

# PLACE<sup>®</sup>

## STUDY GUIDE

**23 Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired**



**Program for Licensing Assessments  
for Colorado Educators<sup>®</sup>**

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## **PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLACE® AND TEST PREPARATION**

Part 1 of this study guide is contained in a separate PDF file. Click the link below to view or print this section:

[General Information About the PLACE and Test Preparation](#)

## PART 2: FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### TEST FIELD 23: SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST: VISUALLY IMPAIRED

#### INTRODUCTION

This section includes a list of the test objectives, immediately followed by a set of practice multiple-choice questions. For test areas that include a performance assessment (Basic Skills, all languages other than English, Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired), one or more practice performance assignments (as applicable) will also be included.

**TEST OBJECTIVES.** As noted earlier, the test objectives are broad, conceptual statements that reflect the knowledge, skills, and understanding an entry-level educator needs to teach effectively in a Colorado classroom. The list of test objectives represents the **only** source of information about what a specific test will cover.

**PRACTICE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS.** The practice multiple-choice questions included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included on the PLACE test. The practice questions represent the various types of multiple-choice questions you may expect to see on an actual test; however, they are **not** designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strengths and weaknesses or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

When you answer the practice multiple-choice questions, you may wish to use the answer key to check your answers. To help you identify how the test objectives are measured, the objective statement to which each multiple-choice question corresponds is listed in the answer key. When you are finished with the practice questions, you may wish to go back and review the entire list of test objectives and descriptive statements for your test area.

**PRACTICE PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT.** Because this test area includes a performance assessment, one practice performance assignment is also included in this section. The Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired (23) test includes a performance assessment that involves transcribing a written passage into braille. Paper will be provided. You will be expected to bring your own braille equipment to the administration site. You may use either a braillewriter or a stylus and slate. If you do not have access to such equipment, you may make arrangements through National Evaluation Systems to have equipment provided for you.

## OBJECTIVES



### TEST FIELD 23: SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST: VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Knowledge of Human Development, Vision, and Visual Impairments  
Assessing Students with Visual Impairments  
Fostering Student Growth and Development  
Professional Knowledge

#### KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, VISION, AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

**Understand typical processes of human growth and development and the developmental significance of disabilities.**

Includes typical characteristics and progressions relating to physical, communicative, cognitive, psychological, and social/emotional development through adolescence; factors affecting development in various domains, including factors relating to cultural and language differences; effects of disabilities on different domains of development; and strategies for fostering students' development in all domains.

**Understand learning processes and the significance of disabilities for learning.**

Includes processes by which learning occurs; applications of learning theories; factors that may affect learning, including cultural and language differences; effects of disabilities, especially visual impairments, on learning; factors that may facilitate or impede learning in students with special needs; and strategies for promoting learning that are responsive to students' needs and take advantage of their capacities.

**Understand the visual system and characteristics of all types and degrees of visual impairments.**

Includes structures and processes of the visual system; characteristics of and sequences in the normal development of vision and visual perception; types and degrees of visual impairments, their causes, characteristics, and effects; and student behaviors that may indicate the presence of a visual impairment.

**Understand the implications of visual impairments for cognitive and communicative functioning.**

Includes common effects of visual impairments on children's cognitive and language development; relationships between visual impairments and cognitive and communicative functioning; and typical cognitive and language needs of students who have visual impairments.

**Understand the implications of visual impairments for social/emotional and physical/motor functioning and for functional living competence.**

Includes ways in which visual impairments typically affect children's social/emotional development, motor development, and functional living competence; and common social/emotional, motor, and functional living needs (including self-help and career/vocational needs) of students who have visual impairments.

**Understand principles of optics and the use of low vision aids.**

Includes principles of optics as related to low vision aids; types of low vision aids, their characteristics and uses; procedures for helping students learn to use low vision aids; and situations in which the use of low vision aids is appropriate.

## ASSESSING STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

### **Understand assessment procedures for evaluating individual differences and making placement and programming decisions for students with disabilities.**

Includes types and characteristics of informal and formal assessments used to make placement and programming decisions; use of assessment information to identify and understand students with special needs, to determine degree of need in compensatory skills areas, to make placement and program recommendations, and to monitor progress; and assessment-related issues in special education (e.g., early identification and intervention, nondiscriminatory assessment, use of assessments designed for general student populations to test students with disabilities).

### **Apply procedures for assessing students' functional vision.**

Includes types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments of functional vision; procedures for conducting different types of assessments (including screening procedures and procedures for ongoing assessment of visual behavior); and interpretation of assessment results (including clinical reports).

### **Apply procedures for assessing the intellectual performance and academic achievement of students with visual impairments.**

Includes types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments of intellectual performance and academic achievement used with students who have visual impairments; procedures for conducting assessments of intellectual performance and academic achievement, including ongoing assessment; and interpretation of assessment results.

### **Apply procedures for assessing the motor functioning, communicative competence, and functional living skills of students with visual impairments.**

Includes types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments of motor functioning, communicative competence, and functional living skills; procedures for conducting different types of assessments in these areas, including ongoing assessment; and interpretation of assessment results.

## FOSTERING STUDENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

### **Apply procedures for developing and implementing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students with visual impairments.**

Includes roles and functions of team members; factors and procedures in determining appropriate placements and developing IEPs for students with visual impairments; components of an IEP; and evaluation of student progress with respect to IEP goals and objectives.

### **Understand how to establish a positive and productive learning environment for all students.**

Includes procedures for establishing a smoothly functioning and productive learning environment that is responsive to the academic, social, and affective needs of all students, including those with cultural and language differences; factors in the learning environment that affect students' self-esteem and attitudes toward learning; strategies for modifying learning environments to address diverse student needs, particularly needs related to visual impairments; physical and medical management of and specialized equipment for students with physical and health impairments; and individual and group management strategies and intervention techniques for achieving instructional management goals (e.g., maintaining standards of behavior, maximizing time spent in learning).

**Understand how to foster the orientation and mobility skills of students with visual impairments.**

Includes factors related to the development of orientation and mobility skills; strategies for providing students with learning experiences to achieve goals related to orientation and mobility; and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to foster students' orientation and mobility skills.

**Understand sensory training techniques used with students with visual impairments.**

Includes strategies and activities for providing students with sensory training; and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies for sensory training for students with visual impairments.

**Understand strategies for fostering communicative skills development in students with visual impairments.**

Includes knowledge of braille and procedures for developing students' readiness and ability to read in braille; strategies for providing students with learning experiences to address communication needs and meet specified goals relating to expressive and receptive language (e.g., through keyboarding); and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to individualize instruction and foster the communicative functioning of students with visual impairments.

**Understand how to foster academic achievement in students with visual impairments.**

Includes curriculum scope and sequence in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; strategies for teaching academic skills and content to elementary and secondary students with visual impairments and providing them with learning experiences to meet specified academic goals (e.g., involving concept development, study skills); and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to individualize instruction and foster student achievement.

**Understand how to address the social and emotional needs of students with visual impairments.**

Includes strategies and activities for promoting students' social development and functioning and for meeting students' emotional needs; use of consultation and counseling skills to facilitate student growth in specified areas (e.g., self-esteem, assertiveness, social adjustment); and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to promote student achievement of goals related to social/emotional development.

**Understand how to foster the functional living competence of students with visual impairments.**

Includes strategies for promoting the independent living, vocational/ career, and leisure time skills of students with visual impairments; strategies for providing learning experiences to enhance transition readiness; and evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional strategies, materials, technologies, and community resources to individualize instruction and promote functional living and vocational/career competence.



## PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

### **Understand how to establish partnerships with other members of the school community to enhance learning opportunities for students with visual impairments.**

Includes consultation, collaboration, and communication skills and strategies for working with other school staff and support service providers to solve problems and promote student achievement; and strategies for effectively providing services that involve other professionals (e.g., providing training to teachers individually and through inservice programs, conducting student evaluations, coordinating instruction with other teaching professionals).

### **Understand how to foster strong school-home relationships.**

Includes strategies for establishing and maintaining communication with families, including families with diverse backgrounds; how to recognize and overcome barriers to communication with families; how to work collaboratively with families to promote their participation in planning and implementing their children's education; and how to provide information, training, support, counseling, and referrals to families whose children have visual impairments.

### **Understand how to encourage school-community interactions that enhance learning opportunities for students with visual impairments.**

Includes strategies for accessing and working effectively with agencies and services that can help meet the needs of students with visual impairments; how to establish and maintain positive relationships with community institutions to facilitate successful transitioning of students; and how to engage community support for the special education program.

### **Understand requirements, responsibilities, and constraints associated with teaching special needs populations in Colorado.**

Includes legal and ethical issues affecting special education teachers; roles and responsibilities of teachers of students with visual impairments; organizational and management responsibilities (e.g., involving program development and coordination, scheduling, record keeping); and application of special education-related regulations (e.g., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, PL 94-142) and guidelines (e.g., involving referral, evaluation, eligibility, equity, program development, due process).

### **Understand the history and philosophy of special education and key issues, trends, and research relating to the education of students with visual impairments.**

Includes the historical, philosophical, and theoretical foundations of special education and education for students with visual impairments; current issues and trends in special education and education for students with visual impairments (e.g., regarding alternative delivery systems); and research regarding special education and education for students with visual impairments and its interpretation and applications.

The PLACE Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired test consists of two sections: 1) a section of selected-response questions, and 2) a transcription section that involves transcribing a written passage into braille. The directions for Section Two appear immediately before that section in the test booklet and in this guide.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS AND PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT: SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST: VISUALLY IMPAIRED



1. Which of the following cognitive abilities is typically expected to be exhibited by a four-year-old child?
  - A. recognizing basic relationships among numbers from 1 to 20
  - B. sorting common objects according to size and color
  - C. identifying another person's point of view
  - D. distinguishing between fantasy and reality
2. Which of the following occurs first in the development of visual perception?
  - A. response to light
  - B. perception of form
  - C. ability to fixate
  - D. ability to focus
3. During adolescence, a severe visual impairment is likely to cause the greatest difficulty in:
  - A. maintaining close relationships with parents.
  - B. enjoying recreational and social activities.
  - C. establishing an independent life style.
  - D. cooperating with others in group activities.
4. The Visual Efficiency Scale is most appropriately used to assess an individual's:
  - A. visual-motor integration.
  - B. aptitude for learning braille.
  - C. functional vision.
  - D. scanning and tracking ability.

5. A teacher would like to gather assessment data that will both identify the prevalence of a student's stereotypic behavior and be valuable later in developing and monitoring the success of a behavioral intervention strategy. Which of the following observational strategies is likely to be most effective in this situation?
  - A. tallying the number of times the target behavior occurs during a two-hour time period and calculating the percentage of that time period the student exhibits the behavior
  - B. assessing the frequency and duration of the target behavior systematically in several different settings and noting any antecedent and/or consequent behaviors
  - C. asking the student to self-report on when and why the target behavior occurs and then observing the student to determine the accuracy of the student's perceptions
  - D. recording the frequency and duration of the target behavior over a day's time and comparing it to data gathered for students who exhibit similar behaviors
6. The additional requirements on the IEP for a student with a visual impairment must include a detailed description of which of the following?
  - A. specific adaptations to be made to regular instructional materials and methods to compensate for the student's visual loss
  - B. the training and background of special education personnel who will be working with the student
  - C. arrangements made to provide the student with special training and equipment to compensate for his or her visual loss
  - D. procedures to be followed if the student fails to make satisfactory progress before the next annual review

7. After a five-year-old child with a visual impairment has explored a room and become familiar with the objects in it, the next useful orientation skill to teach the child would most likely be to have him or her:
  - A. make a model of the room that indicates where furniture is located.
  - B. estimate distance traveled in a given time.
  - C. count the number of footsteps it takes to get to the corners of the room from a given point.
  - D. point to the location of objects in the room.
8. Which of the following auditory training activities would be most appropriate for helping a student with a severe visual impairment improve his or her skills in figure-ground discrimination?
  - A. focusing on a unique sound in the presence of other sounds
  - B. indicating the location of a fixed auditory signal in an otherwise silent environment
  - C. following the path of a moving sound source
  - D. identifying the agent that has made a particular isolated sound



11. Which of the following would be the most appropriate way to educate parents or guardians about family dynamics that may be experienced as a result of a child's visual impairment?
  - A. Hold individual conferences with parents or guardians and tell them what other families in the school have experienced.
  - B. Suggest that the parents or guardians consult with the family ophthalmologist or optometrist.
  - C. Send the parents or guardians printed materials about the social and emotional effects of visual impairments on children.
  - D. Invite the parents or guardians to attend a group meeting with other parents or guardians of children with visual impairments to share their experiences.
12. Federal laws guarantee that students who are eligible for special education services will be provided with:
  - A. appropriate placements during a 12-month year.
  - B. a special needs evaluation conducted in their native language.
  - C. vocational placement following graduation.
  - D. a review of their IEP conducted by a multidisciplinary team once each semester.

The Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired test includes a performance component in addition to multiple-choice questions. The performance task involves transcribing a written passage into braille, using either a braillewriter or a stylus and slate. Paper will be provided. You will be expected to bring your own braille equipment to the administration site. If you do not have access to such equipment, you can make arrangements through National Evaluation Systems to have equipment provided for you.

### DIRECTIONS FOR SECTION TWO

The second section of this assessment involves transcribing a passage into Grade 2 Literary Braille. Your transcription must be made using a braillewriter or a stylus and slate that can accommodate the 8 1/2" × 11" paper provided by your assessment administrator. You must use a 28-cell line and should make maximum use of each line. However, do **not** divide or hyphenate words at the end of a line. Your transcription should be done in Grade 2 Literary Braille. It is not necessary to number your pages in braille.

The following errors will be counted as incorrect in your transcription.

- contractions omitted or misused
- characters misformed (including added or omitted dots)
- letters inserted or omitted
- text omitted or repeated
- spacing errors
- format irregularities
- punctuation or composition signs omitted or inserted
- erasures detectable by touch

If you need additional braille paper, notify your assessment administrator. When you have completed your final version of the transcription, check the appropriate box at the bottom of the page containing your final version. **Your score for this section will be based solely on the version of your transcription that you designate as the final version.**

Turn the page and continue with Section Two.



### **Practice Transcription Assignment**

**Transcribe the following passage into braille.**

The mid-nineteenth century expansion of settlements west of the Mississippi is a common subject of historians' work. In examining this phenomenon, it is important to keep in mind that this expansion was the sum of many individual experiences. Those people who moved westward were courageous pioneers who made many sacrifices along the way. In her writings, Laura Ingalls Wilder recorded her family's experiences as they moved from the relatively crowded territory of Minnesota to the vast open prairie of South Dakota.

## ANSWER KEY: SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST: VISUALLY IMPAIRED



<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Correct Response</b>	<b>Objective</b>
1.	<b>B</b>	Understand typical processes of human growth and development and the developmental significance of disabilities.
2.	<b>A</b>	Understand the visual system and characteristics of all types and degrees of visual impairments.
3.	<b>C</b>	Understand the implications of visual impairments for social/emotional and physical/motor functioning and for functional living competence.
4.	<b>C</b>	Apply procedures for assessing students' functional vision.
5.	<b>B</b>	Apply procedures for assessing the intellectual performance and academic achievement of students with visual impairments.
6.	<b>C</b>	Apply procedures for developing and implementing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students with visual impairments.
7.	<b>D</b>	Understand how to foster the orientation and mobility skills of students with visual impairments.
8.	<b>A</b>	Understand sensory training techniques used with students with visual impairments.
9.	<b>C</b>	Understand strategies for fostering communicative skills development in students with visual impairments.
10.	<b>D</b>	Understand how to foster academic achievement in students with visual impairments.
11.	<b>D</b>	Understand how to foster strong school-home relationships.
12.	<b>B</b>	Understand requirements, responsibilities, and constraints associated with teaching special needs populations in Colorado.