
VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT™

FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS

TEST BLUEPRINT

March 2004

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Virginia Reading Assessment
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT

March 2004

Domain	Range of Objectives
I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching	01–02
II. Oral Language and Oral Communication	03–04
III. Reading Development	05–10
IV. Writing and Research	11–13
V. Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills	14–16
VI. Integrated Knowledge and Understanding: Case Study	01–16

VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT

FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS

TEST BLUEPRINT

Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching
Oral Language and Oral Communication
Reading Development
Writing and Research
Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills
Integrated Knowledge and Understanding: Case Study

DOMAIN I—ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC TEACHING

0001 Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students' language proficiency and reading skills.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of formal assessments (e.g., norm referenced, criterion referenced), informal assessments (e.g., informal reading inventories, anecdotal records), and screening measures for evaluating students' oral and written language proficiency.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for evaluating emergent readers' and beginning readers' knowledge and skills, including concepts of print, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sound-symbol knowledge, single-word recognition, and decoding.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for monitoring the ongoing development of students' reading skills and strategies, including word-attack skills, vocabulary, word recognition in context, reading fluency, and oral and silent reading comprehension.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0002 Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of methods for using assessment data to diagnose the reading needs of, and tailor instruction for, individual students.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of methods for using diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to accelerate the development of students' reading skills.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of methods for using diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to address the needs of students with reading difficulties.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the uses of flexible groupings in instruction to address students' changing reading needs.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

DOMAIN II—ORAL LANGUAGE AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

0003 Understand the development of oral language and oral communication skills.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to promote growth in students' use of oral language, to develop their listening and speaking skills, and to expand their listening and speaking vocabularies.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to build students' oral communication skills, to help students use oral language for different purposes (e.g., to inform, to explain, to persuade, to entertain), and to facilitate the use of oral language for critical thinking and creative expression.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' use of oral and nonverbal communication skills in various settings, including group activities (e.g., subject-related group learning activities) and oral presentations.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' understanding of oral language structures (e.g., structural elements in oral stories and oral dramatic activities, correct verb tenses in oral communication, increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication).
- Demonstrate knowledge of effective methods for facilitating the learning of Standard American English by speakers of other languages and dialects.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the complex nature of language acquisition and the unique needs of students with language delays and disorders.
- Recognize how to create a learning environment that is respectful of, and responsive to, linguistic and cultural diversity.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0004 Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of phonological awareness (i.e., the awareness that oral language is composed of smaller units such as spoken sounds, syllables, words, and sentences) and effective instructional strategies for promoting students' phonological association skills (e.g., helping students distinguish the syllables within a spoken word).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of phonemic awareness (i.e., a specific type of phonological awareness involving the ability to distinguish the individual sounds within a spoken word) and the role of phonemic awareness in reading development.
- Identify types of phonemic awareness skills (e.g., counting the phonemes in a spoken word, segmenting a spoken word into phonemes, blending phonemes to form a spoken word, deleting or substituting phonemes to modify spoken syllables or words).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies (e.g., oral rhyming activities, games involving spoken words that have the same beginning or ending sounds) to promote development of phonemic awareness skills by helping students hear, say, and manipulate phonemes in spoken words containing one or more syllables.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

DOMAIN III—READING DEVELOPMENT

0005 Understand how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles.

For example:

- Identify instructional strategies for helping students learn concepts of print (e.g., recognize how print is organized, understand the directionality of print, recognize the difference between individual printed letters and printed words or larger units of text, understand that print carries meaning) and begin to match voice with print.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' automatic recognition of high-frequency sight words.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ways to help students recognize and name uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Apply knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' understanding of basic phonetic principles by helping students grasp the alphabetic principle, match consonant sounds and short vowel sounds to appropriate letters, and identify beginning consonant sounds in single-syllable printed words.
- Recognize the connection between students' invented spellings and their understanding of phonetic principles.

0006 Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of basic phonic elements (e.g., consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel patterns).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers blend consonant and vowel sounds to decode single-syllable words with regular spellings.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers recognize common consonant-vowel patterns and apply knowledge of these patterns to read single-syllable words and decode unfamiliar words through analogy with known words containing familiar patterns.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for developing and reinforcing students' skills in using phonics to decode multisyllabic words and read words containing consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel combinations, and r-controlled vowels.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0007 Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the way phonics, syntax, and semantics interact as the reader constructs meaning.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of methods for improving students' reading proficiency by helping students apply word-analysis skills and word-attack strategies.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for helping students read unfamiliar multisyllabic words, including compound words, by using syllabication and structural analysis (e.g., identification of base words, roots, inflections, and other affixes) to identify common spelling patterns and morphemes within the word.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for helping students use context, including sentence structure as well as meaning clues, to identify unfamiliar words and technical terms, determine the relevant meaning of a word with multiple meanings, and verify the relevant meaning and/or pronunciation of a homonym or homograph.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for building and extending vocabulary knowledge (e.g., identifying word origins, derivations, and inflections; studying vocabulary words that are conceptually related, including synonyms and antonyms; analyzing analogies and figurative language).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for helping students make effective use of a dictionary, thesaurus, glossary, or other word-reference materials to clarify understanding of a word's denotative and connotative meanings.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0008 Understand the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the role and importance of automatic word recognition (e.g., automatic recognition of high-frequency irregular sight words in connected text) and reading fluency (i.e., the ability to read aloud accurately at an appropriate rate and with appropriate expression).
- Identify instructional strategies for promoting development of students' reading fluency (e.g., oral reading and rereading of texts written at each student's independent reading level).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, and psychological bases of the reading process and how they influence students' reading comprehension (e.g., vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge and experience, fluency, interest, motivation).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of literal comprehension (e.g., the ability to identify main ideas or cause-and-effect relationships that are explicitly stated, the ability to identify sequence of events in a narrative text), inferential comprehension (e.g., the ability to make inferences, draw conclusions, and understand cause-and-effect relationships that are not explicitly stated), and evaluative comprehension (e.g., the ability to analyze arguments and distinguish fact from opinion).
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of ways to help students apply comprehension strategies before reading (e.g., previewing, setting a purpose for reading, discussing prior knowledge related to the topic of the text), during reading (e.g., making predictions, using questioning strategies to self-monitor comprehension), and after reading (e.g., rereading, retelling, summarizing, relating the text to other texts).
- Recognize the importance of independent reading in the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.
- Identify ways to promote independent reading and family and community involvement in literacy activities.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0009 Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry.

For example:

- Recognize how to select a wide variety of literature at appropriate reading levels to encourage independent and reflective reading and to promote students' comprehension and enjoyment of, and appreciation for, fiction and poetry.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to help students comprehend fiction by identifying basic story elements (e.g., plot, character, conflict, problem/solution, setting), retelling familiar stories, and making predictions based on information and pictures in the text.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of different genres and types of literature (e.g., fiction, poetry, myth, folk and fairy tales, fantasy) and use this knowledge to improve students' comprehension.
- Identify instructional strategies (e.g., story mapping, Venn diagrams, webbing) to help students recognize different genres and types of literature.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of ways to strengthen students' comprehension by developing their literary response and analysis skills (e.g., guiding students to identify themes, describe imagery, interpret figurative language, and draw on personal experience to understand a plot or infer characters' motives).

0010 Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction.

For example:

- Recognize how to select and use a variety of informational, descriptive, and persuasive materials at appropriate reading levels to promote students' comprehension of nonfiction, including content-area texts.
- Recognize how to use a variety of comprehension strategies (e.g., linking information in the text to previously learned knowledge, identifying key words and concepts, questioning, paraphrasing, summarizing) to clarify understanding of a text.
- Identify instructional strategies (e.g., summarizing, using graphic organizers) to help students distinguish main ideas and supporting details in a nonfiction text and identify the author's purpose.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' comprehension by helping them identify logical organization and recognize structural patterns (e.g., cause and effect, comparison and contrast) in nonfiction texts.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for helping students locate and use evidence from a nonfiction text to support their predictions, opinions, and conclusions.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

DOMAIN IV—WRITING AND RESEARCH

0011 Understand writing skills and processes.

For example:

- Recognize writing as a developmental process.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to write in various forms and for various audiences and purposes (e.g., to describe, to inform, to persuade, to entertain, for creative expression).
- Identify strategies for promoting students' writing skills (e.g., replicating patterns from literature, engaging in interactive writing, using the language experience approach).
- Demonstrate knowledge of recursive stages in the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) and appropriate strategies for conferencing with students to provide effective feedback during all phases of writing.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of effective composing (e.g., focusing on a central idea; elaborating through selection of appropriate details; creating logical structure, coherent transitions, and unity).
- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of effective written expression (e.g., precise vocabulary, appropriate voice and tone, variation in sentence length and structure).
- Recognize the interdependence of reading and writing development and the role of writing activities (e.g., written retelling, response logs, written summaries) in promoting reading comprehension.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0012 Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of spelling as a developmental process (e.g., identify the purpose and limitations of invented spelling by emergent writers, recognize the connection between stages of language acquisition and spelling development).
- Demonstrate knowledge of systematic spelling instruction, including strategies for helping students recognize common orthographic patterns and strategies for helping students generalize spelling knowledge by transferring what they learn in spelling lessons to their own writing (e.g., word sorts, word families/spelling patterns).
- Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies for promoting students' knowledge and use of writing mechanics, including correct usage (e.g., complete sentences, subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement), punctuation (e.g., use of commas and apostrophes), and capitalization (e.g., helping beginning writers learn to capitalize proper nouns).

0013 Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' research skills by helping the students apply effective reading techniques (e.g., questioning, previewing, skimming, scanning) and writing techniques (e.g., note taking, outlining, summarizing, use of graphic organizers) to locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of print and electronic sources.
- Recognize how to help students use text organizers (e.g., tables of contents, headers, graphic features, indices) to help locate and categorize information.
- Identify strategies for helping students make effective use of reference materials (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopedia, glossary).
- Recognize how to promote students' skills in using technology, including electronic media, to conduct research and create final products of research.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ways to evaluate and select a variety of media resources.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

DOMAIN V—SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

0014 Understand specialized knowledge and skills required to perform the role of a reading specialist.

For example:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the processes involved in language acquisition in order to diagnose reading difficulties.
- Demonstrate knowledge of types of disabilities and their implications for literacy development and reading instruction.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the reading needs of high-achieving students and effective instructional strategies to challenge them at appropriate levels.
- Demonstrate knowledge of developmental psychology, including theories of personality and learning behaviors in relation to literacy development.
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of, and respect for, the influence of cultural contexts on language and literacy development.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of educational measurement and evaluation as they apply to reading assessment and screening.
- Demonstrate knowledge of current research (e.g., research on the reading process, research-based methods of reading instruction) and exemplary practices in literacy instruction.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

0015 Understand leadership roles of the reading specialist in organizing and supervising reading programs and promoting staff development.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for planning, organizing, coordinating, and supervising the reading program within the classroom, school, or division.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for instructing and advising teachers (e.g., by modeling, demonstrating, teaming, consulting, coaching) in the skills necessary to differentiate reading instruction for all students.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ways to initiate, implement, evaluate, and participate in professional development to enhance the quality of reading instruction and address the goals of the reading program.
- Demonstrate knowledge of principles, procedures, and issues involved in designing, implementing, evaluating, and improving the reading curriculum.
- Identify strategies for selecting, organizing, and using appropriate reading materials and instructional resources, including instructional technologies, to create a learning environment that promotes students' reading development.

0016 Understand strategies for communicating and collaborating with all members of the educational community to address the goals of the reading program.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of communication and facilitation skills to promote effective collaboration among colleagues (e.g., teachers, administrators, media specialists, other specialists, special education personnel), students' families, and the wider community in addressing the goals of the reading program.
- Recognize how to apply techniques for consensus building and conflict resolution to facilitate communication about issues relating to the reading program.
- Recognize how to interpret and communicate to colleagues and other members of the educational community relevant research findings about reading and their implications for reading instruction.
- Recognize how to help advocate for public support of reading education by communicating effectively with policymakers, the media, and the general public.
- Identify strategies for developing effective partnerships between schools and community agencies to help address reading goals.

**VIRGINIA READING ASSESSMENT
FIELD 002: READING SPECIALISTS
TEST BLUEPRINT**

DOMAIN VI—INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING: CASE STUDY

- 0001–0016** The candidate will apply knowledge of reading assessment and instruction to prepare an organized written response to a case study of an elementary school student.