

## Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessments (AEPA™)

### FIELD 23: SPECIAL EDUCATION—EARLY CHILDHOOD TEST OBJECTIVES

<b>Subarea</b>	<b>Range of Objectives</b>	<b>Approximate Test Proportions</b>
I. Understanding Young Children with Special Needs	1–6	30%
II. Promoting Young Children's Development and Learning	7–16	50%
III. Working in a Collaborative Learning Community	17–20	20%

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# Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessments (AEPA™) Subject Knowledge Test

## Test Objectives

### Field 23: Special Education—Early Childhood

#### Subareas:

Understanding Young Children with Special Needs  
Promoting Young Children's Development and Learning  
Working in a Collaborative Learning Community

#### UNDERSTANDING YOUNG CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**0001 Understand the developmental significance of disabilities.**

For example: effects of disabilities on young children's physical, communicative, cognitive, psychological, and social/emotional development; developmental similarities and differences between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers; how disabilities relating primarily to one domain of development may affect other domains; and strategies for promoting development that are responsive to children's needs and reinforce and utilize their strengths.

**0002 Understand learning processes.**

For example: processes by which young children's learning typically occurs; the importance of play in the learning process; recognition of learning as an active, constructive process; applications of learning theories; and factors that may affect children's learning, including cultural and linguistic characteristics.

**0003 Understand the significance of disabilities for learning.**

For example: effects of various disabilities on children's learning; similarities and differences between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers with regard to learning processes; factors other than disability that may impede learning (e.g., abuse/neglect, medications); factors that may facilitate learning in children with special needs; and instructional strategies that are responsive to children's needs and reinforce and utilize their strengths.

**0004 Understand medical aspects and physical management implications of disabilities.**

For example: working with the multidisciplinary team to identify strategies to meet the individual medical and physical needs of young children with special needs; procedures for the physical management of children with disabilities; and awareness of emergency procedures that may be used with young children in special education settings.

**TEST OBJECTIVES**  
**FIELD 23: SPECIAL EDUCATION—EARLY CHILDHOOD**

- 0005 Understand assessment procedures used by multidisciplinary teams to evaluate individual differences and make placement and programming decisions for young children with disabilities.**

For example: types and characteristics of informal and formal assessments, including authentic assessments, used with young children; components of a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education programs and related services; principles and procedures for screening and diagnosing young children with disabilities; involvement of families in the assessment process; methods for determining learning styles and strengths; working with the multidisciplinary team to interpret assessment information to make placement and program recommendations for young children with special needs; using assessment to monitor young children's learning and progress; and assessment-related issues in early childhood special education (e.g., early identification and intervention, unbiased assessment).

- 0006 Understand procedures for developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) for young children with special needs.**

For example: roles and functions of all team members, including children's families, early intervention personnel, and/or special education and related service personnel; procedures for gathering and maintaining information, determining appropriate service options, and developing IEPs and IFSPs for young children with special needs; components of an IEP and an IFSP; and evaluation of children's progress with respect to IEP and IFSP goals and objectives.

**PROMOTING YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

- 0007 Understand procedures for creating a safe, stimulating, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for young children with special needs.**

For example: knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practice for young children with special needs; providing services to infants and toddlers in the most natural environment (e.g., in the home, in a day-care center, at a babysitter's house); strategies for structuring the physical environment, selecting appropriate learning materials, and facilitating different types of activities to promote children's development in all domains; and procedures for modifying learning environments in the context of different types of programs (e.g., home-based, integrated preschool, self-contained special education preschool) to address children's diverse physical, social, affective, cultural, linguistic, and cognitive needs.

**TEST OBJECTIVES**  
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**0008 Understand procedures for using developmentally appropriate individual and group management strategies to provide an atmosphere that enhances young children's learning.**

For example: factors, processes, and issues related to individual and group management in a classroom that includes young children with special needs; strategies for managing routines and transitions and for establishing and maintaining developmentally appropriate standards of behavior; and strategies for creating a productive and cooperative learning environment.

**0009 Understand procedures for establishing a positive and supportive learning climate that promotes all children's sense of competence and self-worth.**

For example: procedures for establishing a learning climate that is responsive to the cognitive, social, and affective needs of all children; strategies that respond to cultural, linguistic, and gender differences; strategies for ensuring that all children feel a sense of membership in a supportive learning community and develop a sense of achievement and competence; strategies for crisis prevention/intervention; and recognition of the effects of adults' behaviors and expectations on children's self-esteem and attitudes toward learning.

**0010 Understand how to promote young children's self-discipline and autonomy.**

For example: recognition of how self-discipline and autonomy develop in young children; ways in which children's disabilities may affect the development of self-discipline and autonomy; strategies for facilitating children's ability to make successful transitions (e.g., from one activity to another, from one learning setting to another) and learning experiences and environments that promote self-discipline and autonomy (e.g., those that offer children opportunities to apply decision-making, self-assessment, self-help, and self-advocacy skills).

**0011 Understand how to promote young children's social and emotional development.**

For example: principles of relationship intervention and strategies for helping young children and their caregivers develop optimum attachments (e.g., helping caregivers understand their infant's unique patterns of interaction and how to modify their own behaviors to be more responsive); appropriate expectations for young children's social and emotional behaviors; ways in which disabilities and other factors may affect social and emotional development; assessment of social skills and interpretation of assessment results; strategies for helping young children develop friendships; ways to address inappropriate social behaviors and enhance the social skills of children with given needs; and ways to provide children with opportunities to interact productively with peers and adults in various settings.

**TEST OBJECTIVES**  
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**0012 Understand how to promote young children's communication development.**

For example: factors that may affect young children's communication development; working with other multidisciplinary team members to conduct and interpret informal and formal assessments of communication needs and progress; selection and adaptation of methods, resources, and technologies to help children meet specified goals and promote communicative competence; and strategies for providing children with opportunities for meaningful communication in authentic settings.

**0013 Understand emergent literacy and how to encourage the emergence of literacy in young children.**

For example: recognition of how literacy emerges; ways in which disabilities and other factors may affect literacy development in young children; and strategies for creating an environment that offers children opportunities to interact with print in varied and meaningful contexts and to develop skills (e.g., prereading skills, phonological awareness), knowledge (e.g., concepts about print), and positive attitudes related to literacy.

**0014 Understand how to promote young children's self-help skills.**

For example: ways in which disabilities and other factors may affect children's development of self-help skills; informal and formal assessment procedures for evaluating needs and progress in the development of self-help skills; interpretation of assessment results; use of task analysis to develop instruction; and selection and adaptation of methods, resources, and technologies to address specified self-help goals and needs.

**0015 Understand how to promote young children's cognitive development.**

For example: ways in which disabilities and other factors may affect the development of cognitive skills and abilities; working with other multidisciplinary team members to conduct and interpret informal and formal assessments of young children's cognitive skills; and selection and adaptation of methods, resources, and technologies to help children develop cognitive skills and meet specific cognitive goals.

**0016 Understand how to promote young children's physical development.**

For example: ways in which disabilities and other factors may affect the development of young children's gross-motor, fine-motor, and perceptual awareness skills; working with other multidisciplinary team members to conduct and interpret assessments of children's physical skills; strategies for providing developmentally appropriate experiences and activities to promote physical development; and selection and adaptation of instructional strategies, resources, and technologies to address individual goals and needs.

**TEST OBJECTIVES**  
**FIELD 23: SPECIAL EDUCATION—EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**WORKING IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY**

- 0017 Understand how to establish partnerships with individuals and programs within the AzEIP (Arizona Early Intervention Program) and school communities to enhance learning opportunities for young children with disabilities.**

For example: consultation, collaboration, supervision, and communication skills and strategies for working with early intervention personnel and school staff and support service providers (including general education teachers and instructional assistants) to solve problems and promote children's learning and development; and strategies for working with other professionals in the context of different types of programs and service options (e.g., home-based programs, integrated preschool, self-contained special education preschool).

- 0018 Understand how to promote strong family-professional partnerships.**

For example: strategies for establishing partnerships with all families; knowledge and application of family systems theory; ways to communicate effectively with families and to recognize and overcome communication barriers; ways to work collaboratively with families to solve problems and promote their participation in planning and implementing IFSP- or IEP-related activities; and how to provide information, support, and referrals to families whose children have disabilities.

- 0019 Understand how to encourage school-community interactions that enhance young children's opportunities for learning and development.**

For example: strategies for working effectively with community agencies and services that can help meet the needs of young children with disabilities; sensitivity to various cultural perspectives within the community; and ways to establish and maintain positive relationships with community programs to facilitate children's successful transitions.

- 0020 Understand the history and philosophy of early childhood special education, key issues and trends, and legal and ethical issues relevant to the education of young children with special needs.**

For example: the historical and philosophical foundations of early childhood special education; ways in which approaches to early childhood special education have changed over time; legal and ethical issues in early childhood special education (e.g., providing services in the most natural environment; educating children in general education classrooms to the maximum extent appropriate; confidentiality; student discipline); and application of special education related laws (e.g., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA], Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]).