

**GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY &
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION
MASTERS COMPREHENSIVE EXAM STUDY QUESTIONS**

Updated Summer 2009- Version A for Students Admitted After Spring 2009

The following study questions should guide you in focusing your study. Actual test questions may come directly from the following or close approximations thereof (but not exclusively). It is important that you review course notes and readings from all of your graduate coursework as you prepare for the comprehensive examination.

The exam is a 4-hour written exam that you compose on a computer. You will receive approximately 6-8 questions to answer in short and long essay format. You may NOT bring any notes or readings with you to the exam or use digital resources (e.g., Internet, cell phones) during the exam.

Examinations are scored using social security numbers to ensure objectivity. Each exam question is scored by a set of faculty readers along a 4-point scale, with 1 being the lowest score and 4 being the highest score. Students must receive a summary rating of at least a 3 to pass the comprehensive exam. Students have three attempts to pass the examination, with one attempt per quarter.

1. Most definitions of autism are composed of a series of characteristics considered essential for classifying a student as having an autism spectrum disorder. Select one of the definitions (e.g., Kanner, Rutter, Autism Society of America, DSM-IV, IDEA) and discuss and operationalize the characteristics. Also discuss any problems that arise in classifying an individual with autism and precautions that can be taken to enhance the possibility of making an accurate diagnosis. **[EXC 7320 & EXC 7650]**
2. Students with autism have identified speech/language characteristics. List these characteristics and provide an example of how each may be manifested in the student's attempts at communication. Discuss how educators can support students with autism's communication efforts. **[EXC 7320]**
3. Socialization is a critical area of concern for children with autism spectrum disorders. Describe the social characteristics for a potential child with autism, how the social abilities of that child will likely impact his or her functioning, and how an educator may support the student's development of social skills. **[EXC 7320]**
4. Specific classroom components and strategies have been demonstrated to be useful in helping students with autism spectrum disorders benefit from their educational opportunities. You have been charged with setting up a program for students with autism. Based on demonstrated utility, what would you include in your program and why? **[EXC 7320]**
5. IDEA requires that a functional behavior assessment (FBA) be conducted for children's behavior that impedes learning and/or which may lead to suspension/expulsion from school. Describe the process for conducting a functional behavior assessment and the impact that the information will have on subsequent instruction for that child. **[EXC 7320, EXC 7030, & EXC 7660]**

6. Researchers and educators in the area of applied behavior analysis have developed and systematized various procedures for use in changing and maintaining behavior. Explain _____ (e.g., two) of the following and give an example of how each can be used to further learning and/or management in the classroom: **[EXC 7030]**
 - a. Fixed and variable interval schedules of reinforcement
 - b. Differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO) and differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA)
 - c. Token economy
 - d. Timeout

7. Researchers and educators in the area of applied behavior analysis have developed various procedures for measuring behavior. Explain _____ (e.g., three) of the following and give an example of how each can be used to further understanding of a particular child's behavior: **[EXC 7030]**
 - a. Event recording
 - b. Duration recording
 - c. Interval recording
 - d. Time sampling

8. When attempting to reduce a child's challenging behavior, it is best practice to replace the behavior being reduced or eliminated with an alternative, socially appropriate behavior. This is called Equivalency Training or teaching replacement behaviors. Describe the guidelines you would use to choose an equivalent behavior to replace a challenging behavior through a particular example of a child with challenging behavior. Discuss the child's challenging behavior, the method for choosing the equivalent behavior, and how you would teach the equivalent behavior. **[EXC 7030 & EXC 7660]**

9. Students may have difficulty with toilet training for a number of reasons. Explain why a student may have difficulty learning to use the toilet and how to systematically teach toilet training. **[EXC 7330]**

10. Students with severe disabilities often have feeding difficulties. Describe (a) how you would promote the following normal eating mechanisms _____ (lip closure, jaw closure and control, activation of cheek muscles for chewing, tongue lateralization, swallowing), (b) type of adaptive equipment you may use for eating, and (c) what intervention and considerations you could use if the student has _____ (oral tactile defensiveness, tongue thrust, tonic bite, hypersensitive gagging/choking, no gag reflex). **[EXC 7330]**

11. You have a student who is receiving tube feedings through a gastrostomy. Describe why a student might need tube feedings, who might be giving the tube feedings (including training qualifications), and what the main steps in the procedure are. Discuss possible problems which may be encountered when giving a tube feeding and how you would resolve each. **[EXC 7330]**

12. You are designing a communication board for a student with a physical disability who is nonverbal. Discuss what you will need to consider in the construction of the communication board, how you would select the vocabulary, and what teaching strategies you will use. **[EXC 7330]**

13. High tech and low tech devices are commonly used with students in Special Education. Describe three types of low tech devices and three types of high tech devices which may be used in the classroom. Give examples of their use and for whom they may be appropriate. Describe the advantages and precautions of using these devices. **[EXC 7300]**
14. What is an assistive technology plan and what are its components? Describe a student and give an example of the construction of the assistive technology plan. **[EXC 7300]**
15. Choose one of the following theories, guiding frameworks, or approaches and describe: (a) its key principles and (b) how it influences collaborations between early childhood special educators and families with young children with disabilities. **[EXC 7000, EXC 7650]**
 - a. Family Systems Theory
 - b. Ecological Approach
 - c. Developmentally Appropriate Practice
 - d. Social Learning Theory
16. Describe the three teaming models used in early childhood special education. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each teaming model? **[EXC 7000, EXC 7650]**
17. Describe how poverty, access to health care, and access to high quality childcare affect children's development. What implications does this information have for early intervention and early childhood special education? **[EXC 7000, EXC 7650]**
18. A local preschool special education program has asked you to provide consultation regarding family involvement in their program. The program's teachers currently send notes home to parents each day, documenting what the child did that day at school. Describe the suggestions that you would make to the program about increasing and improving their home-school partnerships. How can the program increase the likelihood that their collaboration with families will be effective and meaningful? **[EXC 7000]**
19. You have just accepted a job as the lead teacher in an inclusive classroom for young children with and without disabilities. You will have two paraprofessionals working with you. What are the potential issues that may arise while working with paraprofessionals? What can you do to create a positive working relationship with your colleagues? **[EXC 7000]**
20. How does a young child meet eligibility requirements for a disability under IDEA Part B? How is this different under Part C? How is "significant developmental disability" defined for young children in the state of Georgia? And, how is Child Find involved in the identification of children with disabilities? **[EXC 7650]**
21. One of the first transitions a child with disabilities must make is from infant and toddler programs to preschool programs. What are the differences in service delivery between early intervention for infants and toddlers and special education services for preschool children? What are two things that Part C and Part B personnel are required to do prior to the transition? How can transitions be facilitated for families? **[EXC 7650, EXC 7660]**
22. Compare and contrast the administration and purposes of screening instruments, diagnostic assessments, curriculum-based assessments, and portfolios. Which involve norm-referenced assessments and which involve criterion-referenced assessments? Provide an example of a published assessment for each type of assessment. **[EXC 7650, EXC 7660]**

23. What are three issues to consider when assessing children who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse? What are two steps that a professional should take to ensure that he or she uses a nondiscriminatory approach to assessing young children from diverse backgrounds? **[EXC 7650]**
24. Choose two of the following individuals who have influenced early childhood education. Describe each individual's contribution to education then compare the two individuals' approaches, discussing similarities and differences in their views of child development and appropriate educational practices. **[EXC 7650]**
- Locke
 - Froebel
 - Montessori
 - Malaguzzi
 - Piaget
 - Waldorf
25. You have been asked to consult with a team who is starting a new inclusive program for young children with and without disabilities. The team will start its planning by developing a program philosophy. Choose one of the following theories to guide the development of this philosophy. Describe the theory and how it will influence practices and collaboration in the program. Finish with the draft of the program philosophy and at least 3 program goals. **[EXC 7650]**
- Behavioral
 - Cognitive
 - Social Learning
 - Ecological
26. Choose three of the following terms to define. Describe each of the three terms and their implications for early childhood special education. **[EXC 7650]**
- Least Restrictive Environment
 - Free and Appropriate Education
 - Developmentally Appropriate Practice
 - Risk and Resiliency
 - Linked System
27. Choose two of the following terms related to brain development and describe: (a) what it is and (b) how it impacts children's development. **[EXC 7650]**
- Pruning
 - Myelination
 - Critical period
 - Neural tube
28. Patricia gave birth to Kylie at 26 weeks. Kylie weighed 2 lbs, 7 oz. Which term(s) best describe Kylie: full term, premature, or very low birthweight? How might Patricia's family be affected by conditions associated with Kylie's birth? How might maternal/paternal bonding be affected? **[EXC 7650]**
29. Discuss four major maternal infections and/or physical or environmental factors that can affect a developing embryo/fetus. Describe the risk factor and its effect on infant development. **[EXC 7650]**
30. Choose ____ (one, two, three) of the following disorders or disabilities and describe: (a) its

etiology, (b) its characteristics, and (c) the educational impact for the child. [EXC 7650, EXC 7330]

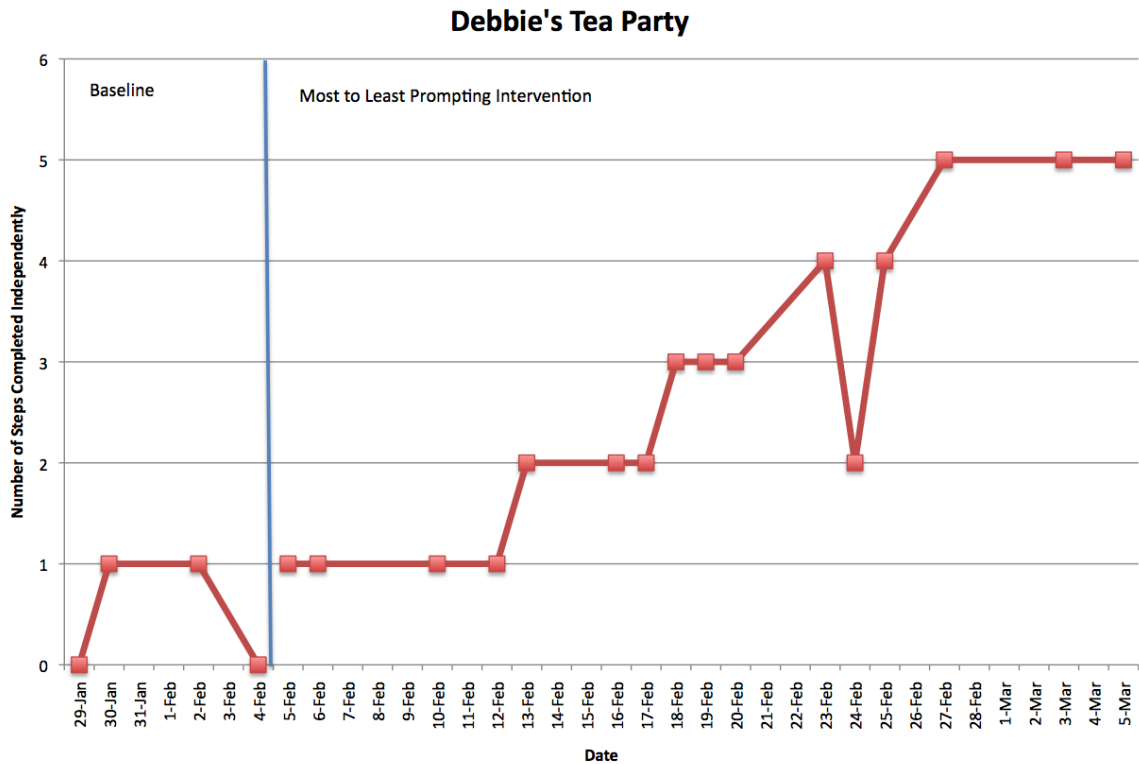
- a. Down syndrome
 - b. Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS)
 - c. Cerebral palsy
 - d. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
 - e. Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
 - f. Cystic fibrosis
 - g. Fragile X syndrome
 - h. Tourette syndrome
 - i. Hearing impairment
 - j. Visual impairment
31. Human development during infancy and early childhood provides a foundation for many later skills and abilities. Describe the major milestones for _____(see developmental domains below that may be inserted here) during infancy and early childhood development, noting the approximate age at which each milestone is expected to develop. [EXC 7650]
Possible developmental domains:
- Gross motor
 - Fine motor
 - Language
 - Cognitive/Academic
 - Social-emotional
32. You have been working as an advocate for a 5-year-old child with Down syndrome whose parents want the child to be included in a community childcare program. The director of the program is willing to accept the child. However, several parents of children without disabilities in the program have objected because they believe their children will suffer from a decrease in teacher attention, learned inappropriate behaviors, and a reduction in resources as they are funneled to the child with a disability. The director has asked you to make a presentation to the parents at a family welcome night to address their concerns. Use information learned about inclusion to prepare what you will present to the parents. Frame your answer as a presentation, which may be either a verbal presentation (e.g., lecture) or visual presentation (e.g., slides). [EXC 7650, EXC 7660]
33. What are the required components of the Individualized Education Program (IEP)? Describe each component. What are three ways in which these components are different for the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)? Who must attend the IEP meeting? How must families be involved in IEP process? And, how is educational placement determined in an IEP meeting? [EXC 7660]
34. What are the five characteristics of a good IEP objective? Provide an example of an IEP objective that meets all five characteristics, explaining how each characteristic was met. [EXC 7660]
35. You are given the task of developing the instructional/curricular approach for a new program that meets the diverse needs of preschool-aged children with disabilities. You are given the following options: Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Activity-Based Intervention, High Scope, or Creative Curriculum. Describe each approach, explaining the theoretical base and key principles and strategies. Then, select one of the approaches that you'll use for the new program and provide a comprehensive argument in support of your selection. [EXC 7660]
36. Various instructional practices are available to use to teach young children with disabilities new

skills. Choose two of the practices listed below and for each one, describe: (a) the instructional practice and (b) an example in which the practice is used with a child with a disability for a specific learning task. Then, compare and contrast the two instructional practices, discussing their similarities and differences and their advantages and disadvantages. [EXC 7660]

- a. Direct instruction
- b. Naturalistic instruction
- c. Mileu teaching
- d. Behavior trapping
- e. Embedded learning opportunities
- f. Prompting (least to most, most to least)
- g. Time delay

37. Provide an example of a task analysis to teach a child with a disability a skill. Make sure that you provide an operational definition of the target behavior, the setting, materials, and adaptations, steps of the task analysis, instructional strategy, and how data will be collected. Include a sample data collection sheet. How will you assess if the task analysis was effective or not? [EXC 7660]

38. Analyze the following graph for level, trend, variability, and percentage of overlapping data points for baseline and intervention: [EXC 7660]



39. Your school is going to take proactive steps to address (one of the following: cultural diversity, nontraditional families including families who are LGBTQ, class, religious diversity) in its curriculum so that all children and families feel included. What are your personal feelings about the issue? How might your personal feelings influence your work with children and families? What are specific materials and strategies teachers could use to teach children about the issue and/or to provide opportunities for children and families to see themselves reflected in the classroom in a meaningful way? [EXC 7660]

40. Provide an example of a (one of the following: math, literacy, social studies, science) lesson for a

small group of children in an early childhood special education classroom that addresses at least 3 (math, literacy, social studies, science) concepts. Make sure that your lesson is developmentally appropriate for young and diverse learners, includes recommended materials for teaching the subject to young children, includes preview and review activities, and at least 2 different extension activities. **[EXC 7660]**

41. What is positive behavior support? Explain the Teaching Pyramid (Center on Social and Emotional Foundations of Learning, 2008), including the type of interventions involved at each level and who receives intervention. Provide examples of teaching strategies used at each level of the Teaching Pyramid, including how one establishes nurturing and responsive relationships, provides high quality supportive environments, teaches social emotional supports, and delivers intensive intervention. **[EXC 7660]**
42. Describe the purpose and components or tiers of Response to Intervention (RTI). What are evidence-based practices and how can teachers find out about evidence-based practices after they are finished with a graduate program? What is progress monitoring, what information does it give teachers, and how often is it done? Provide an example of a progress monitoring tool. **[EXC 7660]**