

PRACTICE EXAM 10: ECYA/EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS SPECIALIST — COMPONENT 1: CONTENT KNOWLEDGE SIMULATION (100 QUESTIONS)

This practice exam contains 100 selected-response questions modeled on the Selected-Response Items (SRI) portion of the NBPTS ECYA/Exceptional Needs Specialist Component 1: Content Knowledge computer-based assessment. The official SRI section is one part of a 3-hour Component 1 appointment that also includes three constructed-response exercises; national board certification is scored on a composite basis across all four certification components, not on a single cut score for this section alone. Select the single best answer for each item.

1. A 4-year-old relies mainly on single-word requests and has not yet begun combining words into short phrases such as “more milk.” Which developmental domain does this delay primarily reflect?

- A. Gross motor development
- B. Social-emotional development
- C. Expressive language development
- D. Adaptive/self-help development

2. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the term Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) most directly guarantees that a student with a disability will receive:

- A. Placement in a general education classroom for the entire school day
- B. Educational services identical to those provided to nondisabled peers
- C. The single best possible program available anywhere in the district
- D. Specially designed instruction and related services reasonably calculated to enable progress

3. A student demonstrates average nonverbal reasoning ability but performs significantly below expected levels in reading decoding and fluency despite appropriate instruction. This profile is most consistent with:

- A. Intellectual disability
- B. Specific learning disability
- C. Autism spectrum disorder
- D. Emotional disturbance

4. The 'zero reject' principle under IDEA requires that:

- A. All children with disabilities, regardless of severity, be identified, located, and offered a free appropriate public education
- B. Only students who pass an initial screening are eligible for special education services
- C. Districts may deny enrollment to students whose disabilities exceed available resources
- D. Private schools must accept any student referred by a public school district

5. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirement means a student with a disability must be educated:

- A. Exclusively in a separate special education classroom
- B. In whatever setting a parent unilaterally selects
- C. In general education only if no support services are needed
- D. Alongside nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate for that student

6. The IDEA requirement obligating states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability, including those in private schools and homeless children, is known as:

- A. Least restrictive environment
- B. Free appropriate public education
- C. Child find
- D. Procedural safeguards

7. A school must provide parents with prior written notice before it:

- A. Proposes or refuses to initiate or change a student's identification, evaluation, or placement
- B. Sends home a routine weekly behavior report
- C. Schedules an annual IEP review meeting at a mutually convenient time
- D. Shares a student's report card with the parent

8. Before a student with an IEP can be given a disciplinary change of placement exceeding 10 school days, the IEP team must conduct a:

- A. Functional vocational assessment
- B. Manifestation determination review
- C. Three-year reevaluation
- D. Transition planning meeting

9. During a due process hearing dispute over placement, the IDEA 'stay-put' provision generally requires that a student:

- A. Be immediately moved to the placement the district proposes
- B. Be removed from school pending resolution of the dispute
- C. Remain in the current educational placement unless the parties agree otherwise
- D. Be homeschooled until the hearing officer issues a decision

10. A student who does not qualify for special education under IDEA but has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity may still be entitled to accommodations under:

- A. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- B. The Every Student Succeeds Act
- C. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- D. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

11. The Supreme Court's decision in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* clarified that a student's IEP must be reasonably calculated to enable:

- A. Guaranteed grade-level achievement regardless of disability
- B. The minimal, trivial progress previously described as 'some benefit'
- C. Placement exclusively in general education settings
- D. Progress appropriately ambitious in light of the child's circumstances

12. An Exceptional Needs Specialist discovers a colleague has altered a student's assessment scores to secure additional services. The most appropriate first professional response is to:

- A. Ignore the issue since the intent was to help the student
- B. Report the concern through the appropriate supervisory or ethics channel
- C. Confront the colleague publicly during a team meeting
- D. Independently correct the records without informing anyone

13. Under FERPA, a parent's right to inspect and review their child's special education records must generally be honored within:

- A. 10 business days of any verbal request
- B. One full school year
- C. 60 calendar days with no exceptions
- D. 45 calendar days of the request

14. Before conducting an initial special education evaluation, a school district must obtain:

- A. A court order authorizing testing
- B. Informed parental consent
- C. Approval from the state department of education
- D. A physician's referral for testing

15. A typically developing 8-year-old is expected to reliably perform two-digit addition with regrouping and to sustain attention for a full instructional lesson. A student of the same age who cannot yet do either is showing delays in which two domains, respectively?

- A. Fine motor and gross motor
- B. Social skills and adaptive behavior
- C. Academic/cognitive skills and attention/self-regulation
- D. Speech articulation and receptive vocabulary

16. Exemplifying high ethical ideals as described in the ECYA/Exceptional Needs Standards primarily involves:

- A. Advocating for students' best interests even when it is professionally inconvenient
- B. Always deferring to administrative preference over student needs
- C. Avoiding any disagreement with colleagues to preserve harmony
- D. Limiting advocacy to only the requirements written into the IEP

17. The federal law originally enacted in 1975 as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was later renamed and reauthorized as:

- A. The Rehabilitation Act
- B. The Americans with Disabilities Act
- C. No Child Left Behind
- D. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

18. In most IDEA due process hearings, the burden of proof generally rests with:

- A. The state department of education regardless of who filed
- B. Whichever party has greater financial resources
- C. The party who filed the complaint
- D. The school district automatically, in every case

19. A typically developing toddler is expected to walk independently by approximately:

- A. 6 months
- B. 12 to 15 months
- C. 24 to 30 months
- D. 36 months

20. 'At no cost to parents,' as part of the FAPE requirement, means:

- A. Provided without charge, apart from incidental fees charged to all students
- B. Parents may be billed for any specialized materials used
- C. Families must first exhaust private insurance benefits
- D. Districts may charge a reduced co-pay for related services

21. A teacher notices that a family from a collectivist cultural background seems reluctant to set individual behavioral goals for their child in the IEP meeting, preferring family-oriented language instead. The most culturally responsive response is to:

- A. Insist that individual goals are required and cannot be reframed
- B. Assume the family does not value their child's progress
- C. Reframe goals collaboratively to reflect the family's values while still meeting IDEA requirements
- D. Remove the family from further goal-setting discussions

22. Family systems theory is most useful to an Exceptional Needs Specialist because it emphasizes that:

- A. A child's disability affects only the child, not other family members
- B. Change in one family member or subsystem affects the functioning of the whole family
- C. Families should be excluded from professional decision-making
- D. Siblings of children with disabilities are unaffected by family stress

23. The concept of 'cultural reciprocity' in special education asks professionals to:

- A. Reflect on their own cultural assumptions before advising a family

- B. Require families to adopt mainstream educational values
- C. Avoid discussing culture altogether to remain neutral
- D. Rely solely on standardized checklists to assess family needs

24. Persistent overrepresentation of students from certain racial or ethnic groups in specific special education disability categories, relative to their proportion in the overall student population, is referred to as:

- A. Zero reject
- B. Universal design
- C. Least restrictive environment
- D. Disproportionality

25. When communicating with a family whose home language differs from English, best practice for an IEP meeting requires the district to:

- A. Rely on the student to informally translate for their parents
- B. Postpone the meeting indefinitely until the family learns English
- C. Send only written English documents home
- D. Provide a qualified interpreter and translate procedural documents into the family's language

26. Family-centered practice is best defined as an approach in which professionals:

- A. Treat the family as an equal partner and build services around family priorities and strengths
- B. Determine goals independently and inform the family afterward
- C. Focus exclusively on the child's deficits without family input
- D. Limit family involvement to signing consent forms

27. A model describing how a family's stress level depends on the interaction of a stressor event, existing resources, and the family's perception of the event is known as the:

- A. Zone of Proximal Development model
- B. Double ABCX model of family stress and adaptation
- C. Universal Design for Learning model
- D. Response to Intervention model

28. Creating an equitable and diverse learning environment for students with exceptional needs requires teachers to:

- A. Apply identical instructional methods to every student regardless of need
- B. Limit exposure to diverse materials to avoid controversy
- C. Actively remove barriers and provide differentiated supports so every student can access learning
- D. Assume that fairness means treating all students exactly the same

29. IDEA requires that parents be treated as:

- A. Optional observers who may attend if convenient
- B. Advisory members whose input is not required to be considered
- C. Equal members of the IEP team with the right to participate in all decisions
- D. Silent participants who may not raise concerns during the meeting

30. To comply with IDEA's nondiscriminatory evaluation requirement, assessments used to determine eligibility must be:

- A. Administered only in English regardless of the student's home language
- B. Selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory
- C. Limited to a single standardized test score
- D. Chosen based on the assessor's personal preference

31. A family caring for a child with significant medical and behavioral needs is overwhelmed navigating multiple agencies. The Exceptional Needs Specialist's most appropriate role is to:

- A. Take over all medical decision-making on the family's behalf
- B. Advise the family to manage all coordination independently
- C. Limit involvement strictly to classroom instruction
- D. Help connect the family to relevant community resources and support coordinated service delivery

32. Recognizing 'disability culture' as a valid identity and community, rather than viewing disability solely through a deficit lens, primarily supports:

- A. A strengths-based, respectful partnership with students and families
- B. Lowering academic expectations for all students with disabilities
- C. Replacing individualized instruction with generic group programming
- D. Discouraging students from self-identifying as disabled

33. When a bilingual interpreter assists during a special education evaluation, their role should be limited to:

- A. Independently scoring the assessment based on their own judgment
- B. Modifying test items to make them easier for the student
- C. Accurately conveying language between the examiner and student/family without altering content
- D. Deciding the student's eligibility on the examiner's behalf

34. Encouraging families to gradually shift from making decisions for their child to supporting the child's own decision-making as they approach adulthood reflects the practice of:

- A. Zero reject
- B. Fostering student self-determination within family partnership
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Universal design for learning

35. A district schedules all IEP meetings only during standard business hours on weekdays, which repeatedly excludes working parents who cannot take time off. This scheduling practice is best addressed by:

- A. Offering flexible meeting times, including evenings or virtual options, to support family participation
- B. Proceeding with meetings without the parent since notice was properly given
- C. Documenting the parent's absence as a waiver of their rights
- D. Requiring the parent to submit written comments only, with no live discussion

36. A student who is an English language learner shows errors in English grammar that mirror typical patterns of second-language acquisition, with no similar difficulties in the home language. This pattern most likely reflects:

- A. A specific learning disability in written expression
- B. An intellectual disability
- C. A speech sound disorder
- D. Typical second-language acquisition, not a disability

37. Sharing ongoing, understandable progress data with families between formal IEP meetings primarily supports:

- A. Sustained, informed family partnership in monitoring the student's progress
- B. Replacing the need for annual IEP review meetings
- C. Transferring legal responsibility for progress to the family
- D. Reducing the school's obligation to formally report progress

38. Applying universal design principles to family engagement materials, such as IEP progress reports, means:

- A. Producing one fixed format for all families regardless of need
- B. Requiring families to request accommodations before any materials are shared
- C. Using only technical, jargon-heavy language for accuracy
- D. Proactively designing materials in multiple accessible, understandable formats from the start

39. A teacher assumes a low-income family is uninvolved in their child's education because they have not attended recent school events. The most professionally sound response is to:

- A. Confirm the assumption in the student's file
- B. Explore possible barriers, such as work schedules or transportation, before drawing conclusions about involvement
- C. Reduce communication with the family going forward
- D. Report the family to a truancy or welfare agency

40. Ensuring 'access to quality learning experiences' for a student with exceptional needs, as described in the ECYA/ENS standards, means the student receives:

- A. The exact same curriculum pacing as all peers with no adjustment
- B. Only a modified curriculum with reduced academic expectations
- C. Instruction and materials adapted so the student can meaningfully engage with rigorous content
- D. Access limited to non-academic, functional activities only

41. A toddler who uses single words such as 'milk' or 'up' to represent an entire idea (e.g., 'I want milk') is demonstrating which stage of language development?

- A. Holophrastic (one-word) stage
- B. Telegraphic stage
- C. Complex sentence stage
- D. Babbling stage

42. A nonspeaking student uses a picture-based communication device to request items and express needs throughout the school day. This device is best described as a form of:

- A. Sign language interpretation
- B. Speech articulation therapy
- C. Auditory processing support
- D. Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)

43. A student understands and uses grammar and vocabulary appropriately but has significant difficulty physically producing certain speech sounds, making words hard to understand. This is best classified as a:

- A. Language disorder
- B. Speech (articulation/phonological) disorder
- C. Pragmatic language disorder
- D. Receptive language disorder

44. A teacher writes a short, structured narrative describing an upcoming fire drill, including what the student will see, hear, and be expected to do, to reduce the student's anxiety. This is an example of a:

- A. Social story
- B. Functional behavior assessment
- C. Behavior intervention plan
- D. Video model

45. Before writing a formal plan to address a student's recurring classroom outbursts, the team should first conduct a:

- A. Vision and hearing screening
- B. Curriculum-based measurement probe
- C. Functional behavior assessment (FBA)
- D. Standardized IQ test

46. Once the function of a student's behavior has been identified through an FBA, the team develops a formal document outlining proactive strategies, replacement behaviors, and consequences, known as a:

- A. Individualized transition plan
- B. Behavior intervention plan (BIP)

- C. Related services log
- D. Progress monitoring chart

47. A schoolwide approach that emphasizes teaching expected behaviors directly, reinforcing them consistently, and using data to guide tiered supports before relying on punitive consequences reflects the framework of:

- A. Applied academic remediation
- B. Manifestation determination
- C. Curriculum-based assessment
- D. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

48. A student who screams to escape difficult tasks is taught instead to hand a teacher a 'break' card to request a pause. This intervention is best described as:

- A. Extinction
- B. Response cost
- C. Functional communication training
- D. Time-out

49. Teaching a student to set personal goals, evaluate their own progress, and make choices about their own learning supports the development of:

- A. Fine motor coordination
- B. Self-determination
- C. Phonological awareness
- D. Gross motor planning

50. Explicitly teaching a student to request accommodations, explain their disability-related needs, and participate in their own IEP meeting is primarily building the student's:

- A. Articulation accuracy
- B. Fine motor precision
- C. Self-advocacy skills
- D. Auditory discrimination

51. Training typically developing classmates to initiate play, model appropriate social responses, and prompt a student with exceptional needs during structured activities describes a:

- A. Peer-mediated intervention
- B. Manifestation determination
- C. Curriculum-based measurement
- D. Functional behavior assessment

52. A curriculum that explicitly teaches recognizing and managing emotions, establishing positive relationships, and making responsible decisions is best classified as:

- A. Applied behavior analysis
- B. Universal design for learning
- C. Response to intervention
- D. Social-emotional learning (SEL)

53. A teacher who recognizes that a student's frequent shutdowns may reflect a trauma response and responds by building predictability, safety, and trust rather than immediately escalating discipline is practicing:

- A. Extinction procedures
- B. Trauma-informed practice
- C. Standardized assessment
- D. Manifestation determination

54. When a student begins showing early signs of escalating frustration, an effective de-escalation strategy is to:

- A. Increase demands to test the student's limits
- B. Ignore all signs until a full outburst occurs
- C. Immediately remove all reinforcement available to the student
- D. Lower verbal demands, offer choices, and provide space and time to calm

55. An Exceptional Needs Specialist wants to reinforce a student's newly taught communication strategies throughout the school day, not just during therapy sessions. The most effective approach is to:

- A. Collaborate directly with the speech-language pathologist to embed strategies across settings
- B. Wait for the therapist to independently generalize the skills
- C. Discontinue classroom communication supports during therapy weeks
- D. Limit communication strategy use strictly to the therapy room

56. A student watches a short recorded video of a peer successfully greeting a classmate before practicing the same skill himself. This intervention is known as:

- A. Discrete trial training
- B. Manifestation determination
- C. Video modeling
- D. Curriculum-based measurement

57. A teacher provides reinforcement after an unpredictable number of correct responses rather than after every single response, producing behavior that is highly resistant to extinction. This describes a:

- A. Fixed ratio schedule
- B. Continuous reinforcement schedule
- C. Variable ratio schedule
- D. Fixed interval schedule

58. Providing a student with structured opportunities to make real choices and experience the natural consequences of those choices, within a safe environment, primarily builds:

- A. Articulation skills
- B. Phonological awareness
- C. Fine motor precision
- D. Self-confidence and self-determination

59. Rearranging classroom seating, posting visual schedules, and pre-teaching transition routines to prevent problem behavior before it occurs exemplifies:

- A. Reactive discipline
- B. Proactive/antecedent-based strategies
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Response cost

60. A student who understands significantly more language than they can verbally express is showing a gap between:

- A. Receptive and expressive language skills
- B. Fine and gross motor skills
- C. Short-term and long-term memory
- D. Reading and math achievement

61. Before selecting an AAC device for a nonspeaking student, the team should primarily consider:

- A. The lowest-cost option available regardless of fit
- B. The student's motor, cognitive, sensory, and communicative needs across settings
- C. Only the preferences of the classroom teacher
- D. Whichever device another student in the class already uses

62. A student struggles to initiate conversations with peers. An evidence-based approach is to explicitly teach and rehearse specific initiation phrases, then provide structured practice with feedback. This reflects the principle of:

- A. Incidental, unplanned exposure to peers
- B. Extinction of avoidance behavior
- C. Direct, explicit social skills instruction
- D. Passive modeling with no practice

63. A student uses grammatically correct sentences but frequently interrupts, stands too close to listeners, and struggles to take conversational turns. This profile most closely reflects a difficulty with:

- A. Pragmatic (social) language use
- B. Phonological production
- C. Syntax and grammar
- D. Vocabulary knowledge

64. A student's language goals are most effectively supported across the school day when the classroom teacher, speech-language pathologist, and family:

- A. Work entirely independently to avoid conflicting approaches
- B. Focus only on goals during scheduled therapy time
- C. Share information only once per year at the annual review
- D. Regularly share strategies and data to reinforce consistent language targets across settings

65. Providing a student with a reliable, functional way to communicate basic wants and needs, even before full spoken language develops, primarily supports the student's:

- A. Fine motor coordination
- B. Sense of control, reduced frustration, and growing self-confidence
- C. Standardized test performance
- D. Auditory processing speed

66. After teaching a student a replacement behavior through functional communication training, the team's next essential step is to:

- A. Discontinue monitoring since the replacement behavior has been taught
- B. Withhold reinforcement to test whether the behavior generalizes on its own
- C. Reintroduce the original problem behavior briefly for comparison
- D. Consistently reinforce the replacement behavior across settings while reducing reinforcement for the original problem behavior

67. A preschooler who engages in parallel play alongside peers but does not yet initiate joint attention or shared play is showing typical development for approximately what age range?

- A. Newborn to 3 months
- B. 5 to 7 years
- C. Roughly 2 to 3 years
- D. 10 to 12 years

68. A student using an AAC device should have that device available:

- A. Across all school settings and activities, not just during designated communication instruction time
- B. Only during speech therapy sessions
- C. Only when a paraprofessional happens to be present
- D. Only for academic subjects, not social interactions

69. Teaching a student to recognize early physiological signs of frustration and use a pre-taught calming strategy, such as deep breathing, before escalating is an example of building:

- A. Receptive vocabulary
- B. Self-regulation skills
- C. Fine motor precision
- D. Phonemic awareness

70. Embedding communication targets into naturally occurring classroom routines, such as requesting materials during an art activity, rather than only during isolated drill sessions, reflects the principle of:

- A. Discrete trial training in isolation
- B. Standardized testing accommodations
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Naturalistic, embedded instruction

71. A test that compares a student's performance to the performance of a nationally representative sample of same-age peers is best classified as:

- A. Criterion-referenced
- B. Curriculum-based measurement
- C. Norm-referenced
- D. Dynamic assessment

72. A test designed to determine whether a student has mastered a specific set of predefined skills, such as multiplying two-digit numbers, regardless of how other students perform, is:

- A. Norm-referenced
- B. A dynamic assessment
- C. A curriculum-based measurement probe only
- D. Criterion-referenced

73. A teacher administers brief, standardized one-minute oral reading fluency probes weekly to track a student's growth toward an IEP reading goal. This practice is best described as:

- A. Curriculum-based measurement for progress monitoring
- B. A comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation
- C. A dynamic assessment protocol
- D. An alternate assessment for significant cognitive disabilities

74. An evaluator teaches a student a novel problem-solving strategy during testing, then measures how much the student's performance improves with that guided support, to estimate learning potential rather than only current skill. This approach is:

- A. Norm-referenced testing
- B. Curriculum-based measurement
- C. Dynamic assessment
- D. Alternate assessment

75. Designing a lesson from the outset with multiple means of representation, action/expression, and engagement, so most students can access the content without later retrofitting, reflects the principle of:

- A. Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- B. Response to Intervention (RTI)
- C. Alternate assessment
- D. Manifestation determination

76. A teacher varies the complexity of a reading task, the way content is presented, and the way students demonstrate understanding, based on ongoing assessment of individual student readiness. This practice is known as:

- A. Standardized testing
- B. Differentiated instruction
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Zero reject

77. Explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, delivered in a carefully sequenced and cumulative manner, reflects best practice in:

- A. Social skills training
- B. Behavior intervention planning
- C. Structured, evidence-based literacy instruction

D. Vocational assessment

78. For a student whose IEP includes goals for managing money, preparing simple meals, and using public transportation, instruction should primarily emphasize:

- A. Functional life skills embedded in real or simulated community contexts
- B. Abstract academic content unrelated to daily living
- C. Standardized test preparation exclusively
- D. Isolated worksheet-based drills with no real-world application

79. Under IDEA, a student's IEP must include measurable postsecondary goals and needed transition services beginning no later than:

- A. Kindergarten entry
- B. The student's 21st birthday
- C. Graduation day itself
- D. The first IEP at age 16

80. Administering interest inventories, aptitude measures, and situational work assessments to help a student and IEP team identify appropriate postsecondary employment goals describes:

- A. Curriculum-based measurement
- B. Vocational/transition assessment
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Universal design for learning

81. Taking a small group of students to a local grocery store to practice reading price labels, comparing costs, and making a purchase, as part of an instructional unit, is an example of:

- A. Discrete trial training in a clinical setting
- B. Standardized norm-referenced testing

- C. A manifestation determination review
- D. Community-based instruction

82. Involving a student directly in identifying their own strengths, needs, and preferences when developing IEP goals primarily supports:

- A. Meaningful student voice and self-determination in the planning process
- B. Reducing the legal validity of the IEP
- C. Replacing parental participation entirely
- D. Eliminating the need for present levels of performance

83. A school provides all students with high-quality core instruction, then offers increasingly intensive small-group and individualized interventions based on ongoing progress-monitoring data. This layered model is known as:

- A. Zero reject
- B. Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS/RTI)
- C. Manifestation determination
- D. Universal design for learning

84. Providing a student extended time on a test measures the same content and skills as their peers receive, while changing the test to fewer or easier items would alter what is being measured. This distinction illustrates the difference between:

- A. Formative and summative assessment
- B. Norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing
- C. Accommodations and modifications
- D. Alternate and standardized assessment

85. A student with a significant cognitive disability, for whom even accommodated grade-level testing is not appropriate, participates instead in an assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards. This is known as:

- A. Curriculum-based measurement
- B. Dynamic assessment
- C. Norm-referenced testing
- D. Alternate assessment

86. An IEP goal stating 'the student will improve reading' without a specified behavior, criterion, or timeline fails primarily because it is not:

- A. Related to a disability category
- B. Written by a certified teacher
- C. Measurable and specific
- D. Reviewed at least annually

87. For a student with exceptional needs whose goals span both academic content and independent living, the most effective curricular approach is to:

- A. Teach academic and life skills in entirely separate, unconnected blocks
- B. Integrate life skills instruction across academic disciplines, contexts, and settings
- C. Prioritize academics exclusively until life skills instruction begins in adulthood
- D. Limit life skills instruction to a single stand-alone weekly period

88. An IEP team uses standardized testing, informal observation, work samples, and parent/teacher interviews together, rather than relying on any single measure, primarily because this approach:

- A. Provides a more complete and accurate picture of the student's needs across contexts
- B. Is required only when a parent formally requests it
- C. Replaces the need for a formal eligibility evaluation
- D. Is used solely to reduce the time spent on assessment

89. Beginning transition planning discussions well before the legally required age, introducing career exploration activities gradually across middle and early high school years, best reflects the principle that:

- A. Transition planning is a single event occurring only in the final year of school
- B. Career development should begin only after postsecondary enrollment
- C. Transition needs are identical for every student regardless of goals
- D. Transition and career development are best supported as an ongoing, developmentally sequenced process

90. A student with a significant intellectual disability is provided literacy instruction that includes phonics, sight-word recognition, and functional reading of everyday text, adapted to the student's learning profile. This reflects the principle that:

- A. Literacy instruction should be withheld for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- B. All students, including those with significant disabilities, are entitled to individualized, evidence-based literacy instruction
- C. Only sight-word memorization is appropriate for this population
- D. Literacy goals should be replaced entirely by vocational goals

91. When discussing postsecondary options with a student and family, the IEP team should present:

- A. A range of options matched to the student's own goals
- B. Only four-year college as a goal for every student
- C. Only sheltered workshop placement regardless of student interest
- D. No specific options, leaving the family to research independently

92. When progress-monitoring data show a student is not on track to meet an IEP goal despite several weeks of intervention, the most appropriate next step is to:

- A. Wait until the next annual review to make any changes
- B. Discontinue all services immediately

- C. Analyze the data and adjust the instructional approach or intensity
- D. Assume the goal itself must be factually incorrect

93. Before writing new annual IEP goals, a team must first establish the student's:

- A. Preferred extracurricular activities
- B. Long-term postsecondary career choice
- C. Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- D. State assessment schedule for the upcoming year

94. Providing a student who is deaf or hard of hearing with visual supports, captioned media, and preferential seating near the speaker is intended primarily to:

- A. Change the academic content being taught
- B. Lower the expected standard of performance
- C. Reduce the rigor of grade-level curriculum
- D. Provide equitable access to the same instructional content as hearing peers

95. A teacher uses short, frequent checks for understanding during a lesson to immediately adjust pacing and re-teach a concept before moving on. This practice is best described as:

- A. Formative assessment
- B. Summative assessment
- C. Norm-referenced assessment
- D. Alternate assessment

96. An IEP goal requires a student to apply a taught math skill both in the classroom and during a community grocery trip. Requiring the skill to be demonstrated in more than one setting primarily supports:

- A. Reducing the complexity of the skill being taught

- B. Generalization of the skill across contexts and settings
- C. Meeting a purely administrative documentation requirement
- D. Replacing the need for classroom instruction altogether

97. A transition plan for a student pursuing supported independent living should include goals addressing:

- A. Only academic content unrelated to daily living
- B. College entrance exam preparation exclusively
- C. Skills such as budgeting, self-care, and navigating the community, matched to the student's goals
- D. No specific goals, since independent living is outside the scope of transition planning

98. Inviting a representative from a vocational rehabilitation agency to a student's transition IEP meeting, with parental consent, primarily supports:

- A. Reducing the school's responsibility for transition services
- B. Coordinated planning between school and adult service agencies
- C. Replacing the need for measurable postsecondary goals
- D. Automatically enrolling the student in agency services without further steps

99. Using ongoing assessment data to decide that one student needs manipulatives for a math concept while another needs only visual models reflects:

- A. Data-driven individualization of instruction
- B. A violation of equal treatment requirements
- C. Unnecessary duplication of effort
- D. A departure from evidence-based practice

100. An IEP team designs a student's final two years of programming to blend rigorous academic instruction, explicit self-determination and self-advocacy skill-building, and structured community-based work experience matched to the student's stated career interest. This integrated approach best reflects:

- A. A modification that lowers academic expectations
- B. An isolated vocational track disconnected from academics
- C. A generic program applied identically to all students regardless of interest
- D. Individualized, evidence-based curriculum and instruction aligned with the student's assessed needs and postsecondary goals

Practice Exam 10: Answer Key and Explanations

1. **C** — Combining two words into short phrases is an expressive-language milestone that typically emerges around a child's second birthday, well before age four. A four-year-old still limited to single-word requests shows a delay specifically in expressive language output, not in gross motor skills, social-emotional functioning, or adaptive self-help routines, which develop along separate trajectories and require their own distinct assessment tools.
2. **D** — FAPE does not require the single best program, identical services to peers, or full-time general education placement; placement instead follows a student's individualized needs under the least restrictive environment principle. FAPE requires specially designed instruction and related services, provided at public expense, reasonably calculated to enable meaningful educational progress given the student's unique circumstances.
3. **B** — A specific learning disability is defined by an unexpected, domain-specific gap between a student's overall cognitive ability and achievement in an area such as reading, despite adequate instruction and opportunity to learn. Intellectual disability involves broadly below-average cognitive and adaptive functioning across domains, while autism and emotional disturbance present with core social-communication or behavioral features this profile does not describe.
4. **A** — Zero reject is one of IDEA's core principles, obligating public school systems to actively find, evaluate, and provide a free appropriate public education to every child with a disability within their jurisdiction. It prohibits excluding students based on the type or severity of disability or on limited district resources, and does not extend enrollment mandates to private schools.
5. **D** — LRE requires that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities be educated with nondisabled peers, with removal to separate settings occurring only when the nature or severity of the disability makes general education with supplementary aids unsatisfactory. It does not mandate exclusive segregated placement or allow a parent to unilaterally select the setting.
6. **C** — Child find is the affirmative, ongoing duty IDEA places on states and districts to actively identify, locate, and evaluate every child suspected of having a disability who may need special education, regardless of severity or setting. This duty is distinct from LRE, which governs placement,

FAPE, which governs services, and procedural safeguards, which protect due-process rights during disputes.

7. A — Prior written notice is a procedural safeguard under IDEA given to parents a reasonable time before a district proposes or refuses to initiate or change a child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, so parents can meaningfully participate in the decision. Routine communications like report cards or scheduling a meeting do not, by themselves, trigger this formal notice requirement.

8. B — When a disciplinary removal would exceed ten consecutive school days, or forms part of a pattern amounting to a change of placement, IDEA requires a manifestation determination review to decide whether the misconduct was caused by the student's disability or resulted from a failure to implement the IEP. Vocational assessments, reevaluations, and transition meetings serve unrelated purposes entirely.

9. C — The stay-put provision protects educational stability by requiring that, while an IDEA due process proceeding is pending, a child generally remains in the current educational placement unless the parents and school agree otherwise. It prevents unilateral moves to a newly proposed placement, exclusion from school, or a shift to homeschooling while the dispute remains unresolved.

10. A — Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has a broader definition of disability than IDEA and protects any student whose physical or mental impairment substantially limits a major life activity, entitling that student to reasonable accommodations without an IEP. ESSA and Title I address general education funding and accountability, while FERPA governs confidentiality rather than eligibility for accommodations.

11. D — In *Endrew F.*, the Supreme Court rejected a merely trivial or de minimis progress standard and held that an IEP must be reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriately ambitious given his or her unique circumstances, though it does not guarantee grade-level achievement for every student. The decision addressed the adequacy of educational benefit, not placement setting.

12. B — Professional ethical standards require honesty and integrity in reporting student data, and falsifying scores, even with a well-intentioned motive, undermines the validity of the evaluation process and the trust it depends on. The appropriate response is to raise the concern through the school's designated supervisory or ethics channel, not to ignore it, confront a colleague publicly, or alter records unilaterally.

13. D — FERPA requires that educational agencies comply with a parent's request to inspect and review their child's education records within 45 calendar days, though many states set shorter timelines for special education records. This right is central to confidentiality and due-process protections built into the special education system and is not extended to a full school year.

14. B — IDEA requires that a school district obtain informed parental consent before conducting an initial evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for special education, ensuring parents understand and voluntarily agree to what is proposed and may withdraw consent at any time. This safeguard does not require a court order, state department approval, or a physician's referral to proceed.

15. C — Two-digit addition with regrouping is an academic and cognitive skill tied to number sense and working memory typically consolidating in early elementary years, while sustaining attention across a lesson reflects attention and self-regulation development. A same-age student lacking both is showing delays in academic/cognitive skills and attention/self-regulation specifically, not motor coordination, social-adaptive functioning, or speech-language articulation and vocabulary.

16. A — High ethical ideals for accomplished Exceptional Needs Specialists mean consistently advocating for what is genuinely in a student's best interest, even when doing so is professionally inconvenient or creates friction with administrators. This standard goes beyond simply meeting the letter of an IEP or avoiding conflict, and does not require automatic deference to administrative preference over documented student needs.

17. D — The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 established the foundational right to a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities and was subsequently renamed and reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA. The Rehabilitation Act, ADA, and No Child Left Behind are related but separately enacted statutes serving different populations and purposes.

18. C — The Supreme Court's decision in *Schaffer v. Weast* held that, absent a specific state law assigning it otherwise, the burden of proof in an IDEA due process hearing rests on the party seeking relief, typically whichever party filed the complaint. It is not automatically assigned to the district, tied to financial resources, or defaulted to the state education agency.

19. B — Independent walking is a gross motor milestone that typically emerges between roughly 12 and 15 months of age, following earlier milestones such as sitting, crawling, and pulling to stand. A toddler not walking independently by around 18 months warrants screening, since 6 months is far too early and 24 months or later would represent a real delay, not typical variation.

20. A — The 'at no cost' component of FAPE means special education and related services must be provided without charge, though it does not exempt families from incidental fees also charged to nondisabled students, such as normal school supply fees. Districts may not require families to exhaust private insurance first or charge co-pays or extra fees for special education services.

21. C — Culturally responsive practice calls for honoring a family's cultural framework, such as a collectivist orientation, by collaboratively reframing how goals are discussed and worded, while still ensuring the IEP contains legally required, individualized, measurable goals. Dismissing the family's preference, assuming indifference, or excluding them from goal-setting would violate both cultural reciprocity principles and IDEA's requirement for meaningful parent participation.

22. B — Family systems theory views the family as an interconnected unit in which a change affecting one member, such as a child's diagnosis or new services, ripples through and affects other members, including siblings and parents. This supports family-centered practice and contradicts the notion that disability effects are contained to the child alone.

23. A — Cultural reciprocity, as developed by Kalyanpur and Harry, asks professionals to first identify the cultural assumptions embedded in their own professional recommendations, then explore whether a family shares those assumptions, before deciding collaboratively how to proceed. It rejects both a colorblind avoidance of culture and a one-directional expectation that families simply adopt mainstream values or standardized frameworks.

24. D — Disproportionality refers to the well-documented pattern in which students from particular racial, ethnic, or linguistic groups are identified for special education, or for specific disability categories, at rates substantially higher or lower than their share of the general student population. Addressing it requires examining referral and eligibility practices for bias, distinct from unrelated concepts like zero reject or universal design.

25. D — IDEA's procedural safeguards require that communications with parents, including notices and meeting participation, be provided in the family's native language or other mode of communication, generally through a qualified interpreter and translated documents. Using the student as an informal interpreter, sending only English materials, or indefinitely delaying the meeting all fail this legal and ethical obligation.

26. A — Family-centered practice positions the family as an equal, active partner throughout assessment, planning, and intervention, building goals and services around the family's own priorities, resources, and strengths rather than a professional's unilateral judgment. This contrasts with approaches that determine goals independently, focus only on deficits, or reduce family involvement to a purely procedural role such as signing consent forms.

27. B — The Double ABCX model describes family adaptation to stress as a function of the interaction between a stressor and any accumulated pile-up, existing family resources, and the family's perception or meaning-making of the event, producing a level of crisis or adaptation. It is unrelated to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, UDL, or RTI, which address instruction rather than family coping.

28. C — Equity, unlike strict uniformity, requires actively identifying and removing barriers and providing individualized, differentiated supports so that each student, regardless of background or disability, has genuine access to learning and can meet high expectations. Applying identical methods to everyone, avoiding diverse materials, or equating fairness with sameness overlooks the individualized nature of both equity and special education law.

29. C — IDEA establishes parents as equal, integral members of the IEP team, entitled to participate meaningfully in decisions about their child's identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of FAPE, not merely as optional or advisory attendees. Parents retain the right to raise concerns, request changes, and disagree during and after the meeting, and their input must be genuinely considered, not simply noted.

30. B — IDEA requires that evaluation materials be selected and administered so they are not racially or culturally discriminatory, are provided in the student's native language unless clearly not feasible, and draw on more than a single test or measure. Defaulting to English-only administration, relying on one score, or leaving selection to personal preference would each violate this nondiscriminatory mandate.

31. D — Accomplished Exceptional Needs Specialists extend their advocacy beyond the classroom by helping connect overwhelmed families to relevant community resources, such as medical, behavioral health, and social service agencies, and supporting coordinated communication among providers. This collaborative role stops short of taking over medical decision-making, and it goes beyond simply telling an overwhelmed family to manage coordination entirely alone.

32. A — Recognizing disability culture as a source of identity, community, and pride, rather than viewing disability only as deficit, supports a strengths-based, respectful partnership between educators, students, and families that honors student voice. It does not imply lowering expectations, replacing individualized planning with generic programming, or discouraging students from embracing their own disability identity.

33. C — An interpreter's role in an evaluation is to accurately and neutrally convey communication between the examiner and the student or family, without independently scoring the assessment, modifying test content or difficulty, or making eligibility determinations, all of which remain the qualified evaluator's responsibility. Blurring these roles risks compromising both the validity of the assessment and the family's procedural rights.

34. B — As students with exceptional needs approach adulthood, effective family partnership involves gradually shifting decision-making authority from parents toward the student, supporting growing self-determination and independence while still honoring the family's ongoing role and cultural values. This is distinct from unrelated concepts such as zero reject, manifestation determination, or universal design for learning.

35. A — Meaningful parent participation is central to IDEA, so districts have an obligation to schedule meetings at a mutually agreeable time, offering flexibility such as evening or virtual options when standard hours create a barrier for working families. Proceeding without the parent, treating absence as a waiver, or limiting participation to written comments would undermine this requirement rather than accommodate it.

36. D — When error patterns mirror well-documented, typical stages of second-language acquisition and the student shows no corresponding difficulty in the home language, this points to normal language-learning development rather than a disability. Overidentifying such students as having a learning disability, intellectual disability, or speech disorder without ruling out language acquisition contributes to disproportionate identification of English language learners in special education.

37. A — Regular, accessible progress updates between formal meetings help families stay informed partners in monitoring their child's growth toward IEP goals, strengthening collaboration and trust rather than replacing the legally required annual review or formal progress reporting obligations. It also does not shift legal responsibility for a student's progress onto the family, which remains a shared, school-supported responsibility under IDEA.

38. D — Universal design principles applied to family communication call for proactively creating materials, such as translated versions, plain-language summaries, or accessible digital formats, from the outset, so most families' needs are met without an individual request. A single fixed format, jargon-

heavy language, or a reactive request-only model each place unnecessary burden on families rather than building in access from the start.

39. B — Assuming disengagement from limited event attendance ignores common, addressable barriers such as inflexible work schedules, lack of transportation, or childcare needs, and can reflect bias rather than a family's actual investment in their child's education. Professionally sound practice is to explore possible barriers and alternative ways to engage the family before drawing conclusions, rather than documenting assumptions or escalating unnecessarily.

40. C — Access to quality learning experiences means adapting instruction, materials, and supports so a student with exceptional needs can meaningfully and actively engage with rigorous, grade-appropriate content, not simply receiving identical unadjusted pacing or being shifted to a reduced, purely functional curriculum by default. The goal is genuine access and high expectations paired with individualized support, not a lowered standard.

41. A — The holophrastic, or one-word, stage occurs when a young child uses a single word to convey an entire idea or request, such as saying 'milk' to mean 'I want milk.' This precedes the telegraphic stage, where children combine two or three words, and follows babbling, which involves repetitive, non-referential sound production rather than word use with communicative intent.

42. D — Augmentative and alternative communication, or AAC, encompasses any tool or system, including picture-based devices, speech-generating devices, and communication boards, that supplements or replaces spoken language for individuals with limited or no functional speech. It is distinct from sign language interpretation, articulation therapy targeting speech sound production, and auditory processing interventions, which address different communication needs.

43. B — Speech disorders involve difficulty with the physical production of sounds, such as articulation or phonological errors, while the underlying language system, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension, remains intact, as described in this scenario. This differs from a language disorder, which affects understanding or use of language content and structure, and from a pragmatic disorder, which affects social use of language.

44. A — A social story is a short, individualized narrative that describes a situation or expectation from the student's perspective, using concrete, predictable language to reduce anxiety before the event occurs. It differs from a functional behavior assessment, which analyzes why a behavior occurs, a behavior intervention plan, which outlines strategies, and video modeling, which uses recorded demonstrations instead of narrative text.

45. C — A functional behavior assessment systematically gathers data on the antecedents, the behavior itself, and its consequences to identify the function a behavior serves for the student, such as gaining attention or escaping a demand, before an intervention plan can be designed. Vision/hearing screenings, curriculum-based measurement, and IQ testing address unrelated areas and do not analyze the purpose behind a behavior.

46. B — A behavior intervention plan translates the findings of a functional behavior assessment into a structured document specifying proactive strategies, a functionally equivalent replacement behavior to teach, and planned responses to both appropriate and problem behavior. It is distinct from a transition plan, which addresses postsecondary goals, and from routine service logs or progress charts, which track other information.

47. D — Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a proactive, tiered framework that explicitly teaches expected behaviors, reinforces them systematically, and uses ongoing behavioral data to match support intensity to student need, rather than defaulting to punitive, reactive consequences. It differs from academic remediation, manifestation determination, and curriculum-based assessment, which address academic content or discipline rather than schoolwide behavior systems.

48. C — Functional communication training teaches a student a socially appropriate replacement, such as handing over a break card, that serves the same function as the problem behavior, in this case escaping a difficult task, making the problem behavior unnecessary. This differs from extinction, which withholds reinforcement altogether, response cost, which removes a reward, and time-out, which removes access to reinforcement temporarily.

49. B — Self-determination involves a student's capacity to set personal goals, self-monitor and evaluate progress, make informed choices, and advocate for their own needs, all of which are directly built through explicit instruction in goal-setting and self-evaluation as described here. It is a social-emotional and self-regulatory construct, unrelated to fine or gross motor skill development or phonological awareness in early literacy.

50. C — Self-advocacy instruction directly builds a student's ability to understand and communicate their own disability-related needs, request appropriate accommodations, and take an active role in meetings such as their own IEP, which becomes increasingly important as students approach transition to adulthood. This skill set is distinct from unrelated areas such as articulation accuracy, fine motor precision, or auditory discrimination.

51. A — Peer-mediated interventions train typically developing classmates to initiate interactions, model appropriate social behavior, and provide natural prompts and reinforcement to a student with exceptional needs during everyday activities, capitalizing on the motivating nature of peer relationships. This differs from manifestation determination, curriculum-based measurement, and functional behavior assessment, which serve legal, academic, or behavioral-analysis purposes rather than peer-based social skill-building.

52. D — Social-emotional learning curricula explicitly teach core competencies such as recognizing and managing one's own emotions, building and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible, ethical decisions, forming a distinct instructional domain from applied behavior analysis, a broader intervention methodology, universal design for learning, which addresses instructional access, and response to intervention, a tiered academic and behavioral support framework.

53. B — Trauma-informed practice involves recognizing that certain behaviors may reflect a student's response to past traumatic experiences and responding by prioritizing physical and emotional safety,

predictability, and trust-building, rather than defaulting to punitive escalation. It is a broader relational and environmental approach, distinct from a specific extinction procedure, standardized testing, or the narrow legal process of manifestation determination.

54. D — Effective de-escalation at the earliest signs of rising frustration involves reducing verbal demands, offering meaningful choices, and providing physical space and time to self-regulate, which helps prevent further escalation into crisis. Increasing demands, ignoring warning signs until a full outburst, or abruptly removing all reinforcement tend to intensify distress rather than support a return to a calm baseline.

55. A — Generalization of communication strategies is most effective when the classroom teacher collaborates directly with the speech-language pathologist to understand the specific strategies being taught and intentionally embeds and reinforces them throughout the school day, not solely within isolated therapy sessions. Waiting passively for the therapist to generalize skills, discontinuing supports, or confining strategies to the therapy room undermines that transfer.

56. C — Video modeling is an evidence-based intervention in which a student observes a recorded demonstration of a target skill, such as an appropriate social greeting, performed by a peer or adult, before practicing that same skill, leveraging observational learning to build social and communication competencies. It is distinct from discrete trial training's structured format and from unrelated legal or academic-measurement procedures.

57. C — A variable ratio schedule delivers reinforcement after an unpredictable, averaged number of correct responses, producing steady, high rates of responding that are resistant to extinction, unlike fixed ratio schedules, which reinforce after a set, predictable number of responses. Continuous reinforcement, which rewards every response, and fixed interval schedules, based on set time periods, produce more easily extinguished response patterns.

58. D — Structured opportunities to make genuine choices and experience their natural, safe consequences build a student's sense of competence, autonomy, and self-determination, key components of self-confidence that support later independence and self-advocacy. This kind of experiential learning targets social-emotional and self-regulatory growth, not articulation, phonological awareness, or fine motor skill development, which belong to entirely different developmental domains.

59. B — Proactive, antecedent-based strategies modify the environment before problem behavior occurs, such as adjusting seating, posting visual schedules, or pre-teaching transitions, to reduce triggers and prevent challenging behavior from arising in the first place. This differs from reactive discipline, which responds after behavior occurs, from the legal manifestation determination process, and from response cost, which removes a reward after a behavior.

60. A — A meaningful gap between what a student understands, or receptive language, and what they can produce, or expressive language, is a common, clinically significant pattern in students with communication delays and requires targeted expressive-language intervention. This gap is unrelated to motor skill domains, memory systems, or academic achievement discrepancies between subject areas, which reflect different developmental profiles.

61. B — Effective AAC device selection requires a comprehensive, individualized assessment of the student's motor abilities, cognitive and language level, sensory needs, and the communicative demands of different environments, ensuring the chosen system genuinely fits the student rather than being selected for convenience. Choosing based solely on cost, teacher preference, or simply mirroring another student's device ignores this individualized, needs-based decision-making process.

62. C — Direct, explicit social skills instruction breaks a target skill, such as initiating a conversation, into specific, teachable steps or scripts, provides guided rehearsal, and follows with structured practice and feedback, rather than relying on incidental exposure or passive observation alone. This systematic approach is more effective for students who do not acquire social skills simply by being placed near peers.

63. A — Pragmatics refers to the social use of language, including turn-taking, appropriate physical proximity, topic maintenance, and reading conversational cues, all of which are impaired in this scenario despite grammatically intact sentences. This differs from phonological, syntactic, or vocabulary-based difficulties, which would show up as errors in sound production, sentence structure, or word knowledge rather than social communication breakdowns.

64. D — Language development generalizes best when the classroom teacher, speech-language pathologist, and family regularly communicate, share data, and reinforce the same targeted strategies and vocabulary across the classroom, therapy room, and home, creating a consistent, coordinated approach. Working in isolation, limiting focus to therapy time alone, or communicating only once a year at the annual review each fragment this necessary collaboration.

65. B — Giving a student a reliable, functional communication method, whether AAC, sign, or another modality, reduces the frustration that often accompanies unmet communicative needs and builds a sense of control and self-confidence, even before spoken language fully develops. This benefit is primarily social-emotional and communicative in nature, not a direct effect on motor coordination, standardized testing, or auditory processing speed.

66. D — For a taught replacement behavior to take the place of a problem behavior, it must be reinforced across all relevant settings, while reinforcement for the problem behavior is simultaneously minimized, so the new behavior becomes the more efficient way to meet the student's need. Discontinuing monitoring, withholding reinforcement to test generalization, or reintroducing the problem behavior would undermine this step.

67. C — Parallel play, in which children play near one another using similar materials without direct interaction or coordinated joint attention, is a typical stage occurring around two to three years of age, preceding the more socially coordinated cooperative and associative play seen in preschool and early elementary years. This pattern would be atypical if it persisted unchanged into the five-to-seven-year range.

68. A — An AAC device represents a student's primary means of communication and, consistent with the principle of functional, generalized communication, must be available and encouraged across all school settings, including academics, social time, and unstructured activities, not restricted to therapy

sessions or specific staff availability. Limiting access in any of these ways denies the student consistent communicative competence throughout the day.

69. B — Self-regulation instruction teaches students to recognize their own internal states, such as rising frustration, and independently apply a previously practiced calming strategy before behavior escalates, building a lifelong coping and emotional-management skill. This is a social-emotional and behavioral competency, distinct from receptive vocabulary, fine motor precision, or phonemic awareness, which belong to language and early literacy development respectively.

70. D — Naturalistic, embedded instruction teaches communication and language targets within authentic, motivating daily routines, such as requesting art supplies during a preferred activity, which supports more meaningful learning and better generalization than massed, isolated drill alone. This contrasts with strictly discrete trial formats conducted outside natural contexts, and is unrelated to testing accommodations or the legal manifestation determination process.

71. C — A norm-referenced assessment compares a student's performance against a representative normative sample of same-age peers, typically producing standard scores or percentile ranks, and is commonly used in eligibility determinations. This differs from criterion-referenced assessment, which measures mastery against a fixed standard, curriculum-based measurement, which tracks progress on classroom content, and dynamic assessment, which measures learning potential through a test-teach-retest process.

72. D — A criterion-referenced assessment measures a student's performance against a fixed, predetermined standard or set of skills, such as mastering two-digit multiplication, rather than comparing that performance to how other students perform, which is the hallmark of norm-referenced testing. While curriculum-based measurement probes can be one method of gathering criterion-referenced data, the defining feature here is the fixed mastery standard itself.

73. A — Curriculum-based measurement uses brief, standardized, repeatable probes, such as one-minute oral reading fluency checks, administered frequently to efficiently track a student's ongoing progress toward specific goals and inform instructional decision-making. This differs from a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation, a broader, less frequent eligibility assessment, dynamic assessment, and alternate assessment, which serves a distinct population and purpose under IDEA.

74. C — Dynamic assessment uses a test-teach-retest format, in which the examiner provides guided instruction during testing and measures the resulting change in performance, to estimate a student's learning potential and responsiveness to instruction rather than a single static snapshot of current skill. This differs from norm-referenced testing, curriculum-based measurement, and alternate assessment, which do not incorporate this teaching-during-testing design.

75. A — Universal Design for Learning is a proactive instructional framework built on multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement, designed into a lesson from the beginning so the broadest range of learners can access content without later, individual retrofitting. It is distinct from RTI's tiered intervention framework, alternate assessment, and the unrelated legal process of manifestation determination.

76. B — Differentiated instruction involves proactively varying the content, process, and product of a lesson based on ongoing formative data about individual students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles, allowing all students to work toward the same essential learning goals through different pathways. This is unrelated to standardized testing procedures, the legal manifestation determination process, or the zero reject principle governing eligibility.

77. C — Structured, evidence-based literacy instruction systematically and cumulatively teaches the five core reading components, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, in an explicit, carefully sequenced manner shown by research to be especially effective for students with reading-related exceptional needs. This is unrelated to social skills training, behavior intervention planning, and vocational assessment, which address entirely different instructional domains.

78. A — Functional life skills goals, such as money management, meal preparation, and using transportation, are best taught through instruction embedded in real or closely simulated community contexts, which supports meaningful skill acquisition and generalization to actual independent living. Relying solely on abstract academic content, standardized test preparation, or isolated worksheets disconnected from real-world application undermines the purpose of these goals.

79. D — IDEA requires that measurable postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment, and independent living, along with the transition services needed to reach them, be included beginning with the first IEP in effect when the student turns 16, or younger if state law requires. This requirement does not begin at kindergarten, wait until graduation day, or extend only to age 21.

80. B — Vocational or transition assessment uses tools such as interest inventories, aptitude measures, and situational work assessments to gather information about a student's strengths, preferences, and skills, directly informing measurable postsecondary employment and training goals within the transition planning process. This differs from curriculum-based measurement of academic skills, the legal manifestation determination process, and UDL's instructional design principles.

81. D — Community-based instruction takes learning directly into real community settings, such as a grocery store, so students can practice and generalize functional academic and life skills, like reading labels and comparing prices, in the authentic contexts where those skills will actually be used. This differs from clinical discrete trial training, standardized testing, and the unrelated legal manifestation determination process.

82. A — Actively involving students in identifying their own strengths, needs, and preferences during IEP development builds meaningful student voice and self-determination, especially emphasized as students approach transition age, without replacing the parent's separate right to participate or eliminating the requirement for documented present levels of performance. This inclusion strengthens, rather than weakens, the overall planning process and its legal soundness.

83. B — A Multi-Tiered System of Support, sometimes called Response to Intervention, provides universal core instruction to all students and layers progressively more intensive, data-driven interventions for students who need additional support, using ongoing progress-monitoring data to guide

movement between tiers. This tiered model is distinct from the zero reject eligibility principle, manifestation determination, and UDL's proactive design framework.

84. C — Accommodations, such as extended time, change how a student accesses or demonstrates learning without altering the content or expectations being measured, while modifications, such as reducing the number or difficulty of items, change the actual content or standard being assessed. This distinction is different from the formative/summative timing distinction, the norm/criterion-referenced comparison basis, or the alternate/standard assessment population distinction.

85. D — Alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards is designed for the small subset of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom even accommodated grade-level assessment would not appropriately measure learning, and eligibility must be determined individually by the IEP team using state criteria. This is distinct from curriculum-based measurement, dynamic assessment, and standard norm-referenced testing.

86. C — IDEA requires IEP goals to be measurable, specifying an observable behavior, a clear criterion for success, and a timeframe, so progress can be objectively determined; a vague goal like 'will improve reading' provides none of these elements. The deficiency is measurability, not whether the goal relates to a disability category, who authored it, or the annual review requirement.

87. B — Effective individualized curriculum integrates life skills instruction across academic disciplines and settings, for example embedding measurement and money skills within a math lesson used in a real cooking or shopping task, rather than confining these skills to a single isolated period or delaying them until adulthood. This approach supports better generalization than teaching academics and life skills as separate blocks.

88. A — IDEA requires that eligibility and programming decisions rely on a variety of assessment tools, such as standardized tests, observation, work samples, and interviews, rather than any single measure, because combining multiple sources of information produces a more complete and accurate picture of a student's strengths and needs. This requirement applies broadly and does not shorten or replace formal evaluation.

89. D — Effective transition and career development is best understood as an ongoing, developmentally sequenced process that can begin with age-appropriate exploration before the legally required age-16 IEP requirement, gradually building skills rather than being treated as a single event in the final year of school. This process is individualized to each student's goals and does not wait until after postsecondary enrollment.

90. B — All students with exceptional needs, including those with significant intellectual disabilities, are entitled to individualized, evidence-based literacy instruction adapted to their learning profile, which may combine phonics, sight-word instruction, and functional reading rather than relying on a single narrow method or withholding instruction altogether. Literacy goals are not replaced by vocational goals, since both can and should be pursued together.

91. A — IDEA's transition requirements call for postsecondary planning that reflects the student's preferences, interests, and abilities, meaning the team should present a range of options, including further education, employment, and independent living supports, matched to that student's goals. Defaulting to a single option for everyone, such as four-year college or sheltered workshops, or leaving the family without guidance, fails this requirement.

92. C — When ongoing progress-monitoring data indicate a student is not responding adequately to an intervention, best practice is to analyze the data promptly and adjust the instructional approach, intensity, or strategy, rather than waiting for the next scheduled annual review, discontinuing services outright, or assuming the goal itself was invalid. Data-based instructional decision-making is a core purpose of frequent progress monitoring.

93. C — IDEA requires that an IEP include a statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance as the foundation from which measurable annual goals are developed, ensuring goals are grounded in the student's actual skills and needs. This baseline requirement is distinct from a student's extracurricular preferences, an eventual career choice, or the schedule for state assessments.

94. D — Accommodations such as visual supports, captioned media, and preferential seating are designed to provide equitable access to the same grade-level instructional content that hearing peers receive, without changing what is being taught or lowering the expected standard of performance or rigor. This access-focused purpose distinguishes accommodations from modifications, which do alter content or expectations.

95. A — Formative assessment involves frequent, low-stakes checks for understanding conducted during instruction, allowing a teacher to make immediate, responsive adjustments to pacing or re-teaching before students move on to new content. This contrasts with summative assessment, which evaluates learning after instruction has concluded, and with norm-referenced or alternate assessments, which serve broader comparative or eligibility purposes rather than moment-to-moment instructional adjustment.

96. B — Requiring a student to demonstrate a skill across multiple settings, such as the classroom and a community grocery trip, directly targets generalization, ensuring the skill transfers beyond the original instructional context to real, functional use. This purpose goes beyond mere documentation, does not reduce the skill's complexity, and does not eliminate the need for classroom instruction that teaches the skill.

97. C — When a student's postsecondary goals include independent living, the transition plan should address functional skills such as budgeting, self-care, and navigating the community, individualized to that student's goals and needs. Independent living is a recognized transition domain under IDEA, so treating it as out of scope, focusing only on unrelated academics, or limiting planning to college-exam preparation would be inappropriate.

98. B — IDEA encourages inviting relevant outside agency representatives, such as vocational rehabilitation staff, to a student's transition IEP meeting with parental consent, to support coordinated

planning and a smoother connection between school-based and adult service systems after graduation. This invitation does not reduce the school's transition responsibilities, replace the requirement for postsecondary goals, or automatically enroll the student in agency services.

99. A — Using ongoing assessment data to determine that different students need different supports for the same concept, such as manipulatives versus visual models, reflects data-driven individualization, an evidence-based practice in special education rather than a departure from it. This is not unequal treatment or unnecessary duplication, since equity means matching support to individual need, not applying identical methods to every student.

100. D — Blending rigorous academics, explicit self-determination instruction, and community-based work experience tailored to a student's specific career interest exemplifies individualized, evidence-based curriculum and instruction fully aligned with that student's assessed needs and measurable postsecondary goals, the culminating expectation across these standards. This integrated approach is neither a lowered-expectation modification, an academics-disconnected vocational track, nor a one-size-fits-all generic program.