

PLACE[®]

STUDY GUIDE

47 School Social Worker



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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 47: SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

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.

OBJECTIVES



TEST FIELD 47: SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Human Behavior and Social Environment
Social Systems and Organizational Theories and Case Management
Individual Counseling and Group Work
Assessment
The Role of the School Social Worker

HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Understand theories of human growth and development.

Includes major theories of human development, human behavior, and personality (e.g., strengths perspective, learning theory, systems theory, communications theory, social learning theory, behavioral theory); and developmental issues associated with various stages of life.

Understand student diversity and its significance in educational contexts.

Includes characteristics and importance of cultural, racial, linguistic, gender, sexual-orientation, and ethnic diversity; methods for conducting culturally sensitive assessments; and ways to facilitate student and staff appreciation of diversity and understanding of cultural differences.

Understand the needs of children with disabilities.

Includes types and characteristics of physical, developmental, cognitive, social, psychological/emotional, and behavioral disorders; and the effect of various disorders on development and social and academic functioning.

Analyze biological and environmental factors that affect children's ability to function effectively in school.

Includes the influence of biological, psychological/emotional, cultural, social, and economic factors, as well as family and peer relationships, on learning and socialization.

SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES AND CASE MANAGEMENT

Understand systems and ecosystems theories.

Includes concepts related to systems theories (e.g., adaptation, transactions, reciprocity); the relationship between a student, group, or family and relevant environments; paths of communication between systems; and organizational norms.

Understand systems for delivery of educational and human services.

Includes functions and services of the federal, state, city, county, and nongovernmental social welfare agencies; the role and function of the school social worker in relation to community agencies; and the importance of interagency cooperation, development of cooperative service arrangements among agencies, and facilitation of school-linked services.

Understand case planning and management services.

Includes the planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation of social work services; methods for periodic reassessment of students' or families' needs; purposes of ongoing consultation with school personnel; and the school social worker's role in the coordination and monitoring of services provided by school staff or community agencies.

Understand referral, placement, and service options for students in various contexts.

Includes the complexities of the referral process; placement and service options available to students and families; methods for making knowledgeable recommendations for programs and appropriate referrals to agencies; advocacy for students and families; techniques for helping students and families connect with established services; and steps for eliminating barriers to services.

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK**Understand prevention and intervention techniques.**

Includes characteristics and purposes of prevention and intervention strategies (e.g., conflict mediation, peer counseling, crisis counseling and debriefing) and the selection of appropriate prevention and intervention techniques for different needs.

Demonstrate knowledge of essential social work skills to assist students and families.

Includes techniques for questioning, counseling, and interviewing; techniques that help students and families understand the challenges they experience in social and emotional functioning; and methods for empowering students and families to examine options and identify resources to meet their needs.

Demonstrate knowledge of formal treatment modes and models to assist students and families.

Includes a variety of counseling and treatment techniques, modes, and models (e.g., brief, play, solution-focused) to assist students and families in addressing issues that interfere with effective education, and the selection of treatments for specific concerns.

Demonstrate knowledge of group processes, functions, and structures.

Includes group processes, functions, and structures in therapeutic and task-oriented groups and the facilitation of small groups to enhance various skills (e.g., daily-living tasks, conflict resolution, anger management, communication).

Understand uses of group process to assist students, families, school staff, and community groups in maximizing student success.

Includes criteria for determining appropriate group membership for individuals based on environmental, cultural, behavioral, and psychosocial factors; appropriate group facilitation skills for identified needs; methods for implementing classroom affective education programs; facilitation of group process for school staff, school community groups, and parent-teacher meetings; and the development and facilitation of parent groups.

ASSESSMENT**Understand procedures for conducting adaptive behavior assessments.**

Includes the concept of adaptive behavior; the characteristics and uses of formal and informal adaptive behavior assessments; and appropriate reporting of assessment results.

Understand needs assessment procedures.

Includes characteristics of and purposes for needs assessments; methods for gathering information; strategies for conducting a needs assessment of the school setting; and appropriate reporting of assessment results.

Understand methods for creating a social-developmental history.

Includes methods for collecting appropriate information; strategies for interviewing students and families; formats for presenting the information that has been gathered; and appropriate uses of social-developmental histories.

Understand procedures for psychosocial assessments.

Includes elements of psychosocial assessments; methods for conducting in-depth assessments of individuals and of family functioning; and the appropriate uses of assessment results.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Understand professional roles and responsibilities of the school social worker.

Includes the selection of social work service models to meet the needs of students and the school community; the social worker's direct participation in advocacy for and facilitation of change; ways to establish service-delivery priorities; the school social worker's role as an advocate for students and families; the school social worker's role as a liaison among schools, families, and the community; and strategies for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting the results of the school social work program to the public and the school community.

Apply professional standards and ethics in decision making.

Includes the use of National Association of Social Workers' professional standards for school social work services and code of ethics as a guide to ethical decision making in various situations (e.g., privacy concerns, confidentiality) and the importance of the social worker's self-awareness and conduct.

Understand major provisions of laws related to education and the school social worker.

Includes the Colorado school attendance law; the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment); child protection and abuse legislation and mandatory reporting (e.g., suspected abuse/neglect, a danger to self or others); knowledge of parents' and students' due process rights; legal issues related to special education (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]); parents' legal responsibilities to students; and in-service activities for faculty and staff regarding legal issues and the school's responsibilities.

Understand the role of the school social worker in the special education process.

Includes the school social worker's role in assisting schools in the identification of students who need special services; the school social worker's role as a member of interdisciplinary staffing teams; Individualized Education Plan (IEP) development; the school social worker's role in educating parents and students about their due process rights; and the participation of the school social worker in service delivery to students with special needs.

Understand research methods and models.

Includes appropriate research models for various situations; current trends in school social work research; methods for conducting research on current educational or social problems (e.g., substance abuse, attendance problems); and methods for informing the public regarding social problems and possible solutions.

Understand the need for self-evaluation and professional development.

Includes the need for introspection (e.g., self-awareness, therapeutic use of self, transference and countertransference issues); strategies for self-evaluation of job performance and social work practices; the use of self-evaluation to improve service delivery; and approaches to professional advocacy.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS: SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

1. A tenth-grade student who lives in a violent home environment is having difficulty completing school assignments and projects. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the student is most likely:
 - A. focusing on issues of personal safety more than scholastic success.
 - B. trying to get attention from the adults living at home.
 - C. seeking to recreate the turmoil from the home in the school setting.
 - D. working on strategies to resolve the ongoing crisis at home.
2. A seven-year-old child's parents have demonstrated a severe and chronic disregard for her most basic needs. Because of this mistreatment, the child is most likely to exhibit which of the following behaviors?
 - A. seeking social interactions and physical contact with relative strangers
 - B. refusing to conform to other people's expectations or demands
 - C. making excessive noise while engaged in typically quiet activities
 - D. expressing a disproportionate level of anxiety about future events
3. According to general systems theory, Robert, a fifth grader, is a complete system on his own, and he is composed of various biophysiological subsystems such as cells. In this theory, which of the following most accurately describes Robert's relationship to the classroom environment?
 - A. He is an independent system.
 - B. He represents a subculture.
 - C. He is an active receiver.
 - D. He functions as a subsystem.
4. A high school staff works with a local mental health agency to develop a school-based after-care program for students who return to school following residential treatment for alcohol/drug addiction. Therapists from the agency will work at the school, school counselors will provide services, and the school social worker will facilitate the delivery of these services. Facilitation by the school social worker is important for the success of the program primarily because someone needs to be:
 - A. familiar with the services that are offered and able to connect students with providers.
 - B. certain that the providers' approaches to counseling are uniform and effective for students.
 - C. skilled in educating students about treatment and able to support the students' efforts.
 - D. aware of confidentiality issues and the policies that providers are required to follow.

5. To empower family members to examine options and identify resources that could help them resolve a problem, which of the following would a school social worker need to do *first*?
 - A. Strengthen their trust in the relationship they have with the school social worker.
 - B. Teach them different brainstorming strategies they can use to generate new ideas.
 - C. Foster their belief that they can influence various circumstances in their lives.
 - D. Provide them with direct access to social service specialists in the local community.

6. A school social worker is considering whether to use play therapy with a first-grade student. Typically, play therapy is most appropriate and effective for helping a student:
 - A. focus on the positive elements in his or her life.
 - B. develop new responses to an ongoing problem.
 - C. engage in self-examination of thoughts and feelings.
 - D. demonstrate situations that cannot be verbalized.

7. Which of the following small counseling groups is most likely to be considered an *open* group?
 - A. a self-esteem counseling group
 - B. a growth group for students who lack prosocial skills
 - C. a motivational counseling group
 - D. a support group for students who are new to the school

8. While there are several different types of adaptive behavior assessments or scales, which of the following characteristics do all of these instruments have in common?
 - A. Each is a norm-referenced measure of a student's daily living skills.
 - B. Each uses indirect evidence from informants who know the child.
 - C. Each is free from bias related to a student's culture or ethnicity.
 - D. Each can be used for children between birth and the age of 18.

9. A school social worker conducts a needs assessment to determine whether parents/guardians and students would be interested in having an after-school program. In one section of the written report of the needs assessment results, the school social worker describes the procedures and methods that were used to gather data. Including this information in the needs assessment report is useful primarily because it will help the readers:
- A. weigh the recommendations made in the assessment.
 - B. make projections about the cost of any proposal.
 - C. evaluate the validity of the assessment data.
 - D. predict whether the school board will approve the program.
10. The administration of a rural elementary school is having difficulty getting support from parents/guardians for their children's education. Few parents/guardians go to teacher conferences and fewer still attend school board meetings. Due to poor attendance and declining student test scores, the principal asks the school social worker to find ways to promote the interest of families in the education of their children. With this instruction, which of the following would be the most appropriate and effective way for the school social worker to begin building a relationship between the school and the community?
- A. Interview parents, public agency workers, and business leaders to discover their views of the school.
 - B. Send a letter home with students stating that pupil services will help them with any school problems.
 - C. Distribute announcements in the community inviting everyone to an open house at the school.
 - D. Observe small groups of students who have been asked to discuss their feelings about the school.

11. In December, the father of a student with special needs tells the school social worker that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) he signed at the end of last year is not helping his child. The father says he has discussed his concerns with the child's teachers and the school principal, but nothing has changed. Which of the following strategies would be most appropriate for the school social worker to use to address the father's concerns?
- A. Offer assurances that the progress made by students such as his child is likely to be slow and steady.
 - B. Remind the father about the due process rights that allow him to request a review of the IEP.
 - C. Explain to the father that changes to a student's IEP are made during the annual review of the child's progress.
 - D. Offer to raise the issues of concern about the child with the staff who work most closely with the student.
12. A school social worker is researching the effectiveness of a school-based program to help teen parents complete their high school education. One source of data the school social worker plans to use is the school budget. Based on an examination of the school budget, which of the following questions would be most important for the school social worker to be able to answer?
- A. Is the program taking too much money from other student activities to justify the continuation of services?
 - B. Are there enough school social workers on the staff to make this program run effectively?
 - C. Is the district expending its resources in a way that matches its public support for the program?
 - D. Can funding for special education be diverted to increase the number of students served by this project?

ANSWER KEY: SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER



Question Number	Correct Response	Objective
1.	A	Understand theories of human growth and development.
2.	A	Analyze biological and environmental factors that affect children's ability to function effectively in school.
3.	D	Understand systems and ecosystems theories.
4.	A	Understand systems for delivery of educational and human services.
5.	C	Demonstrate knowledge of essential social work skills to assist students and families.
6.	D	Demonstrate knowledge of formal treatment modes and models to assist students and families.
7.	D	Demonstrate knowledge of group processes, functions, and structures.
8.	B	Understand procedures for conducting adaptive behavior assessments.
9.	C	Understand needs assessment procedures.
10.	A	Understand professional roles and responsibilities of the school social worker.
11.	B	Understand major provisions of laws related to education and the school social worker.
12.	C	Understand research methods and models.