



# ARIZONA EDUCATOR PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS™



## STUDY GUIDE

32 Special Education: Visually Impaired

**This test is now delivered as a computer-based test.  
See [www.aepa.nesinc.com](http://www.aepa.nesinc.com) for current program information.**

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### **STUDY GUIDE ORDER FORM**



## **PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AEPA™ AND TEST PREPARATION**

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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 AEPA and Test Preparation](#)



## PART 2: FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Field 32: Special Education: Visually Impaired

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#### INTRODUCTION

This section includes a list of the test objectives, practice questions, and an answer key for the selected-response questions.

**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 practice effectively in Arizona schools. The list of test objectives for each test field is the *only* source of information about what a specific test will cover and therefore should be studied carefully.

**Practice questions.** The practice selected-response questions and practice performance assignments included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in the AEPA tests. The practice questions represent the various types of 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 questions, you may wish to use the sample answer sheet and sample Written Response Booklet provided in Part 1 to acquaint yourself with these materials. Use the answer key located after the practice questions to check your answers. Sample responses are provided immediately following each written performance assignment. The sample responses in this guide are for illustrative purposes only. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

To help you identify how the test objectives are measured, the objective statement to which the 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 field.

# TEST OBJECTIVES

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## Field 32: Special Education: Visually Impaired

### SUBAREAS:

1. Understanding Students with Visual Impairments
2. Assessing Students and Developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
3. Promoting Student Development and Learning
4. Working in a Collaborative Learning Community

### UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

**0001 Understand learning processes and the significance of disabilities for learning.**

For example: processes by which learning occurs in students with visual impairments; applications of learning theories; effects of disabilities and multiple disabilities on learning; factors that may impede learning (e.g., abuse/neglect, substance abuse, medications); and factors that may facilitate learning in students with visual impairments.

**0002 Understand the human visual system and types and characteristics of visual impairments.**

For example: structures and processes of the human visual system; characteristics of and sequences in the normal development of vision and visual perception; types of visual impairments and their causes, characteristics, and effects; diseases or disorders typically characterized by multiple disabilities, including visual impairments; and student behaviors that may indicate the presence of a visual impairment.

**0003 Understand the implications of visual impairments for cognitive and communicative functioning.**

For example: 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 and of students who have multiple impairments, including visual impairments.

**0004 Understand the implications of visual impairments for social/emotional and physical/motor functioning and for functional living competence.**

For example: 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.

**0005 Understand environmental adaptations to enhance the use of vision, the use of low vision aids, and basic principles of optics.**

For example: ways in which environmental and computer adaptations (e.g., variations in lighting, color, contrast, positioning, and size; screen readers and screen enlargers) may enhance visibility; types of low vision aids, their characteristics, and their uses; procedures for helping students learn to use low vision aids; situations in which the use of low vision aids is appropriate; nonoptical devices and techniques that maximize visual function; and principles of optics as related to low vision aids.

## ASSESSING STUDENTS AND DEVELOPING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)

### 0006 Understand types and characteristics of assessment instruments and methods.

For example: principles, procedures, and purposes of informal and formal assessments; and the interpretation and use of assessment information to identify and understand students with special needs.

### 0007 Understand functional vision and learning media assessments for students with visual impairments.

For example: types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments of functional vision; procedures for determining students' primary learning media; procedures for conducting different types of assessments (including screening procedures and procedures for ongoing assessment of visual behavior); basic knowledge of common terms and language used on ophthalmological reports; and the interpretation of assessment results.

### 0008 Apply procedures for assessing the intellectual performance and academic achievement of students with visual impairments.

For example: 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; ways to adapt non-disability-specific instruments for students with visual impairments; and the interpretation of assessment results.

### 0009 Apply procedures for assessing areas of motor, communicative/conceptual, and functional living competence that are typically impacted by visual impairments.

For example: 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; adaptations of assessments for students with visual and multiple impairments; and interpretation of assessment results.

### 0010 Understand procedures for developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with visual impairments.

For example: roles and functions of team members; factors and procedures in gathering information, creating and maintaining records, 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.

## PROMOTING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

### 0011 Understand how to establish a positive and productive learning environment for all students.

For example: factors in the learning environment that affect students' self-esteem and attitudes toward learning; ways in which disabilities, especially visual impairments, may or may not affect progress in the general education curriculum; strategies for modifying learning environments (e.g., providing multisensory learning environments) to address diverse student needs, particularly needs related to visual 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).

**0012 Understand concepts and skills related to orientation and mobility and methods of preparing students for structured orientation and mobility instruction.**

For example: factors related to the development of orientation and mobility skills; strategies for providing students with learning experiences to achieve specific goals related to orientation and mobility; instruction in sighted guide, protective techniques, and trailing and search patterns; and development of students' understanding of body image, environments, and other concepts that are prerequisites for successful orientation and mobility training.

**0013 Understand techniques for helping students make efficient and effective use of all their senses to interpret information from their environment.**

For example: strategies, activities, resources, and technologies for promoting students' ability to use their vision effectively in functional contexts; and strategies for developing students' basic and advanced listening skills, tactual and kinesthetic skills, and senses of smell and taste, as appropriate, to interpret their environment accurately and to respond accordingly.

**0014 Understand strategies for promoting students' communication and literacy skills.**

For example: strategies and activities for helping students with visual impairments develop the conceptual understandings required for meaningful communication; strategies for providing students with learning experiences to address specific communication needs and goals; knowledge of the braille code, including Nemeth code; knowledge of methods for producing braille (e.g., slate and stylus, computers); and methodologies and resources for developing students' literacy skills in print and braille.

**0015 Understand strategies for developing the functional living skills of students with visual and multiple impairments.**

For example: knowledge of the concepts and skills required to perform the tasks and functions of independent daily living (e.g., toileting, personal hygiene, dressing, eating and preparing meals, shopping, money management); ways in which visual and multiple impairments may affect a student's ability to learn or perform such skills; and strategies for helping students develop functional living competence to the fullest extent possible.

**0016 Understand how to promote students' academic achievement.**

For example: knowledge of the academic curriculum (e.g., reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies); strategies for teaching academic skills and content to elementary and secondary students with visual impairments; and instructional methodologies, resources, and technologies (e.g., abacus and talking calculator for math, CCTV for reading, taped materials, computer hardware and software with a wide range of input and output capabilities) for providing students with the learning experiences and tools they need to achieve academic goals in the content areas, including concept development and study skills.

**0017 Understand how to address the social and emotional needs of students with visual impairments.**

For example: strategies and activities for promoting students' development of social skills (e.g., appropriate behaviors in various social contexts; the use of nonverbal skills, such as facial expressions and body language; multicultural awareness) and for meeting students' emotional needs (e.g., making friends); ways to facilitate interpersonal interactions in a variety of contexts (e.g., through classroom grouping practices, field trips, e-mail exchanges); and the use of consultation and counseling skills to facilitate students' growth in specified areas (e.g., self-esteem, assertiveness, appropriate risk-taking, questioning strategies).



**0018 Understand how to promote career/vocational, recreation/leisure, and other independent living skills in students with visual impairments.**

For example: strategies for promoting the career/vocational and recreation/leisure skills of students with visual impairments; strategies for promoting students' ability to make independent life choices; ways to help students learn to gain access to a wide range of services, resources, and information; strategies that promote students' development of the skills and behaviors required for self-advocacy; and strategies for promoting students' understanding of their legal rights and their willingness to advocate for those rights.

**0019 Understand how to help students make successful transitions.**

For example: strategies for helping students make successful transitions at all levels and in all contexts (e.g., transitions from an early intervention program to a regular school, from school to school, and from home-based services to school-based services; family moves to new environments; transitions from school to adult environments).

**WORKING IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY**

**0020 Understand how to establish partnerships with other members of the educational community to enhance learning opportunities for students with multiple disabilities, including visual impairments.**

For example: consultation, collaboration, and communication with other professionals and service providers (e.g., general education teachers, librarians, administrators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, orientation and mobility specialists) to solve problems and promote student achievement; and strategies for providing effective services involving other professionals (e.g., providing training and support to teachers individually and through in-service programs, suggesting modifications for conducting student evaluations, coordinating instruction with other teaching professionals).

**0021 Understand how to promote strong school-home relationships.**

For example: strategies for establishing partnerships with families, including families from diverse backgrounds; ways of communicating effectively with families and overcoming barriers to communication; ways of working collaboratively with families to promote their participation in planning and implementing their children's education; and ways of providing information, training, support, and referrals to families whose children have multiple disabilities, including visual impairments.

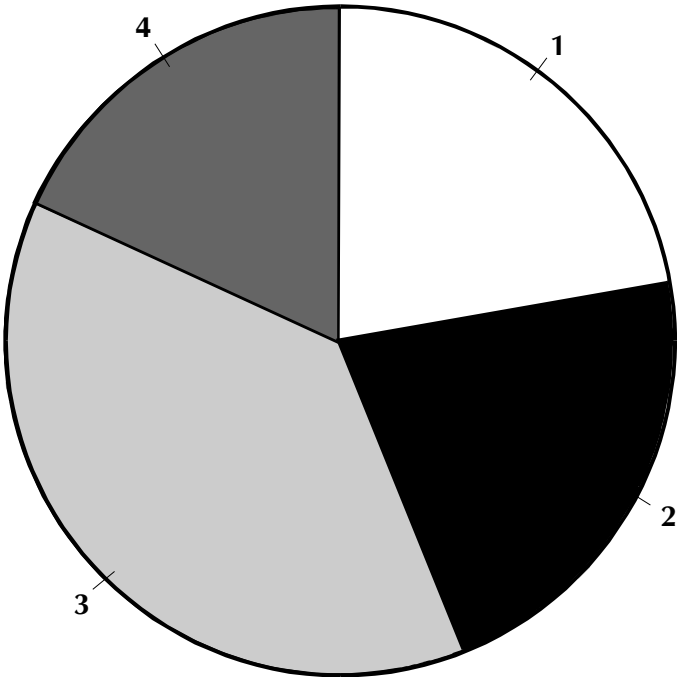
**0022 Understand how to encourage school-community interactions that enhance learning opportunities for students with visual impairments.**

For example: knowledge of agencies, services, and organizations of and for people with visual impairments and their families (e.g., Supplemental Security Income [SSI], American Printing House for the Blind [APH]); strategies for working effectively with such agencies and organizations; sensitivity to various cultural perspectives within the community; ways to establish and maintain positive relationships with community institutions to facilitate successful transitions by students; and ways to engage community support for the special education program.

**0023 Understand the history and philosophy of special education, key issues and trends, roles and responsibilities, and legal and ethical issues relevant to special education.**

For example: the historical and philosophical foundations of special education and education for students with visual impairments; legal and ethical issues in special education (e.g., confidentiality, personal involvement with students and families, student discipline, mediation); roles and responsibilities of teachers of blind and visually impaired students; and application of special education related laws (e.g., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA], the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]), regulations, and guidelines (e.g., regarding referral, evaluation, eligibility, equity, program development, due process).

DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED-RESPONSE ITEMS ON THE TEST FORM



Subarea	Approximate Percentage of Selected-Response Items on Test Form
1. Understanding Students with Visual Impairments	22%
2. Assessing Students and Developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)	22%
3. Promoting Student Development and Learning	38%
4. Working in a Collaborative Learning Community	18%

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

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## Field 32: Special Education: Visually Impaired

1. Which of the following occurs first in the development of visual perception?
  - A. response to light
  - B. response to form
  - C. ability to fixate
  - D. ability to focus
  
2. A mild cognitive impairment would likely make which of the following daily living skills most difficult to learn for a student with a visual impairment?
  - A. using comparison shopping to select foods
  - B. cooking a meal involving various types of foods
  - C. cleaning up after eating a meal
  - D. storing food properly to protect freshness
  
3. For desk work, a student who has 20/40 vision but a visual field restricted to less than 5° would be most likely to benefit from the use of:
  - A. convex spectacles.
  - B. a microscope.
  - C. a stand loupe.
  - D. a reverse telescope.
  
4. During structured observation, a teacher would most appropriately use which of the following to record the frequency of a behavior such as eye poking?
  - A. duration recording
  - B. behavior rating scale
  - C. event recording
  - D. behavioral checklist
  
5. The Diagnostic Assessment Procedure is an instrument designed primarily to assess an individual's:
  - A. field of vision.
  - B. aptitude for learning braille.
  - C. visual efficiency.
  - D. central acuity.

6. The additional requirements on the IEP for a student with a visual impairment must include a detailed description of which of the following?
- I. specific adaptations to be made to regular instructional materials and methods to compensate for the student's visual loss
  - II. the training and background of special education personnel who will be working with the student
  - III. arrangements made to provide the student with special training and equipment to compensate for his or her visual loss
  - IV. procedures to be followed if the student fails to make satisfactory progress before the next annual review
- A. I and III only
  - B. I and IV only
  - C. II and III only
  - D. II and IV only
7. A five-year-old child who is legally blind with a full field of vision has explored a room and become familiar with the objects in it. The most useful orientation skill to teach next would be to have the child:
- 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. stand at the doorway and point to the location of objects in the room.
8. Which of the following auditory training activities would be most appropriate to use in helping a student with a severe visual impairment improve his or her skills in the area of auditory figure-ground discrimination?
- A. following the path of a moving sound source
  - B. focusing on one sound in the presence of other sounds
  - C. indicating the location of a fixed auditory signal
  - D. identifying the agent that has made a particular sound

9. Which of the following would be most effective for improving the nonverbal communication skills of adolescents with visual impairments?
- A. guided peer group activities that include both students with sight and students with visual impairments
  - B. creative dance classes that emphasize movement as a means of creative expression
  - C. school-sponsored sports activities that include students with sight and students with visual impairments
  - D. challenge programs such as Outward Bound that seek to promote self-reliance
10. A Raised Line Drawing Kit (Sewell Kit) would most likely be useful in helping fourth- or fifth-grade students with visual impairments:
- A. represent the relationship between two- and three-dimensional objects.
  - B. write on lines and in specified spaces.
  - C. improve map-reading skills.
  - D. produce various textures in tactual drawings.
11. A teacher has found several specific techniques useful in developing the communication skills of an adolescent with multiple disabilities, and the student's parents wish to reinforce these techniques at home. Which of the following approaches would be most appropriate and effective for coordinating the teacher's and parents' efforts?
- A. Provide the parents with a detailed written description of the techniques that have proven effective at school.
  - B. Send weekly reports to the parents to communicate any progress the student may be making as a result of the techniques.
  - C. Demonstrate the techniques to the parents and then provide the student with a home-school notebook for regular use by the parents and teacher.
  - D. Hold parent-teacher conferences on an as-needed basis and encourage parents to call if they have any concerns or questions.

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 primary language.
  - C. vocational placement following graduation.
  - D. a review of their IEP conducted by a multidisciplinary team once each semester.

Below are the directions for the Special Education: Visually Impaired performance assignment.

### **TRANSCRIPTION SECTION DIRECTIONS**

This section of the test involves transcribing a passage into Grade 2 Literary Braille. Your transcription must be made using a braillewriter that can accommodate the 11 ½" × 11" paper provided by your test administrator. You must use a 40-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 (including improper cell format and improper indentation at the beginning of a paragraph)
- punctuation or composition signs omitted or inserted
- erasures detectable by touch

If you need additional braille paper, notify your test 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.**



Below is the scoring scale for the Special Education: Visually Impaired performance assignment.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION: VISUALLY IMPAIRED—PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT SCORING SCALE**

Circle the "C" on the scoring form (denoting "Correct" response) for each item if, and only if, the candidate's response is described by the following:

Braille Transcription	Notation	Notation Description
Items 1–32	C	Correct—The candidate's response is a correct and appropriate representation of the word, partial word, letter, number, or symbol transcribed from the written passage, i.e., the response conforms to the standards of Grade 2 Literary Braille.

If the response is not correct, circle **one** of the following choices:

Braille Transcription	Notation	Notation Description
Items 1–32	NC	Not Correct—The candidate's response is an incorrect representation of the word, partial word, letter, number, or symbol transcribed from the written passage, i.e., the response does not conform to the standards of Grade 2 Literary Braille.
Items 1–32	U	Unscorable—The candidate's response is illegible or is not in braille.
Items 1–32	B	Blank—The candidate provides no response whatsoever.

The following errors will be counted as incorrect in a transcription:

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

## Practice Performance Assignment

13. **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

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## Field 32: Special Education: Visually Impaired

Question Number	Correct Response	Objective
1.	A	Understand the human visual system and types and characteristics of visual impairments.
2.	A	Understand learning processes and the significance of disabilities for learning.
3.	D	Understand environmental adaptations to enhance the use of vision, the use of low vision aids, and basic principles of optics.
4.	C	Understand types and characteristics of assessment instruments and methods.
5.	C	Understand functional vision and learning media assessments for students with visual impairments.
6.	A	Understand procedures for developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with visual impairments.
7.	D	Understand concepts and skills related to orientation and mobility and methods of preparing students for structured orientation and mobility instruction.
8.	B	Understand techniques for helping students make efficient and effective use of all their senses to interpret information from their environment.
9.	A	Understand strategies for promoting students' communication and literacy skills.
10.	B	Understand how to promote students' academic achievement.
11.	C	Understand how to promote strong school-home relationships.
12.	B	Understand the history and philosophy of special education, key issues and trends, roles and responsibilities, and legal and ethical issues relevant to special education.