

TEXES | Texas Examinations of Educator Standards

Preparation Manual



117 English Language Arts and Reading 4–8

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PREFACE

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) has developed new standards for Texas educators that delineate what the beginning educator should know and be able to do. These standards, which are based on the state-required curriculum for students—the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)—form the basis for new Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES). This initiative will impact all areas of Texas education—from the more than 100 approved Texas educator preparation programs to the more than 7,000 Texas school campuses. This standards-based system reflects SBEC's commitment to help align Texas education from kindergarten through college. SBEC's role in this K–16 initiative will ensure that newly certified Texas teachers have the essential knowledge and skills to teach the TEKS to the state's public school students.

This manual is designed to help examinees prepare for the new TExES test in this field. Its purpose is to familiarize examinees with the competencies to be tested, test item formats, and pertinent study resources. Educator preparation program staff may also find this information useful as they help examinees prepare for careers as Texas educators.

More information about the new TExES tests and educator standards can be found at <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us>.

KEY FEATURES OF THE MANUAL

List of competencies that will be tested

Strategies for answering test questions

Sample test items and answer key

If you have questions after reading this preparation manual, please contact the State Board for Educator Certification, Office of Accountability at 1-512-238-3200.

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SECTION I

THE NEW TExES TESTS FOR TEXAS TEACHERS

As required by the Texas Education Code §21.048, successful performance on educator certification examinations is required for the issuance of a Texas educator certificate. Each TExES test is a criterion-referenced examination designed to measure the knowledge and skills delineated in the corresponding TExES test framework. Each test framework is based on standards that were developed by Texas educators and other education stakeholders.

Each newly developed TExES test is designed to measure the requisite knowledge and skills that an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools must possess. The tests include both individual, or stand-alone, test items (questions) and items that are arranged in clustered sets based on real-world situations faced by educators.

Development of the New TExES Tests

Committees of Texas educators and interested citizens guide the development of the new TExES tests by participating in each stage of the test development process. These working committees are comprised of Texas educators from public and charter schools, faculty from educator preparation programs, education service center staff, representatives from professional educator organizations, content experts, the business community, and parents. The committees are balanced in terms of position, affiliation, years of experience, ethnicity, gender, and geographical location. The committee membership is rotated during the development process so that numerous Texas stakeholders may be actively involved. The steps in the process to develop the TExES tests are described below.

1. **Develop Standards.** Committees are convened to recommend what the beginning educator should know and be able to do. To ensure vertical alignment of standards across the range of instructional levels, individuals with expertise in early childhood, elementary, middle, or high school meet jointly to articulate the critical knowledge and skills for a particular content area. Participants begin their dialogue using a "clean slate" approach with the TEKS as the focal point. Draft standards are written to incorporate the TEKS and to expand upon that content to ensure that all beginning educators possess the appropriate level of both knowledge and skills to instruct students successfully.
2. **Review Standards.** Committees review and revise the draft standards. The revised draft standards are then placed on the SBEC Web site for public review and comment. These comments are used to prepare a final draft of the standards that will be presented to the SBEC Board for discussion, the State Board of Education (SBOE) for review and comment, and the SBEC Board for approval. Standards not based specifically on the TEKS, such as those for librarians and counselors, are proposed as rule by the SBEC Board; sent to the SBOE for its 90-day review; and, if not rejected by the SBOE, adopted by the SBEC Board.
3. **Develop Test Frameworks.** Committees review and revise draft test frameworks that are based on the standards. These frameworks outline the specific competencies to be measured on the new TExES tests. The TExES competencies represent the critical components of the standards that can be measured with either a pencil-paper-based or computer-based examination, as appropriate. Draft frameworks are not finalized until after the standards are approved and the job analysis/content validation survey (see #4) is complete.

4. **Conduct Job Analysis/Content Validation Surveys.** A representative sample of Texas educators who practice in or prepare individuals for each of the fields for which an educator certificate has been proposed are surveyed to determine the relative job importance of each competency outlined in the test framework for that content area. Frameworks are revised as needed following an analysis of the survey responses.
5. **Develop and Review New Test Items.** The test contractor develops draft items that are designed to measure the competencies described in the test framework. Committees review the newly developed test items that have been written to reflect the competencies in the new test frameworks and may accept, revise, or reject test items. Committee members scrutinize the draft items for appropriateness of content and difficulty; clarity; match to the competencies; and potential ethnic, gender, and regional bias.
6. **Conduct Pilot Test of New Test Items.** All of the newly developed test items that have been deemed acceptable by the item review committees are then administered to an appropriate sample of Texas educators.
7. **Review Pilot Test Data.** Committees review all the statistical data gathered from the pilot tests to ensure that the test items are valid, reliable, and free from bias.
8. **Administer New TExES Tests.** New TExES tests are constructed to reflect the competencies, and the tests are administered to candidates for certification.
9. **Set Passing Standard.** A Standard Setting Committee convenes to review performance data from the initial administration of each new TExES test and to recommend a final passing standard for that test. SBEC considers this recommendation as it establishes a passing score on the test.

Taking the TExES Test and Receiving Scores

Please refer to the current TExES registration bulletin for information on test dates, sites, fees, registration procedures, and policies.

You will be mailed a score report approximately four weeks after each test you take. The report will indicate whether you have passed the test and will include:

- a total test scaled score that is reported on a scale of 100–300. The minimum passing score is a scaled score of 240. This score represents the minimum level of competency required to be an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools.
- your performance in the major content domains of the test and in the specific content competencies of the test.
 - This information may be useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses in your content preparation and can be used for further study or for preparing to retake the test.
- information to help you interpret your results.

You will not receive a score report if you are absent or choose to cancel your score.

Additionally, unofficial score report information will be posted on the Internet on the score report mailing date of each test administration. Information about receiving unofficial scores via the Internet, the score scale, and other score report topics may be found on the SBEC Web site at www.sbec.state.tx.us.

Educator Standards

Complete, approved educator standards are posted on the SBEC Web site at www.sbec.state.tx.us.

SECTION II

USING THE TEST FRAMEWORK

The Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) test measures the content knowledge required of an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools. This manual is designed to guide your preparation by helping you become familiar with the material to be covered on the test.

When preparing for this test, you should focus on the competencies and descriptive statements, which delineate the content that is eligible for testing. A portion of the content is represented in the sample items that are included in this manual. These test questions represent only a *sample* of items. Thus, your test preparation should focus on the complete content eligible for testing, as specified in the competencies and descriptive statements.

Organization of the TExES Test Framework

The test framework is based on the educator standards for this field.

The content covered by this test is organized into broad areas of content called domains. Each domain covers one or more of the educator standards for this field. Within each domain, the content is further defined by a set of competencies. Each competency is composed of two major parts:

1. the *competency statement*, which broadly defines what an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools should know and be able to do, and
2. the *descriptive statements*, which describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.

The educator standards being assessed within each domain are listed for reference at the beginning of the test framework, which begins on page 6. These are then followed by a complete set of the framework's competencies and descriptive statements.

An example of a competency and its accompanying descriptive statements is provided on the next page.

Sample Competency and Descriptive Statements

English Language Arts and Reading 4–8

Competency:

The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

Descriptive Statements:

The beginning teacher:

- Knows basic linguistic concepts (e.g., phonemes, segmentation) and developmental stages in acquiring oral language, including stages in phonology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics, and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Knows characteristics and uses of informal and formal oral language assessments and uses multiple, ongoing assessments to monitor and evaluate students' oral language skills.
- Provides language instruction that acknowledges students' current oral language skills and that builds on these skills to increase students' oral language proficiency.
- Plans, implements, and adapts instruction that is based on informal and formal assessment of students' progress in oral language development and that addresses the needs, strengths, and interests of individual students, including English Language Learners.
- Recognizes when oral language delays or differences warrant in-depth evaluation and additional help or intervention.
- Knows how to provide explicit, systematic oral language instruction and supports students' learning and use of oral language through meaningful and purposeful activities implemented one-to-one and in a group.
- Selects and uses instructional materials and strategies that promote students' oral language development; that respond to students' individual strengths, needs, and interests; that reflect cultural diversity; and that build on students' cultural, linguistic, and home backgrounds to enhance their oral language development.
- Understands relationships between the development of oral language and the development of reading and provides instruction that interrelates oral and written language to promote students' reading proficiency and learning (e.g., preview-review, discussion, questioning).
- Knows similarities and differences between oral and written language and how to promote students' awareness of these similarities and differences.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to strengthen students' oral vocabulary and narrative skills in spoken language and teaches students to connect spoken and printed language.

- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students skills for speaking to different audiences for various purposes and for adapting spoken language for various audiences, purposes, and occasions.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students listening skills for various purposes (e.g., critical listening to evaluate a speaker's message, listening to enjoy and appreciate spoken language) and provides students with opportunities to engage in active, purposeful listening in a variety of contexts.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students to evaluate the content and effectiveness of their own spoken messages and the messages of others.
- Knows how to promote students' development of oral communication skills through the use of technology.

Studying for the TExES Test

The following steps may be helpful in preparing for the TExES test.

1. Identify the information the test will cover by reading through the test competencies (see the following pages in this section). Each competency will receive approximately equal coverage on the test.
2. Read each competency with its descriptive statements in order to get a more specific idea of the knowledge you will be required to demonstrate on the test. When you have become familiar with the competencies, consider those competencies about which you feel you know the most and the least. You may wish to use this review of the competencies to set priorities for your study time.
3. Review Section V for possible resources to consult. Also, compile key materials from your preparation coursework that are aligned with the competencies.
4. Study this manual for approaches to taking the TExES test.
5. When using resources, concentrate on the key ideas and important concepts that are discussed in the competencies and descriptive statements.

NOTE: This preparation manual is the only TExES test study material endorsed by SBEC for this field. Other preparation materials may not accurately reflect the content of the test or the policies and procedures of the TExES program.

TEST FRAMEWORK FOR FIELD 117: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING 4–8

Domain I Language Arts, Part I: Oral Language, Early Literacy Development, Word Identification, and Reading Fluency (approximately 33% of the test)

Standards Assessed:

English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 Standards I–III and VIII:

Oral Language: Teachers of students in grades 4–8 understand the importance of oral language, know the developmental processes of oral language, and provide a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

Foundations of Reading: Teachers of students in grades 4–8 understand the foundations of reading and early literacy development.

Word Analysis Skills and Reading Fluency: Teachers understand the importance of word analysis skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provide many opportunities for students to practice and improve their word analysis skills and reading fluency.

Assessment of Developing Literacy: Teachers understand the basic principles of assessment and use a variety of literacy assessment practices to plan and implement instruction.

Domain II Language Arts, Part II: Reading Comprehension, Written Language, Study and Inquiry, and Viewing and Representing (approximately 67% of the test)

Standards Assessed:

English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 Standards IV–VIII:

Reading Comprehension: Teachers understand the importance of reading for understanding, know the components of comprehension, and teach students strategies for improving their comprehension.

Written Language: Teachers understand that writing is a developmental process and provide instruction that helps students develop competence in written communication.

Study and Inquiry Skills: Teachers understand the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning and promote students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

Viewing and Representing: Teachers understand how to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and produce visual images and messages in various media and to provide students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

Assessment of Developing Literacy: Teachers understand the basic principles of assessment and use a variety of literacy assessment practices to plan and implement instruction.

DOMAIN I—LANGUAGE ARTS, PART I: ORAL LANGUAGE, EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT, WORD IDENTIFICATION, AND READING FLUENCY

Competency 001 (Oral Language)

The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

The beginning teacher:

- Knows basic linguistic concepts (e.g., phonemes, segmentation) and developmental stages in acquiring oral language, including stages in phonology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics, and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Knows characteristics and uses of informal and formal oral language assessments and uses multiple, ongoing assessments to monitor and evaluate students' oral language skills.
- Provides language instruction that acknowledges students' current oral language skills and that builds on these skills to increase students' oral language proficiency.
- Plans, implements, and adapts instruction that is based on informal and formal assessment of students' progress in oral language development and that addresses the needs, strengths, and interests of individual students, including English Language Learners.
- Recognizes when oral language delays or differences warrant in-depth evaluation and additional help or intervention.
- Knows how to provide explicit, systematic oral language instruction and supports students' learning and use of oral language through meaningful and purposeful activities implemented one-to-one and in a group.
- Selects and uses instructional materials and strategies that promote students' oral language development; that respond to students' individual strengths, needs, and interests; that reflect cultural diversity; and that build on students' cultural, linguistic, and home backgrounds to enhance their oral language development.
- Understands relationships between the development of oral language and the development of reading and provides instruction that interrelates oral and written language to promote students' reading proficiency and learning (e.g., preview-review, discussion, questioning).
- Knows similarities and differences between oral and written language and how to promote students' awareness of these similarities and differences.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to strengthen students' oral vocabulary and narrative skills in spoken language and teaches students to connect spoken and printed language.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students skills for speaking to different audiences for various purposes and for adapting spoken language for various audiences, purposes, and occasions.

- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students listening skills for various purposes (e.g., critical listening to evaluate a speaker's message, listening to enjoy and appreciate spoken language) and provides students with opportunities to engage in active, purposeful listening in a variety of contexts.
- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students to evaluate the content and effectiveness of their own spoken messages and the messages of others.
- Knows how to promote students' development of oral communication skills through the use of technology.

Competency 002 (Early Literacy Development)

The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.

The beginning teacher:

- Understands the significance of phonological and phonemic awareness for reading and typical patterns in the development of phonological and phonemic awareness and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Understands elements of the alphabetic principle (e.g., letter names, graphophonemic knowledge, the relationship of the letters in printed words to spoken language) and typical patterns of students' alphabetic skills development, and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Understands that comprehension is an integral part of early literacy.
- Understands that not all written languages are alphabetic and that many alphabetic languages are more phonetically regular than English and knows the significance of this for students' literacy development in English.
- Understands that literacy acquisition generally develops in a predictable pattern from prereading (emergent literacy) to conventional literacy and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Understands that literacy development occurs in multiple contexts through reading, writing, and the use of oral language.
- Knows characteristics of informal and formal literacy assessments (e.g., screening devices, criterion-referenced state tests, curriculum-based reading assessments, informal reading inventories, norm-referenced tests).
- Knows how to select, administer, and use results from informal and formal assessments of literacy acquisition.
- Knows how to use ongoing assessment to determine when a student needs additional help or intervention to bring the student's performance to grade level, based on state content and performance standards for reading in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Analyzes students' errors in reading and responds to individual students' needs by providing focused instruction to promote literacy acquisition.
- Selects and uses instructional materials that build on the current language skills of individual students, including English Language Learners, to promote development from emergent literacy to conventional literacy.

Competency 003 (Word Identification Skills and Reading Fluency)

The teacher understands the importance of word identification skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, and sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provides many opportunities for students to practice and improve word identification skills and reading fluency.

The beginning teacher:

- Understands that many students develop word analysis skills and reading fluency in a predictable sequence and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Understands differences in students' development of word identification skills and reading fluency and knows instructional practices for meeting students' individual needs in these areas.
- Understands the connection of word identification skills and reading fluency to reading comprehension.
- Knows the continuum of word analysis skills in the statewide curriculum and grade-level expectations for attainment of these skills.
- Knows how students develop fluency in oral and silent reading.
- Understands that fluency involves rate, accuracy, and intonation and knows the norms for reading fluency that have been established in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for various age and grade levels.
- Knows factors affecting students' word identification skills and reading fluency (e.g., home language, vocabulary development, learning disability).
- Understands important phonetic elements and conventions of the English language.
- Knows a variety of informal and formal procedures for assessing students' word identification skills and reading fluency on an ongoing basis and uses appropriate assessments to monitor students' performance in these areas and to plan instruction for individual students, including English Language Learners.
- Analyzes students' errors in word analysis and uses the results of this analysis to inform future instruction.
- Applies norms and expectations for word identification skills and reading fluency, as specified in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), to evaluate students' reading performance.
- Knows how to use ongoing assessment of word identification skills and reading fluency to determine when a student needs additional help or intervention to bring the student's performance to grade level, based on state content and performance standards for reading in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Knows strategies for decoding increasingly complex words, including using the alphabetic principle, structural cues (e.g., prefixes, suffixes, roots), and syllables, and for using syntax and semantics to support word identification and confirm word meaning.

- Selects and uses instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to teach students to recognize high-frequency irregular words, to promote students' ability to decode increasingly complex words, and to enhance word identification skills for students reading at different levels.
- Selects and uses appropriate instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to improve reading fluency for students reading at different levels (e.g., having students read independent-level texts, engage in repeated reading activities, use self-correction).

DOMAIN II—LANGUAGE ARTS, PART II: READING COMPREHENSION, WRITTEN LANGUAGE, STUDY AND INQUIRY, AND VIEWING AND REPRESENTING

Competency 004 (Reading Comprehension and Assessment)

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

The beginning teacher:

- Understands reading comprehension as an active process of constructing meaning.
- Understands the continuum of reading comprehension skills in the statewide curriculum and grade-level expectations for these skills.
- Understands factors affecting students' reading comprehension (e.g., oral language development, word analysis skills, prior knowledge, language background, previous reading experiences, fluency, vocabulary development, ability to monitor understanding, characteristics of specific texts).
- Knows characteristics of informal and formal reading comprehension assessments (e.g., criterion-referenced state tests, curriculum-based reading assessments, informal reading inventories, norm-referenced tests).
- Selects and uses appropriate informal and formal assessments to monitor and evaluate students' reading comprehension.
- Analyzes student errors and provides focused instruction in reading comprehension based on the strengths and needs of individual students, including English Language Learners.
- Knows how to use ongoing assessment to determine when a student needs additional help or intervention to bring the student's performance to grade level, based on state content and performance standards for reading in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Understands metacognitive skills, including self-evaluation and self-monitoring skills, and teaches students to use these skills to enhance their own reading comprehension.
- Knows how to determine students' independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels and uses this information to select and adapt reading materials for individual students, as well as to guide their selection of independent reading materials.

- Uses various instructional strategies to enhance students' reading comprehension (e.g., linking text content to students' lives and prior knowledge, connecting related ideas across different texts, engaging students in guided and independent reading, guiding students to generate questions and apply knowledge of text topics).
- Knows how to provide students with direct, explicit instruction in the use of strategies to improve their reading comprehension (e.g., previewing, self-monitoring, visualizing, retelling).
- Uses various communication modes (e.g., written, oral) to promote students' reading comprehension.
- Understands levels of reading comprehension and how to model and teach literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension skills.
- Knows how to provide instruction to help students increase their reading vocabulary.
- Understands reading comprehension issues for students with different needs and knows effective reading strategies for those students.
- Knows the difference between guided and independent practice in reading and provides students with frequent opportunities for both.
- Knows how to promote students' development of an extensive reading and writing vocabulary by providing them with many opportunities to read and write.

Competency 005 (Reading Applications)

The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

The beginning teacher:

- Understands skills and strategies for understanding, interpreting, and evaluating different types of written materials, including narratives, expository texts, technical writing, and content-area textbooks.
- Understands different purposes for reading and related reading strategies.
- Knows and teaches strategies to facilitate comprehension of different types of text before, during, and after reading (e.g., previewing, making predictions, questioning, self-monitoring, rereading, mapping, using reading journals, discussing texts).
- Provides instruction in comprehension skills that support students' transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" (e.g., matching comprehension strategies to different types of text and different purposes for reading).
- Understands the importance of reading as a skill in all content areas.
- Understands the value of using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources to determine the meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words and teaches students to use these sources.
- Knows how to teach students to interpret information presented in various formats (e.g., maps, tables, graphs) and how to locate, retrieve, and retain information from a range of texts and technologies.
- Knows how to help students comprehend abstract content and ideas in written materials (e.g., by using manipulatives, examples, diagrams).

- Knows literary genres (e.g., historical fiction, poetry, myths, fables) and their characteristics.
- Recognizes a wide range of literature and other texts appropriate for students.
- Provides multiple opportunities for students to listen and respond to a wide variety of children's and young people's literature, both fiction and nonfiction, and to recognize characteristics of various types of narrative and expository texts.
- Understands and promotes students' development of literary response and analysis, including teaching students elements of literary analysis (e.g., story elements, features of different literary genres) and providing students with opportunities to apply comprehension skills to literature.
- Selects and uses a variety of materials to teach students about authors and about different purposes for writing.
- Provides students with opportunities to engage in silent reading and extended reading of a wide range of materials, including expository texts and various literary genres.
- Engages students in varied reading experiences and encourages students to interact with others about their reading.
- Uses strategies to encourage reading for pleasure and lifelong learning.
- Knows how to teach students strategies for selecting their own books for independent reading.
- Uses technology to promote students' literacy and teaches students to use technology to access a wide range of appropriate narrative and expository texts.

Competency 006 (Written Language—Writing Conventions)

The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

The beginning teacher:

- Knows predictable stages in the development of writing conventions (including the physical and cognitive processes involved in letter formation, word writing, sentence construction, spelling, punctuation, and grammatical expression) and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Knows and applies appropriate instructional strategies and sequences to teach writing conventions and their applications to all students, including English Language Learners.
- Knows informal and formal procedures for assessing students' use of writing conventions and uses multiple, ongoing assessments to monitor and evaluate students' development in this area.
- Uses ongoing assessment of writing conventions to determine when a student needs additional help or intervention to bring the student's performance to grade level, based on state content and performance standards for writing in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Analyzes students' errors in applying writing conventions and uses the results of this analysis as a basis for future instruction.
- Knows writing conventions and appropriate grammar and usage and provides students with direct instruction and guided practice in these areas.
- Understands the contribution of conventional spelling toward success in reading and writing.
- Understands stages of spelling development (prephonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional) and how and when to support students' development from one stage to the next.
- Provides systematic spelling instruction and gives students opportunities to use and develop spelling skills in the context of meaningful written expression.

Competency 007 (Written Language—Composition)

The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

The beginning teacher:

- Knows predictable stages in the development of written language and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Promotes student recognition of the practical uses of writing, creates an environment in which students are motivated to express ideas in writing, and models writing as an enjoyable activity and a tool for lifelong learning.
- Knows and applies appropriate instructional strategies and sequences to develop students' writing skills.
- Knows characteristics and uses of informal and formal written language assessments, and uses multiple, ongoing assessments to monitor and evaluate students' writing development.
- Uses assessment results to plan focused instruction to address the writing strengths, needs, and interests of all individuals and groups, including English Language Learners.
- Uses ongoing assessment of written language to determine when a student needs additional help or intervention to bring the student's performance to grade level, based on state content and performance standards for writing in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Understands the use of self-assessment in writing and provides opportunities for students to self-assess their writings (e.g., for clarity, interest to audience, comprehensiveness) and their development as writers.
- Understands differences between first-draft writing and writing for publication, and provides instruction in various stages of writing, including prewriting, drafting, editing, and revising.
- Understands the development of writing in relation to the other language arts, and uses instructional strategies that connect these various aspects of language.
- Understands similarities and differences between language (e.g., syntax, vocabulary) used in spoken and written English and helps students use knowledge of these similarities and differences to enhance their own writing.
- Understands writing for a variety of audiences, purposes, and settings, and provides students with opportunities to write for various audiences, purposes, and settings.
- Knows how to write using voices and styles appropriate for different audiences and purposes, and provides students with opportunities to write using various voices and styles.
- Understands the benefits of technology for teaching writing and writing for publication, and provides instruction in the use of technology to facilitate written communication.

Competency 008 (Viewing and Representing)

The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various media and provides students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

The beginning teacher:

- Knows grade-level expectations in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and procedures for assessing students' skills in interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images, messages, and meanings.
- Uses ongoing assessment and knowledge of grade-level expectations in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to identify students' needs regarding the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and production of visual images, messages, and meanings and to plan instruction.
- Understands characteristics and functions of different types of media (e.g., film, print) and knows how different types of media influence and inform.
- Compares and contrasts print, visual, and electronic media (e.g., films and written stories).
- Evaluates how visual image makers (e.g., illustrators, documentary filmmakers, political cartoonists, news photographers) represent messages and meanings and provides students with varied opportunities to interpret and evaluate visual images in various media.
- Knows how to teach students to analyze visual image makers' choices (e.g., style, elements, media) and evaluate how these choices help to represent or extend meaning.
- Provides students with opportunities to interpret events and ideas based on information from maps, charts, graphics, video segments, and technology presentations and to use media to compare ideas and points of view.
- Knows steps and procedures for producing visual images, messages, and meanings to communicate with others.
- Teaches students how to select, organize, and produce visuals to complement and extend meanings.
- Provides students with opportunities to use technology to produce various types of communications (e.g., class newspapers, multimedia reports, video reports) and helps students analyze how language, medium, and presentation contribute to the message.

Competency 009 (Study and Inquiry Skills)

The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

The beginning teacher:

- Understands study and inquiry skills (e.g., using text organizers; taking notes; outlining; drawing conclusions; applying test-taking strategies; previewing; setting purposes for reading; locating, organizing, evaluating, and communicating information; summarizing information; using multiple sources of information; interpreting and using graphic sources of information) and knows the significance of these skills for student learning and achievement.
- Knows grade-level expectations for study and inquiry skills in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and procedures for assessing students' development and use of these skills.
- Knows and applies instructional practices that promote the acquisition and use of study and inquiry skills across the curriculum by all students, including English Language Learners.
- Knows how to provide students with varied and meaningful opportunities to learn and apply study and inquiry skills to enhance their achievement across the curriculum.
- Uses ongoing assessment and knowledge of grade-level expectations in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to identify students' needs regarding study and inquiry skills, to determine when a student requires additional help or intervention, and to plan instruction.
- Responds to students' needs by providing direct, explicit instruction to promote the acquisition and use of study and inquiry skills.

SECTION III

APPROACHES TO ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

The purpose of this section is to describe multiple-choice item formats that you will see on the English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 test and to suggest possible ways to approach thinking about and answering the multiple-choice items. The approaches described are meant as suggestions; you may want to try using them on the sample questions included in the next section. However, these approaches are not intended to replace test-taking strategies with which you are already comfortable and that work for you.

The English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 test is designed to include 80 scorable multiple-choice items and approximately 10 nonscorable items. Your final scaled score will be based only on scorable items. The nonscorable multiple-choice items are pilot tested by including them in the test in order to collect information about how these questions will perform under actual testing conditions. Nonscorable test items are not considered in calculating your score, and they are not identified on the test.

All multiple-choice questions on the English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 test are designed to assess your knowledge of the content described in the test framework. In most cases, you are expected to demonstrate more than just your ability to recall factual information. You may be asked to think critically about the information, to analyze it, consider it carefully, compare it with other knowledge you have, or make a judgment about it.

When you are ready to answer a multiple-choice question, you must choose one of four *answer choices* labeled A, B, C, and D. Then you must mark your choice on a separate answer sheet.

Item Formats

You may see the following two types of multiple-choice questions on the test.

- Single items
- Clustered items

Following the last item of a clustered item set containing two or more items, you will see the graphic illustrated below.



This graphic is used to separate these clustered items related to specific stimulus material from other items that follow.

On the following pages, you will find descriptions of these commonly used item formats, along with suggested approaches for answering each type of item. In the actual testing situation, you may mark the test items and/or write in the margins of your test booklet, **but your final response must be indicated on the answer sheet provided.**

SINGLE ITEMS

In the single item format, a problem is presented as a direct question or an incomplete statement, and four answer choices appear below the question. The following question is an example of this type. It tests knowledge of English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 competency 003: *The teacher understands the importance of word identification skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, and sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provides many opportunities for students to practice and improve word identification skills and reading fluency.*

As a word identification strategy, structural analysis would be most effective in helping eighth graders determine the meaning of which of the following words?

- A. sartorial
- B. wisteria
- C. haberdasher
- D. bibliophile

Suggested Approach

Read the question carefully and critically. Think about what it is asking and the situation it is describing. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice, and mark it on your answer sheet.

For example, as you read this question, recall that structural analysis is the technique of dividing an unfamiliar word into parts to help determine its meaning. Now look at the response options and consider how structural analysis might be applied to the word presented in each option.

The word presented in option A is *sartorial*. The word *sartorial* refers to men's clothing and the work of tailors. The word's root, *sartor*, derives from a Latin word meaning "to patch" and is not found in many common English words. Dividing the word *sartorial* into parts is therefore unlikely to provide students with significant clues about the word's meaning.

The word presented in option B is *wisteria*, which refers to a type of climbing vine. The word derives from the surname of an eighteenth-century American anatomist, Casper Wistar. Dividing the word *wisteria* into parts would not provide students with any significant clues about its meaning.

The word presented in option C is *haberdasher*, which refers to a person who sells items such as hats, shirts, and gloves. The word derives from the Middle English word *haberdashere*, and dividing the word *haberdasher* into parts provides no significant clues about its meaning.

The word presented in option D is *bibliophile*. The word *bibliophile* refers to a person who loves books. One approach to analyzing this word is to divide it into two parts: *biblio*, derived from the Greek word for "books," and *phile*, from the Greek word for "loving." Students are likely to be familiar with the root *biblio* through knowledge of the common English word *bibliography* and may therefore infer that *bibliophile* relates to books or other reading materials. Students may also have encountered *phile* in words such as *Anglophile*, meaning a person who loves English culture. In this way, structural analysis can provide students with significant clues about the meaning of the word *bibliophile*.

For eighth graders, structural analysis would be effective in analyzing only one of the four words presented in the response options, the word *bibliophile*. The correct response is option D.

CLUSTERED ITEMS

Some questions are preceded by stimulus material that relates to the question. Some examples of stimulus material included on the test are samples of student work and descriptions of classroom situations. In such cases, you will generally be given information followed by an event to analyze, a problem to solve, or a decision to make.

Two or more items may be related to a single stimulus. You can use several different approaches to answer these types of questions. Some commonly used approaches are listed below.

Strategy 1 Skim the stimulus material to understand its purpose, its arrangement, and/or its content. Then read the item and refer again to the stimulus material to verify the correct answer.

Strategy 2 Read the item *before* considering the stimulus material. The theory behind this strategy is that the content of the item will help you identify the purpose of the stimulus material and locate the information you need to answer the question.

Strategy 3 Use a combination of both strategies; apply the "read the stimulus first" strategy with shorter, more familiar stimuli and the "read the item first" strategy with longer, more complex, or less familiar stimuli. You can experiment with the sample items in this manual and then use the strategy with which you are most comfortable when you take the actual test.

Whether you read the stimulus before or after you read the item, you should read it carefully and critically. You may want to underline its important points to help you answer the item.

As you consider items set in educational contexts, try to enter into the identified teacher's frame of mind and use that teacher's point of view to answer the items that accompany the stimulus. Be sure to consider the items in terms of only the information provided in the stimulus—not in terms of your own class or individual students you may have known.

Suggested Approach

First read the stimulus (a description of a classroom situation, a passage from a biology textbook, and an excerpt from two students' conversation about the passage).

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

Carmen and Derrick, two students in Mr. Thompson's seventh-grade reading class, ask for help in understanding a passage from the biology textbook they use in their science class. Mr. Thompson suggests that they begin by discussing the text with each other—sharing their thoughts and questions about the passage. Shown below are the textbook passage and an excerpt from the two students' conversation about it.

Certain conditions, including appropriate temperatures and proper amounts of water and oxygen, must be present for a seed to sprout and grow. For many seeds, a period of rest is necessary before a seed can germinate. A seed may lie dormant for a single year or many years, but when conditions are right, the seed will sprout. For some species of plants, the seed's own chemical inhibitors temporarily prevent it from germinating. These inhibitors may be washed away by rainwater or eliminated by prolonged exposure to cold.

Derrick: Most of this stuff is easy. Everyone knows that seeds need the right weather to grow. But I don't exactly get this word "germinate." You know what it means?

Carmen: I've heard it before . . . Doesn't it just mean sprout?

Derrick: How do you figure that?

Carmen: Look [points to text], some of the sentences say sprout and other sentences say germinate, and it seems like they're talking about the same thing. Then there's this other part about things that keep seeds from sprouting, like cold weather or pollution.

Derrick: I don't remember anything about pollution. Where did you read that?

Carmen: This part about chemicals.

Derrick: But look, it says the seed's *own* chemical inhibitors. I'm not sure what inhibitors are, but I think the chemicals come from the seed, not pollution.

Carmen: Oh, I get it. That's what keeps the seed dormant.

Derrick: And dormant is . . . ?

Carmen: Resting. You know, like when a bear hibernates.

Now you are prepared to address the first of the two questions associated with this stimulus. The first question measures competency 001: *The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.*

Mr. Thompson's response to the request of Carmen and Derrick is likely to promote their reading development primarily by:

- A. facilitating their ability to identify and apply a variety of effective study strategies.
- B. encouraging them to explore reading materials on related subjects.
- C. facilitating their comprehension through peer scaffolding and oral language interaction.
- D. encouraging them to formulate and address their own reading goals.

Consider carefully the information presented in the stimulus, including the interaction between the teacher and students, the content of the textbook passage, and the two students' conversation about the passage. Then read and consider this first question, which asks how the teacher's response promotes the students' reading development. Recall that Mr. Thompson advised Carmen and Derrick to discuss the textbook passage and to share with each other their thoughts and questions about the passage.

Option A suggests that the students' conversation about the passage helps them identify and apply a variety of study strategies. Review the conversation and notice that it focuses on the meaning of particular words in the passage. There is no reference to multiple study strategies and no application of study skills other than discussion of key vocabulary.

Option B suggests that the students' conversation about the passage encourages them to explore reading materials on related subjects. While it is true, in general, that peer conversation often motivates students to explore reading materials, there is no evidence in the stimulus that Carmen and Derrick plan to consult other reading materials on related subjects.

Option C suggests that the students' conversation facilitates their reading comprehension through peer scaffolding and oral language interaction. Notice that the stimulus provides evidence that oral language interaction (i.e., Carmen and Derrick's conversation) does allow the two students to "scaffold" their understanding (i.e., assist each other in comprehending the textbook passage). For example, Carmen improves Derrick's comprehension of the passage by helping him understand that "germinate" means "sprout." Derrick also improves Carmen's comprehension by clarifying that "chemical inhibitors" refer not to pollution, as Carmen assumed, but to chemicals in the seed.

Option D suggests that the students' conversation promotes their reading development by encouraging the students to formulate and address their own reading goals. While it is true, in general, that peer interaction can help support the process of setting and addressing reading goals, there is no evidence in the stimulus that Carmen and Derrick are formulating such goals.

In this way, analysis of the four options should lead you to select option C as the best response.

Now you are ready to answer the next question. The second question measures competency 003: *The teacher understands the importance of word identification skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, and sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provides many opportunities for students to practice and improve word identification skills and reading fluency.*

Carmen and Derrick's discussion of the word "germinate" is most likely to promote the students' reading proficiency by reinforcing their ability to:

- A. use context to support word identification and confirm word meanings.
- B. apply grammatical principles.
- C. analyze differing perspectives and points of view in informational texts.
- D. identify main ideas.

Again, consider carefully the information presented in the stimulus, including the content of the textbook passage and the two students' conversation about the passage. Read and consider this second question, which asks how the students' conversation about the word "germinate" is likely to promote their reading proficiency.

Option A suggests that the students' conversation about the word "germinate" is likely to reinforce their ability to use context to support word identification and confirm word meanings. Review the portion of the stimulus that describes Carmen and Derrick's conversation about the word "germinate." When Derrick asks how Carmen knows that "germinate" means "sprout," Carmen reexamines the text and explains to Derrick how her interpretation of other words and sentences in the passage helps her determine the meaning of "germinate." Carmen thus uses the context in which the unfamiliar word is found to help her determine its meaning.

Option B suggests that the students' conversation about the word "germinate" is likely to reinforce their ability to apply grammatical principles. A review of the stimulus reveals that Carmen and Derrick's conversation about the word "germinate" includes no explicit or implicit references to parts of speech or other aspects of grammar.

Option C suggests that the students' conversation about the word "germinate" is likely to reinforce their reading proficiency by reinforcing their ability to analyze differing perspectives and points of views in informational texts. In their conversation, Carmen and Derrick express different observations and opinions, but the purpose of their conversation is to clarify their literal comprehension of factual information, not to expand their awareness of different points of view presented in the text.

Option D suggests that the students' conversation about the word "germinate" is most likely to reinforce their ability to identify main ideas. In their conversation, Carmen and Derrick focus primarily on particular terms in the passage. Both students appear to understand the main ideas of the passage prior to their conversation. For example, Derrick's first comment is, "Everyone knows that seeds need the right weather to grow."

In this way, analysis of the four options should lead you to select option A as the best response.

SECTION IV

SAMPLE ITEMS

This section presents some sample test items for you to review as part of your preparation for the test. To demonstrate how each competency may be assessed, each sample item is accompanied by the competency that it measures. While studying, you may wish to read the competency before and after you consider each sample item. Please note that the competency statements will not appear on the actual test form. Space has been provided for you to make notes on each item.

An answer key on page 69 follows the sample items. The answer key lists the item number and correct answer for each sample test item. Please note that the answer key also lists the competency assessed by each item and that the sample items are not necessarily presented in competency order.

The sample items are included to illustrate the formats and types of items you will see on the test; however, your performance on the sample items should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual examination.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING 4–8

1. Students in a middle school class have been studying the battle of the Alamo. The teacher plans a role-playing activity to help structure whole-class discussion about the Alamo. During the discussion, one student will play the role of a newspaper reporter and interview other students who assume the roles of various historical figures (e.g., Santa Anna, Sam Houston, soldiers in the Mexican army). This instructional strategy is likely to promote students' oral language proficiency primarily by helping the students:
 - A. understand how differing points of view affect spoken messages.
 - B. recognize differences between spoken and written language.
 - C. learn how to adapt spoken language for informal occasions.
 - D. expand their speaking and listening vocabularies.

The item above measures competency 001:

The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

2. A fourth-grade class has been reading folk tales from around the world. Which of the following oral language activities would be most effective in promoting students' multicultural awareness and appreciation?
- A. Students discuss folk tales from various countries and then read aloud and discuss descriptions of the geography and cultural characteristics of each country.
 - B. The teacher guides students to discuss some features that folk tales of various countries have in common as well as some of the unique features of each culture's folk tales.
 - C. Students read aloud "folk tales" they have written themselves and then review folk tales from various countries and decide which culture's folk tales most closely resemble their own.
 - D. The teacher helps each student select a folk tale, present it to the class, and answer any questions that other students in the class may have about the folk tale's plot or characters.

The item above measures competency 001:

The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

3. A teacher reads aloud a story to a student who is in the emergent literacy stage of reading development. The teacher wants to assess the student's literal comprehension of the sequence of events in the story. Which of the following assessment strategies would be most appropriate for this purpose?
- A. encouraging the student to begin by describing the beginning and the end of the story
 - B. asking the student to identify the most important episode in the story
 - C. providing the student with visual aids to use in explaining what happened in the story
 - D. asking the student to explain the consequences of the characters' actions

The item above measures competency 002:
The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.

4. A teacher regularly analyzes the attempted spellings of emergent readers. In addition to providing information about students' spelling development, this approach would best help the teacher assess students':
- A. level of reading fluency.
 - B. use of word identification strategies.
 - C. ability to apply phonics skills.
 - D. knowledge of comprehension strategies.

The item above measures competency 002:

The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.

5. A teacher reads aloud a story to emergent readers. The teacher guides students to discuss the story, focusing particular attention on students' understanding of the story's ending. Then the teacher asks students to imagine and describe another adventure that the main characters in the story might have. This final step of the activity is most likely to benefit students by:
- A. helping them identify text structures.
 - B. promoting development of their evaluative comprehension skills.
 - C. helping them identify story elements.
 - D. promoting development of their inferential comprehension skills.

The item above measures competency 002:
The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.

6. A teacher is planning an activity in which students will count the phonemes contained within various words. The teacher begins by selecting words with varying numbers of phonemes. Which of the following words selected by the teacher contains five phonemes?
- A. stamp
 - B. trail
 - C. brush
 - D. grape

*The item above measures competency 002:
The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.*

7. A teacher is working with a group of students in the emergent literacy stage of reading development who have had little experience with books. Which of the following instructional activities would best promote the students' understanding of the relationship between written and spoken words?
- A. Each student pretends to read a picture book by telling a story while turning the pages.
 - B. The teacher displays a big book and points to each word as she reads the book aloud.
 - C. Each student points to each word in a written sentence, and then the teacher reads aloud the sentence.
 - D. The teacher models for students how to move manipulatives to count the words in a spoken sentence.

The item above measures competency 002:
The teacher understands the foundations of early literacy development.

8. Which of the following strategies would best promote beginning readers' automatic recognition of high-frequency, irregular sight words?
- A. strengthening students' phonemic awareness skills
 - B. having the students engage in repeated readings of familiar texts at their independent reading levels
 - C. reinforcing students' knowledge of letter-sound correspondence
 - D. helping the students identify each word by dividing it into separate syllables or clusters of letters

The item above measures competency 003:
The teacher understands the importance of word identification skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, and sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provides many opportunities for students to practice and improve word identification skills and reading fluency.

9. To promote students' reading fluency, a fifth-grade teacher plans activities in which students and their assigned partners will engage in repeated oral readings. When the teacher assembles reading materials for this purpose, it would be most important to assign each pair of students passages from a text that:
- A. both partners are capable of reading aloud with no more than 5 word recognition errors per 100 words of text.
 - B. the students have previewed and selected themselves.
 - C. both partners are capable of reading aloud with no more than 25 word recognition errors per 100 words of text.
 - D. the students have been reading in connection with content-area study.

The item above measures competency 003:

The teacher understands the importance of word identification skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, and sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provides many opportunities for students to practice and improve word identification skills and reading fluency.

10. Students in a middle school class are learning about the westward movement of pioneers in the United States during the nineteenth century. The teacher plans to have students read several selections on this topic and then prepare reports. The teacher is concerned about how meaningful the assignment will be for Alicia, a student whose family moved to the United States from Venezuela a year ago. Alicia's speaking and oral reading skills in English are strong, but she sometimes has comprehension difficulties. The teacher believes that these difficulties often reflect lack of familiarity with the topic of the selection. Which of the following strategies most likely would be effective in helping Alicia complete the assignment successfully and make it a meaningful learning experience for her?
- A. urging Alicia to take detailed notes as she reads to reinforce her understanding of the historical context depicted in the text
 - B. providing Alicia with opportunities to talk about how her own experience of moving to the United States compares with the pioneers' experiences described in the assigned readings
 - C. drawing Alicia's attention to facts and concepts that feature prominently in more than one of the assigned selections to help her recognize which ideas are most important
 - D. encouraging Alicia to write her first draft of the assigned report in Spanish and then translate it into English

The item above measures competency 004:

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

11. Ms. Lennox, a social studies teacher, and Mr. Vale, a reading teacher, work with a group of middle school students. Early in the school year, Ms. Lennox mentions that the students are having difficulty retaining information from their geography textbook. Which of the following would be the most appropriate suggestion for Mr. Vale to offer Ms. Lennox?
- A. Have the students concentrate on transitional words to keep track of the relationship among ideas.
 - B. Encourage the students to focus on the last sentence of each paragraph to extract summary information.
 - C. Have the students read each assignment slowly, looking up definitions of unfamiliar terms.
 - D. Encourage the students to preview the text to anticipate its content and recall related knowledge.

The item above measures competency 005:

The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

12. A middle school teacher wants to improve students' comprehension of informational texts by helping the students analyze comparison/contrast text structures. Which of the following instructional strategies would best address this goal?
- A. Students read two different texts that address the same topic and then meet in small discussion groups to compare/contrast the two texts.
 - B. The teacher models for students how to write a complex sentence that compares/contrasts two different items or ideas.
 - C. Each student outlines the main ideas and significant details in two comparison/contrast texts on a given subject.
 - D. The teacher helps students create a Venn diagram to summarize a comparison/contrast text.

The item above measures competency 005:

The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

13. Students in a middle school class have been learning about active and passive verbs. Which of the following instructional activities would best help students recognize and understand differences between the active and passive voice?
- A. Working with partners, students convert passive sentences to the active voice; then the teacher guides students to discuss how these changes affect tone and meaning.
 - B. Students write a paragraph on an assigned topic and then identify whether each sentence in the paragraph is in the active or the passive voice.
 - C. Working in small groups, students use active and passive sentences provided by the teacher as models to develop their own sets of active and passive sentences.
 - D. Students keep ongoing lists of memorable sentences they encounter over several days and decide whether each sentence is in the active or passive voice.

The item above measures competency 006:

The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

14. Use the student writing sample below to answer the question that follows.

We went on a traen to
the bech. I saw a
red sale bote.

("We went on a train to the beach. I saw a red sailboat.")

The writing sample illustrated above most strongly suggests that the student:

- A. is in the transitional stage of spelling development and would benefit from instruction on vowel digraphs.
- B. lacks an understanding of letter-sound correspondence and would benefit from basic phonics instruction.
- C. is in the phonetic stage of spelling development and would benefit from phonemic awareness instruction.
- D. lacks the ability to distinguish vowel sounds and would benefit from varied oral language activities.

The item above measures competency 006:

The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

15. Which of the following upper-elementary students would benefit most from the use of word processing equipment for writing?
- A. Alice, who often needs the teacher's help in choosing a topic to write about
 - B. Bernardo, who repeatedly confuses words that have the same pronunciation but are spelled differently
 - C. Delia, who has difficulty making logical transitions between paragraphs
 - D. Neil, who is often discouraged by the time-consuming process of revision

The item above measures competency 007:

The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

16. For the past week, students in Ms. Burgess's fifth-grade class have been writing original stories. Ms. Burgess observes that some students are spending their daily writing period adding on to their stories, making them longer but not necessarily better, and making no revisions except occasional corrections of misspelled words. She wants to encourage these students to take a broader, more exploratory approach to revision—to review and evaluate their work and then reshape it based on new insights. Which of the following teaching strategies would be most effective in achieving this goal?
- A. asking students to think about what parts of their story are most important and whether they have described these parts clearly and effectively
 - B. encouraging each student to place an appropriate limit on the length of his or her story based on the number of characters and events the student intends to include
 - C. having students brainstorm words related to the subject of the stories they are writing and decide which words might be incorporated in their work
 - D. suggesting that students begin each writing period by drawing an illustration that depicts the main story idea they wish to convey in their writing for that day

The item above measures competency 007:

The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

17. A middle school teacher wants to help students learn how to offer constructive feedback when they confer with their partners during the initial stage of a writing project. Which of the following guidelines for students would be most appropriate in this context?
- A. Comment briefly on the content, form, and mechanics of your partner's writing.
 - B. Concentrate on helping your partner develop clear and concise topic sentences for every paragraph.
 - C. Suggest improvements in the mechanics of writing, but avoid criticizing your partner's ideas.
 - D. Respond to your partner's planning so far, and suggest ideas that he or she may not have considered.

The item above measures competency 007:

The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

18. An eighth-grade teacher plans the following activities in connection with a field trip to view a photojournalism exhibit at a local museum.

- Before the trip, students study how elements of design and photographic techniques express ideas and communicate meaning.
- The teacher gives students a list of questions to read and consider as they view the exhibit.
- After the trip, students work in small groups to write answers to the questions.
- In a whole-class discussion, students share their reactions to the exhibit and their groups' answers to the questions.

Which of the following additional activities would best help the teacher informally assess students' understanding of the way visual images and elements of design create meaning?

- A. Students work in small groups to prepare their own exhibits by using photographs from newspapers and magazines to tell a story.
- B. Each student researches one photojournalist featured at the exhibit and presents a brief report on his or her work in the field.
- C. Students write an essay about the photojournalism exhibit at the museum, analyzing particular photographs they liked.
- D. Each student writes a simulated magazine article and creates a drawing or illustration to accompany the article.

The item above measures competency 008:

The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various media and provides students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

19. A middle school teacher designs an activity in which students watch a twenty-minute film with the sound turned off. Periodically, the teacher stops the film, and students discuss what they have seen. This instructional activity is most likely to promote students' critical-viewing skills in which of the following ways?
- A. focusing students' attention on differences between visual messages and oral communication
 - B. helping students identify common film clichés by focusing attention on key images in short film segments
 - C. focusing students' attention on the relationship between visual imagery and narration in film
 - D. helping students interpret and evaluate visual images in film by focusing attention on visual details

The item above measures competency 008:

The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various media and provides students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

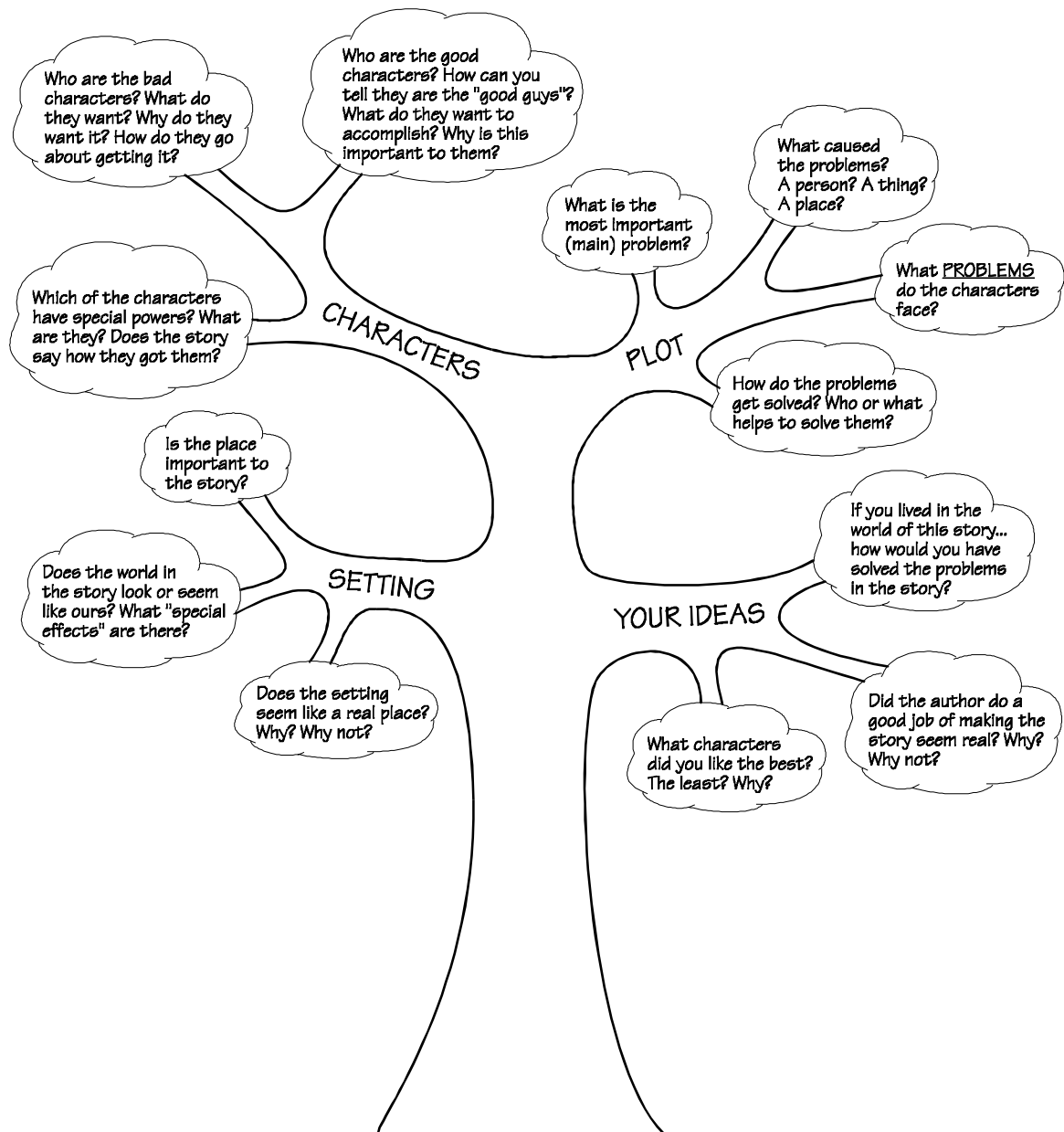
20. Which of the following instructional strategies would best help fourth-grade students learn to self-monitor their reading comprehension?
- A. Students take detailed notes while reading texts written at their instructional reading levels and then answer comprehension questions.
 - B. The teacher models the process of applying word identification strategies while reading aloud a grade-appropriate text.
 - C. Students read an age-appropriate story and then create a story map to describe the plot, characters, and setting of the story.
 - D. The teacher displays a passage, reads it aloud, and models a think-aloud approach by pausing to question herself about the meaning of what she is reading.

The item above measures competency 004:

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

Use the information and the "story tree" below to answer the four questions that follow.

Students in Mr. Wiggins's fifth-grade class study different types of literature over the course of the school year. Their first unit was on fantasy. As part of the introduction for that unit, Mr. Wiggins put up a large blank outline of a tree in the library corner of the classroom. He explained to his students that this was a "story tree" and that each of its major branches represented something different to think about when reading a literary work. As the unit progressed, Mr. Wiggins used guided discussion to challenge his students to label each major branch of the tree. He also encouraged them to think of questions they should ask themselves as they read to help them evaluate all the components of a particular selection. These questions were added to appropriate parts of the tree in the shape of clumps of leaves. The completed tree created by the class during the fantasy unit is pictured below.



21. The questions on the "characters" branch of the story tree are most likely to strengthen students' inferential comprehension by prompting the students to:
- A. distinguish fact from opinion.
 - B. compare the effectiveness of different courses of action.
 - C. evaluate motives behind actions.
 - D. distinguish alternative solutions to problems.

The item above measures competency 004:

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

22. Mr. Wiggins's use of the story tree is most likely to help students develop which of the following reading skills?
- A. critical analysis of literature
 - B. understanding of historical trends in literary forms
 - C. analysis of the effects of word choice on readers' responses
 - D. understanding of literary devices such as caricature and foreshadowing

The item above measures competency 005:

The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

23. Which of the following uses of the story tree would best help students apply metacognitive skills to enhance their comprehension?
- A. Encourage students to ask themselves questions similar to those in the story tree when reading or writing stories independently.
 - B. Have students check to make sure that the book reports they write reflect the format outlined in the story tree.
 - C. Advise students to copy the story tree into their reading journal so they can refer to it when reading independently.
 - D. Help students create concept webs to analyze stories, and then guide the students to compare the webs with the story tree.

The item above measures competency 004:

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

24. After finishing the unit on fantasy, Mr. Wiggins's class is now moving on to a unit on historical fiction. Which of the following questions should Mr. Wiggins ask his students in order to promote most effectively their understanding of the relationship between these two types of literature?
- A. Should the branches of a story tree for historical fiction contain more questions than the branches of a story tree for fantasy?
 - B. How would you rearrange the questions in the fantasy story tree to make a story tree for historical fiction?
 - C. Do you think it will be easier or more difficult to construct a story tree for historical fiction than it was to make a fantasy story tree?
 - D. Which branch or branches of the fantasy story tree contain questions that could also be applied to a story tree for historical fiction?



The item above measures competency 005:
The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

25. According to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), students in the sixth grade should be able to use graphic sources of information to address research questions. Students are most likely to develop these skills if they have had opportunities to:
- A. locate graphic information about a specific topic in an encyclopedia or other reference book.
 - B. create their own tables and charts summarizing the results of a peer survey on an age-appropriate topic.
 - C. collaborate with a partner to make an outline summarizing the features of different graphic formats.
 - D. make accurate copies of tables, charts, maps, and other graphic information provided by the teacher.

The item above measures competency 009:

The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

Read the worksheet below, completed by a fourth grader; then answer the two questions that follow.

Name: Brendan W Date: Nov. 6

Read the following passage and answer the questions.

The Birthday

Hank woke up very excited on Saturday morning because it was his birthday. His family was planning a big party for him, with lots of good food, balloons, and a cake with nine candles. It wasn't the party that Hank was most excited about, though. He was sure this would be the day when he finally got the remote-control car he wanted more than anything. He first saw the shiny red car in the front window of Mitchell's Toy Store a month ago. Since then, it was all he could think about.

Later in the day, it finally was time for Hank to open his presents. His parents gave him a basketball and sneakers. From his sisters, he received a book about making paper airplanes. His little brother gave him a special rock he had found. Finally, there was only the present from his grandfather left to open. This was his last hope. He ripped off the paper and opened the box. Inside there was a T-shirt that said "Number One Grandson." Hank almost groaned out loud, but instead he put a smile on his face and politely thanked his grandfather for the shirt.

Then he said silently to himself, "Maybe next year."

1. How does Hank feel when he wakes up? Why does he feel this way?

Excited cause its his birthday.

2. What does Hank want most for his birthday?

A remote-control car.

3. What presents does Hank get for his birthday?

shirt that says Number One Grandson, basketball, sneakers, book, rock

4. How does Hank probably feel when he opens the present from his grandfather and sees what is inside? What clue in the story tells you he feels this way?

Happy. It says he smiles and says thank you.

26. Brendan's performance on this worksheet suggests that he would benefit most from reading instruction to strengthen his:
- A. literal comprehension.
 - B. inferential comprehension.
 - C. word-recognition skills.
 - D. vocabulary development.

The item above measures competency 004:

The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension, and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

27. Given Brendan's responses to the questions on the worksheet, which strategy would most likely have improved his comprehension of this passage?
- A. stopping after he had read the title and setting a purpose for reading the selection
 - B. asking himself if he understood what was meant by the last sentence in the selection
 - C. going back and rereading any sentence that contained an unfamiliar word to see if he could determine the word's meaning
 - D. reminding himself to read more slowly when he came to portions of the text he found difficult to understand



The item above measures competency 005:
The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

28. Students in a middle school class work together in small groups using the chart illustrated below as a study guide. The students fill in the first two columns after briefly previewing an assigned text and then complete the third column after reading the text.

What We Already Know About This Topic	What We Want To Find Out About This Topic	What We Have Learned About This Topic

Which of the following modifications to the chart would best promote development of students' study and inquiry skills?

- A. dividing the chart into numbered rows to clarify the organization of information related to the assigned text
- B. adding a fourth column labeled "What We Still Want To Learn About This Topic"
- C. dividing the chart into rows that are prelabeled by the teacher with key words reflecting important concepts in the assigned text
- D. relabeling the first column to read "What We Learned About This Text By Previewing It"

The item above measures competency 009:

The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

Use the paper below, written by a fourth-grade student about a favorite memory, to answer the two questions that follow.

I think my best year was when I was five. My friend Edwin and I had adventures together. We had to run away all the time! We use to sneak around in the garden and pretend we were spys. We spyed on people. We lived right next door to Edwin's house. There was a nice gardener named Tony. But there was another man who chased us, we called him BRUTUS! He yelled to come back but we ran away fast! Sometimes we saw mean dogs, we ran away from them, alright! There was a mean big kid named Toby Wolf. One day he chased us all the way to the garden! But we hid and then he couldnt find us. That was scary! Tony said, be careful of the flowers. Edwin was seven years old. Then we moved away, I was sad.

29. When reviewing this paper with the student, the teacher should suggest which of the following revisions?
- A. reorganizing the paper to make the sequence of ideas more logical
 - B. adding specific details in support of the main idea of the paper
 - C. enriching the paper with an extended description of the setting
 - D. establishing a clear audience and purpose for the paper

The item above measures competency 007:
The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

30. Generally speaking, which of the following prewriting activities would be most effective in helping fourth graders write coherently about a favorite memory or other personal experience?
- A. Individual students read an age-appropriate biography of a famous person before beginning to write.
 - B. The teacher provides students with a checklist of guidelines for organizing their personal essay.
 - C. Individual students describe their experiences to a partner before beginning to write.
 - D. The teacher prepares students for the essay by providing a mini-lesson on the use of written language conventions.



The item above measures competency 007:
The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

31. A middle school teacher frequently has students perform semantic mapping activities before and after assigned readings. Which of the following statements best explains the primary rationale for this instructional strategy?
- A. Presenting textual information in several visual formats makes the information more accessible to students by accommodating diverse learning styles.
 - B. Diagramming textual information improves students' writing skills by promoting their use of effective text structures and accurate writing conventions.
 - C. Organizing reading material in new ways highlights connections among ideas and enhances students' short-term and long-term recall of the material.
 - D. Arranging textual information in graphic formats encourages students to use context cues to clarify the meaning of content-specific vocabulary in the text.

The item above measures competency 009:

The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

Students in an eighth-grade class are preparing brief oral presentations as the culminating activity in an English language arts project. Students' parents/guardians, as well as classmates and teachers, will form the audience for the oral presentations. The teacher helps students analyze the purpose of their presentations, the expectations of the audience, the logical structure and wording of their presentations, the use of visual aids, elements of effective speech delivery, and response strategies for follow-up questions.

32. As students begin drafting scripts for their oral presentations, the teacher hands out and discusses the guidelines listed below.

- Begin by providing an overview of the main points that will be covered in your oral presentation.
- End with a summary of the main points that were presented.
- Ensure that the oral presentation follows a logical progression.
- Use transitions to indicate where one idea ends and the next begins.

Which of the following additional guidelines for scripting oral presentations would be most important for the teacher to include in this list?

- A. Document your main ideas by pausing periodically to describe the sources you consulted when preparing your oral presentation.
- B. Vary the sentence structure of your oral presentation by incorporating complex sentences whenever possible.
- C. Summarize information from relevant literary texts rather than including any direct quotations in your oral presentation.
- D. Provide strong supporting examples to clarify and illustrate the main ideas of your oral presentation.

The item above measures competency 001:

The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

33. Which of the following recommendations would be most appropriate for the teacher to make when advising students about visual aids for their oral presentations?
- A. Avoid visual distractions by limiting visual aids to the opening and closing sections of your oral presentation.
 - B. Minimize the use of text in visual aids and use concrete, precise wording to facilitate readability.
 - C. Maintain visual continuity by using no more than two different colors in the visual aids.
 - D. Make sure to introduce a different visual aid for each new idea in your oral presentation.



The item above measures competency 008:
The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various media and provides students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

34. Students in a middle school class are working in small groups to produce and videotape mock newscasts. To help students prepare for this activity, the teacher leads a class discussion about videotaped excerpts from nationally televised news programs. During the discussion, the teacher asks, "Why do you think newscasters are often shown in front of recognizable buildings, such as the Capitol or White House?" This question is likely to promote students' understanding of visual media primarily by prompting the students to:
- A. analyze the relationship between news and politics in television newscasts.
 - B. consider how visual images can be used to highlight ideas and influence viewers' perceptions.
 - C. identify design elements and analyze their function in television newscasts.
 - D. understand the importance of ensuring that background images are visually appealing.

The item above measures competency 008:

The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various media and provides students with opportunities to develop skills in this area.

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

A fifth-grade teacher asks students to write about a personal experience. Shown below is the writing of one student in the class.

my sister is four years older than me. I wanted to roller blade like her. I asked her, and she said its easy. we went outside, and than she held me up. I fell down some at first. she said now I will teach you how to do something real fun. we had to go down a hill. I went passed her real fast. It was scary but not to hard for my sister and I. my sister said your good at this! I said I want to do it again!

35. The writing sample shown above demonstrates the student's correct use of commas to separate:
- A. two independent clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction.
 - B. two or more phrases that appear in a series.
 - C. a dependent phrase from an independent clause that follows it.
 - D. nonrestrictive phrases from the rest of the sentence.

The item above measures competency 006:

The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

36. Based on this writing sample, which of the following types of spelling instruction would be most effective in promoting the student's spelling development?
- A. helping the student spell words containing vowel digraphs
 - B. teaching the student to recognize and spell words that are pronounced the same but spelled differently
 - C. helping the student spell words containing consonant blends
 - D. teaching the student to recognize and spell words containing common affixes



The item above measures competency 006:

The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

37. A middle school teacher designs the instructional activity described below.

- Students read a passage from an informational text.
- Using an overhead projector, the teacher divides a piece of paper into two columns by drawing a line down the center.
- The teacher models how to write in the first column significant information and quotations from the passage. Next, she comments on each of these entries by writing her thoughts about it in the second column. She then discusses with students the rationale for this divided-page method of note taking.
- Working in pairs, students read a second informational passage and use the divided-page method to take notes on the passage.

This instructional activity is most likely to promote development of students' study and inquiry skills by:

- A. prompting students to recognize and describe the difference between main ideas and supporting details.
- B. guiding students to identify and describe the logical structure of an informational text.
- C. helping students understand the difference between recording and analyzing information.
- D. providing students with a method for double checking the accuracy of their notes.

The item above measures competency 009:

The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

ANSWER KEY

Item Number	Correct Answer	Competency
1	A	001
2	B	001
3	C	002
4	C	002
5	D	002
6	A	002
7	B	002
8	B	003
9	A	003
10	B	004
11	D	005
12	D	005
13	A	006
14	A	006
15	D	007
16	A	007
17	D	007
18	A	008
19	D	008

Item Number	Correct Answer	Competency
20	D	004
21	C	004
22	A	005
23	A	004
24	D	005
25	B	009
26	B	004
27	B	005
28	B	009
29	A	007
30	C	007
31	C	009
32	D	001
33	B	008
34	B	008
35	A	006
36	B	006
37	C	009

SECTION V

PREPARATION RESOURCES

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the TExES test in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Journals

Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, International Reading Association.

Language Arts, National Council of Teachers of English.

Reading Research Quarterly, International Reading Association.

The Reading Teacher, International Reading Association.

Voices from the Middle, National Council of Teachers of English.

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