

## School Psychologist (0401)

### Test at a Glance

Test Name	School Psychologist		
Test Code	0401		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120		
Format	Multiple-choice questions		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Data-Based Decision Making	42	35%
	II. Research-Based Academic Practices	14	12%
	III. Research-Based Behavioral and Mental Health Practices	19	16%
	IV. Consultation and Collaboration	14	12%
	V. Applied Psychological Foundations	16	13%
	VI. Ethical, Legal, and Professional Foundations	14	12%

## About This Test

The School Psychologist test is designed for 60-hour master's- and specialist's-degree-level candidates who want to serve as school psychologists in educational settings. The test assumes that candidates have had some form of supervised practicum or internship experience.

The 120 multiple-choice questions focus on both content and process issues that are relevant to the school setting. It should be noted that certain areas relevant to the practice of a school psychologist are not assessed in this examination because they do not lend themselves readily to multiple-choice assessment. It is assumed that candidates' competence in these other areas will have been evaluated using other methodologies during the course of academic training.

The main content areas of the test include data-based decision making; research-based academic practices; research-based behavioral and mental health practices; consultation and collaboration; applied psychological foundations; and ethical, legal, and professional foundations.

In measuring the six content areas, a variety of contexts are used: consultation, assessment, intervention, research, professional standards, and in-service training.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

## Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

### I. Data-Based Decision Making

- Problem Identification
  - Interview strategies, observational strategies, review of background information, screening measures and methods
- Assessment/Problem Analysis
  - Measures of intellectual/cognitive function; measures of educational achievement; diagnostic/processing measures (e.g., memory, executive functioning, phonemic awareness); measures of social skills, development, adaptive behavior; social/emotional functioning and behavior; functional behavioral assessment; measures of personality; performance-based assessment (e.g., work samples, portfolios); curriculum-based assessment/curriculum-based measures; ecological assessment of the learning environment
- Assessment Considerations for Special Populations
  - Infant and early childhood/preschool; English as second language/English-language learners (ELL) (e.g., the appropriate use of translators/interpreters, measurement selection, language of assessment); low-incidence exceptionalities (e.g., chronic health impaired, severe physical disabilities, autism, sensory impaired); gifted and talented; cultural, racial, and diverse populations
- Research, Statistics, and Program Evaluation
  - Evaluating research; translating research into practice; understanding research design and statistics; program evaluation models and methods

### II. Research-Based Academic Practices

- Effective instruction
  - Instructional strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, flexible grouping, differentiated instruction, engagement time, scaffolding, study skills, metacognition); curriculum accommodations and modifications (e.g., assistive technology, specially designed instruction)
- Issues related to academic success/failure
  - Factors related to academic progress (e.g., school/classroom climate, family involvement, motivation, SES, language competency, programming for ELL); educational policies/practices (e.g., social promotion, high stakes testing, retention, tracking, zero tolerance, corporal punishment)
- Academic Interventions
  - Designing and implementing interventions; monitoring interventions (outcomes and treatment fidelity/integrity); evaluating learning outcomes

### III. Research-Based Behavioral and Mental Health Practices

- Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Preventative Strategies
  - School/system-wide (e.g., promoting safe school environments, positive behavioral support, bullying prevention, school climate assessment, policy development); classroom organization and management (e.g., time management, classroom rules, physical environment); individual and small group (e.g., social skills training, conflict resolution)
- School-based intervention skills/techniques
  - Counseling (i.e., individual, group); applied behavioral analysis and intervention; developmentally appropriate intervention techniques
- Crisis prevention/intervention/response
  - Crisis prevention techniques; school/district-wide crisis-management planning and response
- Child and adolescent psychopathology
  - Symptom recognition; educational impact; support and interventions; basic knowledge of psychopharmacology; signs and symptoms of substance abuse

#### IV. Consultation and Collaboration

- Models and methods of consultation
  - Behavioral; mental health; instructional; organizational; collaborative
- School and system organization and policy development
- Home/school/community collaboration
  - Working with families; teaming with school personnel and utilization of resources; interagency collaboration

#### V. Applied Psychological Foundations

- Knowledge of general psychological principles, theories, and major research findings
  - Biological bases of behavior; child and adolescent psychopathology; human learning; child and adolescent development; personality and social psychology; motivation and cognition; theories of intelligence; language development
- Knowledge of measurement theory and principles
  - Types of test scores and norms; strengths and limitations of assessment procedures (e.g., self-report tests and inventories, multiple-choice tests, and interviews); reliability and validity of measurement; personal, social, linguistic, environmental, racial, and cultural factors that may influence test performance; test fairness concepts

#### VI. Ethical, Legal, and Professional Foundations

- Ethical principles and standards for practice
  - Ethical principles in the practice of school psychology (e.g., NASP, APA); professional standards in the practice of school psychology as set forth in the NASP Professional Conduct Manual; standards for educational and psychological tests (e.g., APA, AERA, NCME); considerations in the use of technology (e.g., report writing software, confidentiality, electronic data storage and transmission)
- Legal issues related to the practice of school psychology
  - Laws, codes, and regulations governing the practice of school psychology, including court cases that affect practice; rights of students (e.g., informed consent, least restrictive environment, aversive procedures, discipline); government laws, regulations, and guidelines dealing with education of students with disabilities (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act [IDEA 04], ADA); legal liability of school psychologists (e.g., malpractice, negligence, supervision); legislation dealing with freedom of information and rights to access students' records (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA)
- Professional Foundations
  - History of school psychology; advocating for children and their families (e.g., related to issues such as disproportionality, poverty, access and equity); continued professional development

## Sample Test Questions

*The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.*

**Directions:** Each of the sentences or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. To save the expense of purchasing a new test form, a chief school administrator asks a certified school psychologist to administer a six-year-old form of an achievement test that was purchased because it agreed with the curriculum of the school district at that time. Considering the situation and the National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP's) *Principles for Professional Ethics*, the school psychologist should
  - (A) administer the outdated form but use new norms
  - (B) ask that at least a few copies of the new form be administered for comparison
  - (C) insist on administering only the most recent form of the test
  - (D) recommend that the assessment be canceled
  - (E) administer the outdated form
  
2. A seven-year-old student arrived in the United States one year ago from a non-English-speaking country, where she achieved high scores in reading. Over the year, she has become fluent in social English. After a few months in a monolingual English second grade, her teacher refers her for evaluation because she has great difficulty with the basal reader used in the class. Two English proficiency tests administered to the student show that she performs above the mean for monolingual English grade peers in speaking and listening, but well below their mean in reading and writing. She also performs well above the mean for grade peers on reading tests in her native language. Based on this information alone, which of the following is the most accurate interpretation?
  - (A) Continued use of the student's native language in her home environment is interfering with her development of English.
  - (B) The student's reading difficulty is an early indicator that she will have increased academic problems as her coursework requires more reading.
  - (C) The discrepancy between the student's English social language and reading skills is expected given the richer context in which social skills are acquired.
  - (D) The discrepancy between the student's native language reading skills and English reading skills is related to the greater complexity of English.
  - (E) The discrepancy between the student's reading skills in her native language and English indicates she will not be able to transfer native language skills to English.

3. According to Caplan's model of consultee-centered case consultation, the consultant is primarily interested in
- (A) identifying the causes and solutions of the client's presenting problems
  - (B) identifying and eliminating the causes of the consultee's difficulties in handling a problem
  - (C) establishing a hierarchy of authority to enable effective decision-making
  - (D) presenting a single well-defined and unambiguous course of action for the consultant to overcome skills deficits
  - (E) identifying practices in the administration of school programs that are inconsistent with stated instructional goals
4. A major advantage of standardized norm-referenced assessment, as compared to curriculum-based assessment, is that standardized norm-referenced tests
- (A) are more sensitive to short-term student growth
  - (B) are more tailored to the specific curriculum
  - (C) provide a greater capacity to evaluate students in terms of large groups of grade-level peers
  - (D) yield more information on whether students have mastered units that are prerequisites for future work
  - (E) provide more information on the interplay between the students' learning environment and skills
5. During assigned seatwork time, Mary, a first-grade student, sometimes leaves her seat and attempts to play with a block collection. When she leaves her seat, she fails to complete her seatwork. Which of the following behavioral intervention strategies could the teacher implement to most effectively increase the long-term likelihood that Mary will complete her seatwork?
- (A) Allow Mary to read from a book the teacher selects for a specific time before beginning her seatwork.
  - (B) Allow Mary to play with the blocks afterwards if she remains in her seat throughout the seatwork time.
  - (C) Explain to Mary the value of completing seatwork in terms of the objectives of the lesson.
  - (D) Remove the blocks from the classroom during the assigned seatwork time.
  - (E) Ask Mary to remain in her seat until her assigned seatwork is complete, even if the seatwork takes longer than the allotted time.
6. In a meeting with the school psychologist, Ms. Harcar, a new sixth-grade teacher, expresses some concerns about a student, Anthony. The school psychologist has worked with the boy and knows him well. Anthony has a mild learning disability and receives academic support. He is doing well on a daily basis but has difficulty performing on tests. The school psychologist discusses ways Ms. Harcar could incorporate study skills training into the classroom activities. With regard to study skills training, the school psychologist should stress which of the following principles while advising Ms. Harcar?
- (A) Study skills of students with disabilities are improved when the children are given a single specific study strategy to follow for all subjects.
  - (B) Students with disabilities often develop study skills on their own and need only some guidance and reinforcement by the teacher.
  - (C) Training in study skills needs to include helping students to guide their own thinking, to organize their own study behaviors, and to use varied study approaches.
  - (D) Study strategies are best taught in a small group, by having students practice collaborative problem-solving activities modeled by the teacher.
  - (E) Study skills are best introduced and maintained in an environment in which the teacher has an authoritarian teaching style.
7. A common criticism of labeling students as disabled is that individuals tend to perform in accordance with characteristics associated with a label. This performance phenomenon is known by which of the following names?
- (A) The self-fulfilling prophecy
  - (B) The law of effect
  - (C) The primacy effect
  - (D) Social loafing
  - (E) The Premack principle

8. A ten-year-old student who was born in a non-English-speaking country has been referred as a possible candidate for special education services on the basis of the low scores achieved on the school district's group achievement test. The student has achieved high scores on the district's English fluency test. Of the following approaches to diagnostic assessment, the most appropriate would be the one that
- (A) uses an interpreter who is fluent in the language of the country in which the student was born
  - (B) uses the results of at least two English-language intelligence tests
  - (C) accounts for sociocultural and adaptive behavior in the process of identifying skills and abilities
  - (D) includes parent interviews and classroom observations as well as the results of an intelligence test
  - (E) bases the diagnosis on classroom observations
9. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, which of the following must an educational agency do before it changes the educational placement of a child with a disability?
- (A) Give the child a trial period in the new environment.
  - (B) Notify the parents in writing.
  - (C) Obtain school board approval.
  - (D) Conduct a hearing.
  - (E) Obtain parental consent.
10. In a code-based phonic approach to early reading instruction, first-grade students are taught the sounds to the letters *b*, *a*, *s*, and *g*. According to the theory underlying this approach, which of the following would be most effective as the first sentence for these children to read?
- (A) Bob ate a snack.
  - (B) A dog bit Ann.
  - (C) Gail has a bag.
  - (D) Sally was happy.
  - (E) Mary saw Tom cry.
11. A sixth-grade teacher is concerned because Kerry, a student in his class, has been hostile to classmates. Which of the following teacher strategies is most likely to encourage Kerry to be more cooperative with classmates?
- (A) Preventing Kerry from participating in play or recess activities as a consequence of hostile behavior
  - (B) Having Kerry memorize rules of behavior and write examples of how they would apply in the classroom
  - (C) Withholding attention or approval from Kerry in response to hostile behavior
  - (D) Implementing social skills training to teach Kerry the appropriate replacement behaviors for hostile behaviors
  - (E) Explaining to Kerry why a teacher must control the behavior of a class to support learning
12. The superintendent of a large school district asks the school psychologist to predict students' first year of high school grade point averages (GPAs). The school psychologist has included achievement and aptitude scores as predictor variables for first-year high school GPA in a regression analysis and is considering whether to also administer a school interest inventory and include those scores. The major concern of the school psychologist when making this decision should be which of the following?
- (A) The intercorrelations of the aptitude and achievement test scores
  - (B) The degree to which the school interest inventory score raises the multiple correlation when it is included as a predictor variable of first-year high school GPA
  - (C) The zero-order correlation of first-year GPA and the school interest inventory score
  - (D) The difference in the correlations of the school interest inventory scores with first-year high school GPA and the aptitude or achievement test scores with first-year high school GPA
  - (E) The multiple correlation of the first-year high school GPA and the aptitude and achievement scores with the school interest inventory scores

13. Which of the following interventions is most effective at facilitating the education of gifted students?
- (A) Use of heterogeneous grouping to allow gifted students to strengthen social skills as well as to grow academically
  - (B) Assignment of independent research projects within the framework of the curriculum
  - (C) Implementation of cooperative learning to encourage gifted students to work up to their ability
  - (D) Provision of acceleration for gifted students, especially within the area of their interests and skills
  - (E) Provision of multisensory instructional input to capitalize on the divergent thinking of gifted students
14. Which of the following conditions best characterizes the focus of a behavioral model of school intervention?
- (A) Underlying psychological processes
  - (B) Relationships among children
  - (C) Events during the child's infancy
  - (D) Observable events
  - (E) Language enrichment
15. According to the National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP's) "Position Statement on Supervision in School Psychology," which of the following is most accurate concerning supervising school psychologists of a school district?
- (A) They need only provide supervision to school psychologists who are not fully certified or licensed, and to school psychology interns (if any).
  - (B) They should provide professional, but not administrative, supervision.
  - (C) They should be eligible to serve as supervisors after one year of experience as a school psychologist.
  - (D) They should hold the Nationally Certified School Psychologist credential or the state school psychologist credential.
  - (E) They should provide all supervision on a face-to-face basis.
16. A teacher attempts to encourage reading by exempting students from some homework assignments for each book they read. Which of the following terms best describes the behavior modification technique applied by the teacher?
- (A) Extinction
  - (B) Variable-ratio reinforcement
  - (C) Fixed-ratio reinforcement
  - (D) Negative reinforcement
  - (E) Overcorrection
17. Arnold Gesell is significant to the history of school psychology because he
- (A) identified four major periods of cognitive development
  - (B) established the ethical standards of the National Association of School Psychologists
  - (C) developed a version of the Thematic Apperception Test appropriate for use with children
  - (D) devised a prototypical normative assessment of infants and young children
  - (E) developed a test of general intelligence that is still in widespread use
18. Susan is a first-grade student referred to the school psychologist because she will not remain seated at her desk. Her teacher reports that Susan is "always getting up and walking around the room." What observation data would be LEAST relevant to this referral concern?
- (A) Frequency
  - (B) Duration
  - (C) Intensity
  - (D) Peer comparison
  - (E) Teacher response

19. In test construction and evaluation, validity refers to the degree to which a test
- (A) measures what it purports to measure
  - (B) yields consistent results on successive administrations
  - (C) has been piloted and statistically analyzed
  - (D) includes norms based on a representative sample of the general population
  - (E) receives wide acceptance in the field
20. The decisions in *Tarasoff v. Board of Regents of California* (1974, 1976) establishes which of the following principles regarding confidentiality in counseling relationships?
- (A) Duty to warn and protect
  - (B) Responsibility to maintain privacy
  - (C) Need to obtain informed consent
  - (D) Need to maintain accurate records
  - (E) Duty to limit access to student records
21. Which type of assessment attempts to identify the most pressing behavioral problem and possible ways to alleviate it by investigating the relationship between aspects of an individual's environment and behavior?
- (A) Personality
  - (B) Cognitive
  - (C) Ecological
  - (D) Curriculum based
  - (E) Neuropsychological
22. Within a multimethod model of assessment, child interviews are most helpful for which purpose?
- (A) Incorporating a strength-based perspective
  - (B) Meeting legal guidelines for a comprehensive assessment
  - (C) Providing an accurate timeline of when the issue began and how it has changed over time
  - (D) Establishing rapport and to better understand the child's perspective on the issue
  - (E) Determining the most effective instructional strategies for his or her particular learning needs
23. Mr. Thomas, a school psychologist, works with Ms. Riddle, a special education teacher, to meet the needs of Mark, a student with autism. Mr. Thomas does not work with Mark directly; Ms. Riddle acts as his mediator. This collaboration is an example of which consultation model?
- (A) Systems
  - (B) Resource
  - (C) Triadic
  - (D) Adaptive learning environments
  - (E) Class within a class
24. Which of the following statistical procedures consists of systematically combining data from multiple studies focusing on the same question and using similar variables?
- (A) Analysis of variance
  - (B) Analysis of difference scores
  - (C) Multiple regression
  - (D) Multivariate correlation
  - (E) Meta-analysis

## Answers

**1.** The best answer is C. NASP's *Principles for Professional Ethics IVb2* requires that "[s]chool psychologists insist on collecting relevant data for an evaluation that includes the use of valid and reliable instruments and techniques that are applicable and appropriate for the student." Choice A is inappropriate because the agreement between the old form and current curriculum is unknown. Choice B would be inappropriate for all students who took the old form if it turned out that the forms measured different constructs. Choice D would not address the school district's assessment needs, and choice E violates the NASP principle.

**2.** The best answer is C. Context-imbued second-language skills are acquired before context-reduced second-language skills. According to bilingual theory, the development of a common underlying proficiency through the development of first-language skills should help the child's English acquisition, eliminating choices A and D. The changing nature of the student's proficiencies eliminates both choice B and choice E.

**3.** The best answer is B. In consultee-centered case consultation, the consultant is primarily interested in the problems that prevent the consultee from solving a problem and not in the solutions to the client's problems (eliminating choice A). This relationship is coordinate rather than hierarchical (which eliminates choices C and D). Choice E would be more consistent with consultee-centered administrative consultation.

**4.** The best answer is C. Curriculum-based assessment models and other criterion-referenced models are generally designed to assess specific curricula (choices B and D). The generally standardized nature of norm-referenced instruments limits their use in examining the impact of particular learning environments (choice E) and usually require that the tests be administered on the dates when they were normed (choice A).

**5.** The best answer is B. It is important to note that remaining in her seat throughout the seatwork time is already in Mary's repertoire and need not be shaped. Because playing with the blocks is a high-probability behavior, it can be used to reinforce the lower probability of remaining in the seat, according to Premack's principle. None of the other choices involve contingent reinforcement.

**6.** The best answer is C. Generally, students get the best results when they use a variety of study strategies. Therefore, choice A, which emphasizes teaching one study skill, is not the best answer. Often students Anthony's age need help developing study skills. The fact that Anthony is not performing well on tests indicates that he needs help developing study skills; therefore choice B is incorrect. Having Anthony practice collaborative problem solving skills (choice D) might not help Anthony study for tests.

**7.** The best answer is A. The first sentence in the question contains the definition of self-fulfilling prophecy. The law of effect (B) states that individuals learn responses that have a rewarding effect and responses that result in punishing consequences are weakened or not learned. The primacy effect (C) is the tendency for the first information we receive to carry more effect than later information on our overall impression. Social loafing (D) is a phenomenon in which individuals take less responsibility for working when in the presence of others. The Premack principle (E) states that a high-frequency (preferred) behavior can be an effective reinforcer for a low-frequency (less preferred) behavior.

**8.** The best answer is C. Fluency in English should be no more an issue for this student than for any other student who scores well on the English fluency test, eliminating choices A and B. Without knowing which services the child might be referred for, the intelligence test (choice D) might not be appropriate. Classroom observations (choice E) are also not likely to be sensitive to variables related to achievement deficits. On the other hand, the low scores might reflect motivational factors or other intervening factors related to cultural differences, and the adaptive measures and sociocultural assessment might provide a more balanced perspective of the student.

**9.** The best answer is B. Any change proposed for the child's placement requires written notice to the parents but not necessarily parental consent.

**10.** The best answer is C. The numbers of times the letter sounds the children were taught are repeated in the sentences are (at most): A=6, B=4, C=8, D=4, and E=3. When children are introduced to letter sounds, they should be given the opportunity to use these sounds in sentences.

**11.** The best answer is D. Choices A, B, C, and E reinforce the role of the teacher as a power-assertive dispenser of discipline. When strategies such as these are compared with inductive or victim-centered empathy training, the inductive strategies are usually superior in inhibiting the hostile aggression.

**12.** The best answer is B. Choice A does not address the improvement of prediction by adding the inventory. Choices C and D do not allow for evaluation of whether the inventory adds any new information or just provides information that is already available. Choice E offers no comparison for judging the improvement of prediction offered by the inventory scores and also uses the inventory scores as a dependent rather than an independent variable.

**13.** The best answer is D. Accelerating gifted students, especially in areas of interest, helps them stay interested and motivated. The other choices are effective teaching strategies in certain instances but are not necessarily going to meet the special needs of the gifted child.

**14.** The best answer is D. A behavioral model focuses on the modification of behavior by manipulating behavioral contingencies. Choices A, B, and C are not concerned with behaviors. Without knowing how language would be enriched, it cannot be evaluated as a behavioral model of school intervention.

**15.** The best answer is D. NASP indicates that it is essential that all school practitioners have access to knowledgeable professional supervision, thus eliminating choice A. The NASP Position Statement states that supervision should include both professional and administrative supervision (thus eliminating choice B) and that supervisors should have at least three year's experience as a school psychologist (thus eliminating choice C). Finally, the NASP Position Statement calls for multiple avenues and methods of supervision (thus eliminating choice E).

**16.** The best answer is D. Negative reinforcement refers to the contingent removal of aversive stimuli—in this case, the homework assignments.

**17.** The best answer is D. The other choices are not contributions Gesell made.

**18.** The best answer is C. It is important to record frequency (A and B) and duration of the reported behavior to make an accurate assessment. Knowledge of peer comparison (D) allows you to determine whether Susan's behavior is atypical. Finally, recording the teacher's response (E) will help the school psychologist make recommendations about how to remediate the behavior.

**19.** The best answer is A. Choice A is the definition of validity. Choice B is the definition for test-retest reliability. Choice C describes some kind of pretesting. Though the inclusion of norms based on a representative sample is important, that alone does not indicate that a test is valid. Choice E is not related to the psychometric properties of the test. It is merely a statement of popularity.

**20.** The best answer is A. Choices B–E are good ethical practices but were not decided in the Tarasoff case.

**21.** The best answer is C. Ecological assessment involves a broad analysis of the environment within which the individual functions. Personality, cognitive, and neuropsychological assessment (choices A, B, and E) deal with specific areas of individual functioning and do not account for the broader influence of the environmental milieu. Curriculum-based assessment (choice D) is used to determine the academic progress of students on the material being taught in the classroom; it does not focus on behavior.

**22.** The best answer is D. It is important to develop rapport and to understand the child's perception of the problem. An interview is not required to be part of an assessment (choice B). Child interviews are typically not the best way to incorporate a strength-based perspective (choice A), get detailed information on timing (choice C), or instructional strategies (choice E).

**23.** The best answer is C. The triadic model includes three roles: consultant (school psychologist), mediator (special education teacher), and client (Mark). In this model, the consultant does not provide direct services but works through the mediator. The systems approach (choice A) is a direct teaching method to the consultee and involves direct assessment by the consultant. The resource model (choice B) requires both consultative and direct services to the client by the consultant, with some services coming through the mediator. Choices D and E are not consultative models, but are in fact inclusion service models of team teaching.

**24.** The best answer is E. A meta-analysis is defined as a method of systematically combining data from a number of studies focusing on the same question and using similar variables. The remaining choices (A, B, C, and D) are all types of statistical procedures used to analyze data from a single study.



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