or her thinking before the response is judged.
13. Choice D is the correct answer. Choices A, B, and C are types of items that may be found in a folder kept to assess student progress. Weekly lesson plans and curriculum goals are items that do not need to be in such a folder.
14. Choice B is the correct response. A normally developing 18 month old will be able to follow simple one-step directions (choice B). A normally developing 2 year old will be able to point to five parts of a doll when asked (choice C). A normally developing 3 year old will know what is food and what is not food (choice A) and will also be able to match an object to a picture of that object (choice D).
15. Choice C is the correct response. Anecdotal records document what a child can do, as well as his or her achievements, as opposed to what he or she cannot do. Choice C states what Mary can do and is an appropriate example of an entry in an anecdotal record. Choice A states what Mary cannot do or is unable to do. Choices B and D state a teacher's professional opinion about Mary rather than a direct observation.

16. Choice A is the best answer. Access to the desired activity of riding the tricycle is contingent on the completion of an undesired or less desired activity—participating in art activities. This approach to behavior management is also known as the Premack principle, or “grandma’s law.” If the plan is written down, it is often called a contingency contract.

17. Choice B is the best answer. Activity-based intervention has been defined as child-directed, embedding training across various activities, using logically occurring antecedents and consequences, and focusing on functional skill development (Diane Bricker). The activities described meet this definition.

18. The best answer is choice B. Current best practice in early intervention emphasizes partnership and collaboration with families.

19. The correct answer is choice D. Each of the choices is a literary element, but only choice D, plot sequence, refers to the progression of events in a story, which would be indicated on the cards depicting the beginning, middle, and ending of the story.

20. The correct answer is choice D. The school or agency must allow the parents to see their child’s records within 45 calendar days after receiving the request in writing, unless the parents need to see the records sooner to prepare for an IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting.

Additional information on this topic can be found at the United States government Web site:
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/brochures/parents.html>

21. Choice C is the correct response. A young child sometimes does not understand that there are exceptions to a rule and overgeneralizes, as in this case. Choice A refers to how we say things, and choices B and D refer to possible difficulties related to language development.

22. The best answer is choice B, which describes an activity that would have the children observe that the water somehow moves up the celery stalk to the leaves. Choice A would not help the children see what is happening as well as choice B would. However, after observing that the water somehow moves up the celery stalk, noticing the openings in the cross section could lead to an understanding that the water is moving up through these little tubes. Choices C and D may serve to model that plants drink water, but not that plants circulate water.

23. The correct answer is choice A. The ability to hop is a skill that is required for skipping. None of the skills mentioned in choices B, C, and D is required for learning to skip.

24. The best answer is choice C. It is very desirable for preschool children to learn to express their ideas in print by the teacher’s writing them on large chart paper. The other choices are not appropriate for 3 year olds and are learned after children understand that speech and ideas can be captured in print.

25. The best answer is choice B because the matching activity requires the children to segment or isolate the initial sound in the words that go with the pictures and compare them with one another.

Phonological awareness is an umbrella term used to describe the overall awareness of how words and syllables can be divided into smaller units. Phonological awareness is comprised of many skills, including but not limited to:

1. Rhyme
2. Phoneme blending (blending sounds to form words)
3. Phoneme segmentation (segmenting the sounds in words)
4. Phoneme manipulation (adding, deleting, or changing the sounds in words)
5. Phoneme cluster manipulation (adding, deleting, or changing the sounds in a sound cluster)



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