



ARIZONA EDUCATOR PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS™



STUDY GUIDE

30 Special Education:
Severely and Profoundly Disabled

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PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AEPA™ 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 AEPA and Test Preparation](#)



PART 2: FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Field 30: Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled

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

Field 30: Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled

SUBAREAS:

1. Understanding Students with Severe and Profound Disabilities
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 SEVERE AND PROFOUND DISABILITIES

0001 Demonstrate knowledge of learning processes and the significance of disabilities for learning.

For example: processes by which learning occurs; applications of learning theories; factors that may affect learning, including socioeconomic, cultural, and language differences; effects of various disabilities, especially severe and profound disabilities, on learning; factors that may impede learning (e.g., health issues, abuse/neglect, substance abuse, medications); factors that may facilitate learning in students with special needs; and strategies for promoting learning that accommodate students' needs and take advantage of their strengths.

0002 Demonstrate knowledge of physical/medical conditions commonly associated with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: characteristics and etiologies of conditions associated with severe and profound disabilities; medical and therapeutic terminology related to these conditions; and basic medical knowledge required by teachers of students with these conditions (e.g., relating to health and nutrition, anatomy, physiology, brain functioning).

0003 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to meet the physical and medical needs of students who have severe and profound disabilities.

For example: procedures for using and maintaining equipment to meet students' physical and medical needs; and procedures for the physical and medical management of students with severe and profound disabilities (e.g., safety and emergency procedures; procedures for tube feeding; procedures for positioning, handling, lifting, and transferring), including those procedures performed in consultation with support services personnel.

0004 Demonstrate knowledge of the cognitive and communicative functioning of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: implications of severe and profound disabilities for cognitive and communicative development and functioning; types and characteristics of language and speech disorders common among students with severe and profound disabilities; and common cognitive, educational, and communication needs of students who have severe and profound disabilities.

0005 Demonstrate knowledge of the physical, psychological, and social functioning of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: implications of severe and profound disabilities for students' physical, sensory, motor, psychological, and social development and functioning; and physical, psychological, and social needs of students who have severe and profound disabilities.

ASSESSING STUDENTS AND DEVELOPING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)

0006 Demonstrate knowledge of types and characteristics of assessment instruments and methods.

For example: basic terminology used in assessment; types, characteristics, and methods of formal and informal assessment; principles of and procedures for creating, selecting, and evaluating educational assessment instruments and methods, including those used in prereferral situations; and advantages, disadvantages, and limitations of various assessment instruments and methods.

0007 Apply procedures for assessing the cognitive development and educational achievement of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments used to evaluate the cognitive development and educational achievement of students with severe and profound disabilities; methods for determining learning styles and strengths, including the use of data collection; procedures for selecting, adapting, and modifying assessments to accommodate students' abilities and needs; procedures for administering and conducting different types of assessments, including ongoing assessment, in a variety of settings; and interpretation of assessment results.

0008 Demonstrate knowledge of the assessment of the physical and communicative development of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments and collaboration practices used to evaluate the communicative skills and the sensory, perceptual, and motor development of students with severe and profound disabilities; ways assessment results can be used for instructional planning and Individualized Education Program (IEP) development; and implementation of recommendations and objectives resulting from assessments.

0009 Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for assessing the social/emotional development and functional living competence of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: types and characteristics of formal and informal assessments used to evaluate the social/emotional development, functional behavior, and functional living skills (including prevocational and vocational skills) of students with severe and profound disabilities; procedures for selecting, adapting, and modifying assessments to accommodate students' abilities and needs; procedures for conducting different types of behavior and functional living assessments (including ongoing assessment, data collection, and task analysis) in a variety of settings; and interpretation of assessment results.

0010 Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: roles and functions of team members; factors and procedures in gathering information, creating and maintaining records in accordance with mandated special education timelines, determining appropriate placements (including least restrictive environment), and developing IEPs for students with severe and profound disabilities (includes students functioning 0–5 developmentally/3–21 chronologically); components of an IEP; considerations in the development of goals, objectives, and benchmarks; and evaluation of student progress with respect to IEP goals and objectives.

PROMOTING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

0011 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to establish a positive and productive learning environment for all students.

For example: ways in which severe and profound disabilities affect students' progress in the general education curriculum; factors in the learning environment that affect students' self-esteem and attitudes toward learning; strategies for modifying learning environments and for using para-professionals and ancillary personnel to address the needs of students with severe and profound disabilities and nondisabled peers; strategies for crisis prevention/intervention; strategies for physically arranging the instructional setting to accommodate students' needs and to facilitate learning; and individual and group management strategies and intervention techniques for achieving instructional management goals.

0012 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote the cognitive development and academic achievement of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies for designing and adapting curricula for students with severe and profound disabilities; strategies for facilitating cognitive development and learning in specified situations; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to individualize instruction and to promote students' ability to apply learning in natural environments.

0013 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote the sensory, perceptual, and motor skills of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies for designing and implementing sensory stimulation programs (i.e., visual, auditory, tactile, and sensory integration); awareness of orientation and mobility strategies; strategies for designing, integrating, and implementing activities related to adaptive physical education and fine- and gross-motor programs; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to individualize instruction and to enhance students' physical skills and abilities.

0014 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote the social/emotional development of students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies for designing and implementing programs to promote students' social/emotional development in the areas of behavior management, leisure time, sexuality, peer and adult interactions, sensitivity to cultural diversity, age-appropriate skills, affective behavior, and self-concept; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies to individualize instruction and to promote students' social/emotional development.

0015 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote communicative and language development in students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies for collaborating with speech and language therapists to provide learning experiences to students with severe and profound disabilities to enhance communication skills and meet specified goals relating to expressive and receptive language; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional methods, resources, and technologies (including augmentative communication systems) to individualize instruction and to promote students' communication skills.

0016 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote self-care, home-living, and community skills in students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies to facilitate maximum independent functioning in the living environment and community and to promote transition readiness; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional strategies, materials, technologies, and community resources to individualize instruction and to promote functional living skills.

0017 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote prevocational skills, vocational skills, and transition readiness in students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: strategies for designing and implementing prevocational and vocational training programs for students with severe and profound disabilities (including task analysis); strategies for providing learning experiences to enhance transition readiness for students of different ages; use of the continuum of services available for vocational training and placement; strategies for promoting students' ability to self-advocate and awareness of advocacy programs; and the evaluation, selection, and adaptation of instructional strategies, materials, technologies, and community resources to individualize instruction and to promote prevocational and vocational skills.

WORKING IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

0018 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to establish partnerships with other members of the school community to enhance learning opportunities for students with severe and profound disabilities.

For example: 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 in a variety of educational contexts (e.g., providing in-service disability awareness programs for the entire school community, collaborative teaching).

0019 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote strong school-home relationships.

For example: strategies for establishing partnerships with families from a diversity of backgrounds; how to establish effective communication with families and to recognize and overcome barriers to communication; 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 severe and profound disabilities.

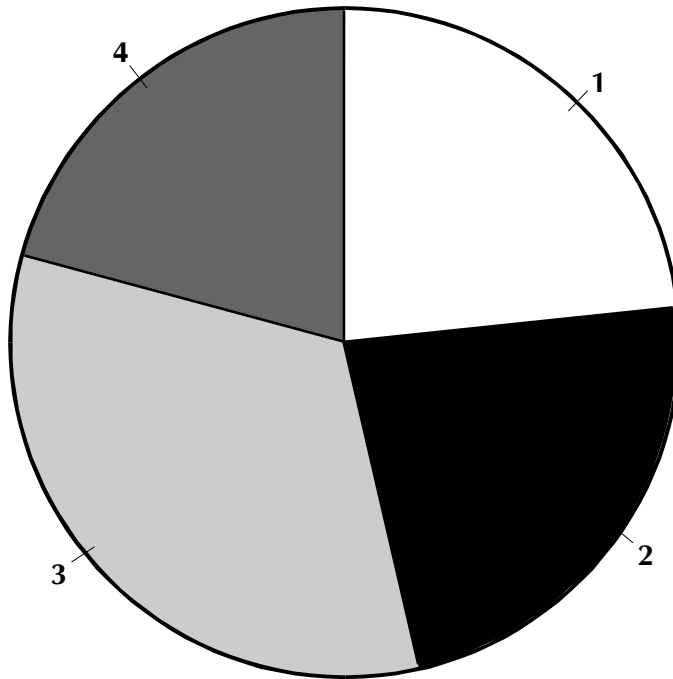
0020 Demonstrate knowledge of ways to encourage school-community interactions that enhance learning opportunities for students with severe and profound disabilities.





For example: strategies for working effectively with agencies and services that can help meet the needs of students with severe and profound disabilities; sensitivity to diverse cultural perspectives within the community; how to establish and maintain positive relationships with the community to facilitate successful student transitions; and how to engage community support for the special education program.

0021 Demonstrate knowledge of 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 severe and profound disabilities; current issues and trends in special education (e.g., relating to alternative delivery systems); legal and ethical issues in special education (e.g., confidentiality, personal involvement with students and families, student discipline); roles and responsibilities of teachers of students with severe and profound disabilities (including professional development); mediation techniques; 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 Severe and Profound Disabilities	24%
 2. Assessing Students and Developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)	24%
 3. Promoting Student Development and Learning	33%
 4. Working in a Collaborative Learning Community	19%

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Field 30: Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled

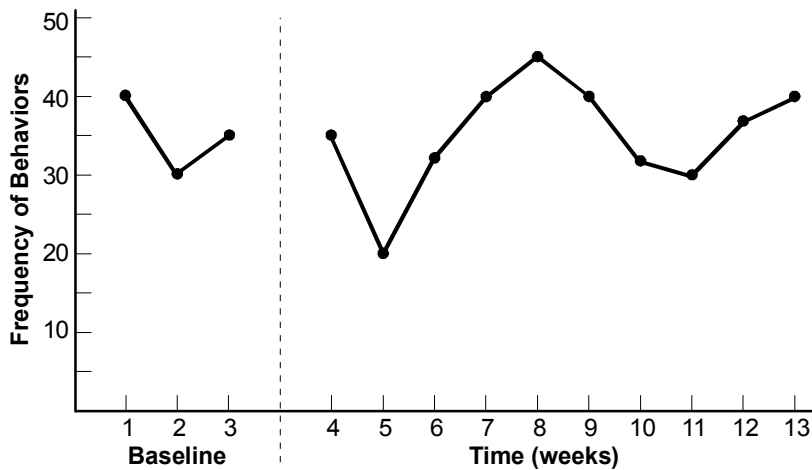
1. Studies indicate that severe lead poisoning in young children is most likely to result in:
 - A. diabetes.
 - B. cognitive disabilities.
 - C. deafness.
 - D. infantile autism.

2. It would be most important for a teacher to do which of the following when implementing an activity designed to develop the social skills of students with autism (e.g., having a group of students with autism cook a meal together and then eat together)?
 - A. Provide minimal intervention to allow for independent problem solving.
 - B. Communicate to students clear expectations for their behavior during the activity.
 - C. Ensure that all students involved in the activity exhibit similar social characteristics and levels of social maturity.
 - D. Have students develop their own set of individual and group goals for the activity.

3. Jason is a 17 year old who is blind, has severe cognitive disabilities, and attends a self-contained classroom. Assessment data show that he needs limited physical assistance but that he can perform most basic self-help skills without prompting. Based on these data, to which of the following professionals should Jason be referred for assistance in learning to locate appropriate materials independently in a classroom?
 - A. orientation and mobility instructor
 - B. adaptive equipment specialist
 - C. physical therapist
 - D. adaptive physical education instructor

4. A functional skills assessment for a high school student with mental disability should include an evaluation of the student's:
 - A. cognitive development.
 - B. vocational skills.
 - C. motor development.
 - D. academic aptitude.

5. Use the graph below, which shows the average weekly number of aggressive behaviors displayed by Martha in the first half of the school year, to answer the question that follows.



One of Martha's IEP goals calls for decreasing the number of aggressive behaviors she exhibits per week by 50 percent. After collecting baseline data, Martha's teacher begins implementing the proposed intervention strategy, while continuing to count the number of aggressive incidents each day. Based on the results in the graph, which would be the most appropriate step for the teacher to take next?

- Continue to implement the program and collect data, since it is too early to assess the current program's degree of success.
- Request a conference with Martha's parents and school administrators to discuss placing Martha in a more restrictive educational setting.
- Consult with Martha's parents and school psychologist to develop a new intervention strategy because the current strategy is ineffective.
- Revise the data summary form to focus on daily data, since the weekly averages do not accurately reflect the student's actual behaviors.

6. Barbara is a 14 year old with spastic quadriplegia who uses a wheelchair and has not yet developed verbal expressive language. Which of the following would be an appropriate way for her special education teacher to assist the content-area teacher in adapting test-taking materials for Barbara's use?
- A. Demonstrate how to incorporate visual prompts into Barbara's tests.
 - B. Review verbal prompts developed for Barbara.
 - C. Use a photocopier to enlarge all test materials.
 - D. Present the test questions so that Barbara can answer by shaking her head.
7. When a student with no consistent expressive communication begins to vocalize and gesture during a familiar activity, the teacher should do which of the following?
- A. Reward the student's quiet behaviors positively.
 - B. Overcorrect the response by having the student repeat a targeted sound.
 - C. Reinforce the student's efforts positively.
 - D. Ignore the student's behavior until targeted sounds are attempted.
8. During functional living skills instruction, a teacher plans to teach a young student with autism to brush his teeth and comb his hair. Which of the following instructional approaches is most likely to be effective for teaching these skills?
- A. total task approach
 - B. natural consequences
 - C. backward chaining
 - D. peer modeling
9. In a vocational program, which of the following techniques would be most appropriate for teaching a 20-year-old student with a severe cognitive disability how to assemble pens?
- A. providing the student with step-by-step written instructions
 - B. having the student learn component skills by performing the task
 - C. explaining the process in a classroom lecture
 - D. showing a filmstrip that illustrates all the steps in the process

10. During a conference with the parents of a student with profound needs, the special education teacher should:
- A. avoid giving a realistic appraisal of the student's potential because it might upset the parents.
 - B. use technical terms whenever possible to give the parents confidence in the teacher's abilities.
 - C. provide the parents with an accurate description of the student's present level of performance.
 - D. assure the parents that the school will plan the student's educational program and tell them that they do not need to be involved.
11. A community vocational rehabilitation center is most likely to provide which of the following to an adolescent with profound disabilities?
- A. remedial classes in basic academic skill areas
 - B. occupational counseling, training, and placement services
 - C. corrective exercises to develop specific physical skills
 - D. appropriate prosthetic devices for his or her orthopedic impairments
12. According to IDEA, which of the following is a right guaranteed to students with physical disabilities?
- A. use of nondiscriminatory testing and evaluation methods and procedures
 - B. access to any programs and classes offered to nondisabled students
 - C. removal of architectural barriers within the school environment
 - D. free provision of all adaptive equipment related to the disability

Below are the directions for the Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled performance assignment.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of a performance assignment. **The assignment can be found on the next page.** You are asked to prepare a written response of approximately 2–3 pages on the assigned topic. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for the assignment.

Read the assignment carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use any blank space in this test booklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. **However, your score will be based solely on the version of your response written in Written Response Booklet B.**

As a whole, your response must demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills of the field. In your response to the assignment, you are expected to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the content area through your ability to apply your knowledge and skills rather than merely to recite factual information.

Your response will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
- **SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE:** accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge
- **SUPPORT:** quality and relevance of supporting details
- **RATIONALE:** soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter

The performance assignment is intended to assess subject knowledge content and skills, not writing ability. However, your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit scorers to make a valid evaluation of your response according to the criteria listed above. Your response should be written for an audience of educators in this field. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. This should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your response.

Below is the scoring scale for the Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled performance assignment.

SUBJECT TESTS—PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT SCORING SCALE

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.
U	<p>The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.</p>
B	<p>There is no response to the assignment.</p>

Practice Performance Assignment

13. **Read the information below; then complete the exercise that follows.**

A student's environment can have a great influence on his or her learning.

Using your knowledge of students with severe and profound disabilities and learning environments, write an essay in which you:

- briefly describe a student with severe and profound disabilities, including his or her age and area(s) of disability;
- describe one environmental factor that would be likely to inhibit learning in the student you have described and one environmental factor that would be likely to promote the student's learning;
- describe two strategies for creating an environment that will promote the student's learning; and
- explain why the strategies you have suggested would be effective.

Sample Performance Assignment Response: Score Point 4

Children with severe and profound disabilities show wide variations in characteristics and combinations of disabilities. One example would be a 12-year-old girl who has severe mental retardation, sensory impairments, impaired motor functioning, and communicative disabilities.

Environmental factors will make a big difference in this child's learning. Particularly because of her sensory impairments, impaired motor functioning, and communicative disabilities, she is likely to feel little motivation to pay attention to her environment or become curious about it. She will therefore need to be helped to interact with objects that she can see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. She will also need an environment where people are actively engaging her, and she will need a system for at least a basic level of communication that will both stimulate her and enable her to convey wants and needs. A student such as this is likely to be doing very little in the way of independent learning or exploring, so that unless people actively interact with her to help her become aware of them and stimulate her sensory perception of her environment, she is very likely to end up spending most of her time isolated and/or engaged in self-stimulatory behaviors of one kind or another.

Environmental factors that would inhibit her learning would be exactly the opposite of what I described above, e.g., nobody who is taking the initiative to engage her with objects in her surroundings and with other people. As I said before, lack of this engagement leads to physical and emotional isolation.

Two strategies for creating an environment that will promote this student's learning would be the following. 1.) Make sure a teacher or staff member is working with this student virtually all the time, either individually or in small groups. This would provide her with sensory stimulation and awareness of other people. For this student, learning will depend largely on other people's initiative in promoting interactions with others and with her surroundings. 2.) Make sure that the environment is designed to meet her physical needs. The student I described would, like many other students with severe and profound needs, probably be in a wheelchair most or all of the time she is in school. She would also have trouble grasping, positioning, and manipulating objects to play with or explore them. Unless the student's teachers create an environment in which she is comfortable and positioned so that she can perceive and interact with people and objects, she will not be able to profit from her school experience. Students with severe and profound disabilities often have other physical needs as well, such as suctioning, and unless the environment is designed to ensure that these needs are met, she will have little inclination to focus on anything but her own physical discomfort.

The reason these strategies would be effective is that they create the optimum environmental conditions for learning to occur. Students such as the one I have described can't explore their environment freely, interact with other people readily, or attend to their own physical needs. Therefore, their teachers must tend to these environmental factors for them. They must also design environments that stimulate, to the greatest degree possible, independent and self-initiated learning. In this way they will create possibilities for growth and learning that would simply not exist otherwise.

ANSWER KEY

Field 30: Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled

Question Number	Correct Response	Objective
1.	B	Demonstrate knowledge of physical/medical conditions commonly associated with severe and profound disabilities.
2.	B	Demonstrate knowledge of the physical, psychological, and social functioning of students with severe and profound disabilities.
3.	A	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to establish a positive and productive learning environment for all students.
4.	B	Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for assessing the social/emotional development and functional living competence of students with severe and profound disabilities.
5.	C	Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with severe and profound disabilities.
6.	D	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote the cognitive development and academic achievement of students with severe and profound disabilities.
7.	C	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote communicative and language development in students with severe and profound disabilities.
8.	C	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote self-care, home-living, and community skills in students with severe and profound disabilities.
9.	B	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote prevocational skills, vocational skills, and transition readiness in students with severe and profound disabilities.
10.	C	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote strong school-home relationships.
11.	B	Demonstrate knowledge of ways to encourage school-community interactions that enhance learning opportunities for students with severe and profound disabilities.
12.	A	Demonstrate knowledge of the history and philosophy of special education, key issues and trends, roles and responsibilities, and legal and ethical issues relevant to special education.