Greetings, Candidates

Welcome to the SUNY Potsdam NYS Certification Exams EAS Session 1 Review

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SUNY Potsdam’s
School of Education and Professional Studies (SOEPS)

- Developed by Eudora Watson
  Writing Specialist for Pre-Service Teachers

With thanks to Dr. Mitchell and the staff of the College Writing Center for their contributions to the development of this workshop series and the Sustained Tutoring Program.
Before the test –

- Know the test
- Know yourself
Test-takers and test-teachers

Your own preparation for these standardized exams can inform how you will:

Approach learning about the standardized tests your own students will be asked to take

Approach test-prep in your own classroom
Coming up:

- Manage your time
- The two types of tasks: selected and constructed
- A comparison between exams
- Timeframe for the EAS tasks
- Breakdown of EAS tasks
Manage your time.

- You have a set amount of time to complete the exam.

- Each exam has **two types of tasks**: Selected and Constructed Response
A comparison of the current exams . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>Educating All Students</td>
<td>2 ¼ hours</td>
<td>Selected and Constructed Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALST</td>
<td>Writing to Sources and Reading</td>
<td>3 ½ hours</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare with the CST exams</td>
<td>Knowledge specific to multiple content areas</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These times are NYSED estimates for the EAS

135 minutes total

Based on these estimates:

• (3) 200 word responses: up to 10 minutes each

• 42 selected-response items: up to 105 minutes
Weights of selected response and written response . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Title</th>
<th>Approx. # of Selected Response Questions</th>
<th>Written Assignment Word Count</th>
<th>Written Assignment, approx. % of score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3 (150–200)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALST</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2 (100–200), 1 (400–600)</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most CST</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1 (150–300)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# EAS breakdown by topic and tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Selected-Response</th>
<th>Constructed-Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approximate Number of Items</td>
<td>Approximate Percentage of Test Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0001 Diverse Student Populations</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0002 English Language Learners</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0003 Students with Disabilities and Other Special Learning Needs</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0004 Teacher Responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0005 School-Home Relationships</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>70%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Note the three competencies that include constructed responses.

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On the sample, you are given 3 exhibits for each of these three competencies.

- Examples of the types of exhibits
  - Class description / case study
  - Teacher’s journal entries
  - Lesson plans
More about the exhibits

- For each set of exhibits, there are several multiple choice questions and one constructed response.

- For both types of questions, you are asked to make judgments about what is going on in the classroom based on these exhibits.
Approach to using the exhibits

You can read these exhibits ‘cold’ and warm up as you go (bad idea)

– OR –

You can read the questions first to get an idea of what you are reading for, then read the exhibits. (much better idea)
Here are three good reasons to read the questions first:

1. The exhibits can be very detailed.
   - It is better to know what you are reading for before you read a complicated text.
   - Knowing what your purpose in reading will help you avoid getting bogged down in details.
Reasons to read the questions first:

2. You will **not need all the exhibits** for all the questions.

- For example: for some of the questions you only need to know about the general climate in the classroom.

- Be sure you pay attention to the description of the classroom – see which questions you can answer with just that information.
Reasons to read the questions first:

3. For some questions, you might not need the exhibits at all.

- Take a look at the next slide for an example.

All we need to know about Valeria to answer the question on the next slide is that she is a Second Language Learner . . .
Without reading anything but the description, we can answer this question:

- Which of the following factors related to language acquisition is most likely contributing to Valeria's below-average content-area literacy skills?

  a. She is reluctant to take risks in English learning.
  b. She has limited literacy in and use of her home language.
  c. She has a debilitating level of communication apprehension.
  d. She receives insufficient English input in the school environment.
How do we know the answer without reading any thing else? Read the description of the correct answer:

- **Correct Response: B.** First-language literacy development is strongly related to successful second-language learning and academic achievement. Many literacy skills in the first language transfer positively to the second language. English Language Learners who have not developed literacy skills in the home language may lack key language foundations on which language and content learning can be built. Another factor in second-language acquisition is the degree to which English Language Learners maintain and use their home language. Literacy in and use of the home language is an asset that facilitates English Language Learners' conceptual understanding of academic content. Bilingualism affirms English Language Learners' sense of identity and competency, characteristics that play an important role in learning.
Need to brush up on Second Language Learners?

Martha Young, of SUNY New Paltz has made an excellent PowerPoint available:

Focus on English Language Learners: Competency 0002

You can download it from the same Moodle site you got this PowerPoint from – use it to study for the EAS exam.
Using the answer key in the NYSTCE sample test to study

- Did you notice how DETAILED that answer to the question about the second Language Learner is?

- Use the answer key to study – read each explanation carefully. Even if you got the answer right, this can serve as important review and reinforcement.
Coming up:

- The constructed (written) response
Where is it hiding?

In plain view – the following slides will show you how to find the formula that describes the genre rules you should follow for the EAS constructed response.
All three written assignments have these instructions:

Use the exhibits to complete the task that follows.

After analyzing the information provided, write a response of approximately 150–200 words in which you:

( specific task is listed here)

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.

*Based on the EAS guide*
The specific task for Diverse St. Populations on the sample is in red:

Diverse Student Populations

Use the exhibits to complete the task that follows.

After analyzing the information provided, write a response of approximately 150–200 words in which you:

- **identify** one issue related to student diversity that Ms. Finnegan should address in her instructional planning related to this lesson;

- **describe** one strategy Ms. Finnegan could use to address the issue you identified; and

- **explain** why the strategy you described would be effective in facilitating student learning.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.
The specific task for English Language Learners on the sample is in red:

English Language Learners

Use the exhibits to complete the task that follows.

After analyzing the information provided, write a response of approximately 150–200 words in which you:

• **identify** a specific learning need for Valeria;
• **describe** a strategy for differentiating instruction related to this lesson to address the need that you identified; and
• **explain** why the strategy you described would be effective in addressing the identified learning need.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.
There are the **same key words** for the specific task in each area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diverse Student Populations</th>
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**Identify** (an issue, need, aspect . . .)

**Describe** (a strategy or modification)

**Explain** (why that strategy or modification will work)

Each is expected to take you up to ten minutes to write.
Written assignment: Approach

Have a plan
Follow your plan
Check your work
Work it, Step 1 – Plan

Based on the sample questions and responses:

- Your answer structure for EAS:
  - Identify need
  - Describe strategy or modification
  - Explain why the strategy / mod you describe will work
Be super logical and clear. Be completely obvious in every sentence. Follow your plan. Stay focused on Topic and Task.

Make it easy for the scorer to line up your answer with the requirements!

Mimic the test’s language
  ◦ You call it a deficiency, they call it a need? Then you call it a need.

Watch your word count – aim for the high end.
Work it, Step 3 – Check your work

- MEASURE your answer – sentence by sentence
  - On Topic?
  - On Task?

  EAS ➔ Identify need, Describe appropriate strategy, Explain why the strategy/mod would work

  Do you have all the information:
  Can you find every element described in the question in your answer?

  Reread the question and use it to judge your answer.

- EDIT as needed
  - Expand and add details, improve your word choice, cut repetition.
Coming up:

Work on content and your writing skills at the same time
You have 150–200 words to

Identify, Describe, Explain

How many words is that?

Know yourself as a writer: what is it like for you to write 175–200 words on a topic in your profession.
Each exam has either

Objectives & Examples
(older CST exams)

or

Performance Expectations & Indicators
(EAS and ALST)
1. Select an example or indicator from the exam you are preparing for.

2. Pick out key words from the text, and

3. Write on the topic for several minutes.
f. Applied knowledge of research–based instructional strategies (e.g., providing scaffolding, using authentic tasks) for promoting literacy for English language Learners at all stages of literacy development.
f. Applied knowledge of research-based instructional strategies (e.g., providing scaffolding, using authentic tasks) for promoting literacy for English language Learners at all stages of literacy development.
Using those key words/phrases

- Identify, Describe, Explain

Writing about concepts and strategies will help you:

- Evaluate your level of knowledge on content
- Work on the craft of writing
Working on Craft of Writing

As you practice “writing on assignment,” keep in mind:

Time and Word count

How much time does it take to write _ # of words?
How much time will you put into your writing?

Craft, like sport or music, requires time practicing to improve.
Coming up:

- Basic strategies that work for all the NYSTCE
Should you guess? - YES

If you can’t decide on the best answer, eliminate as many as possible. Then guess among the ones that are left.

Keep in mind:

The **constructed response** tests your critical thinking and background knowledge through your **reading and writing** skills.

The **selected response** tests your critical thinking and background knowledge through your **reading** skills.
Multiple Choice/Selected Response

- Be methodical.
- Verify your answers – refer to the text.
- Take notes, jot down whatever helps you keep track or sort out.
- Get a sense of how long it takes you
- How good are your second-guesses on multiple choice? Follow your own best-practice

- *Stay engaged with the exam*
Staying engaged with the exam

- What are your strategies?
The Written Assignment

Also known as:

- Constructed Response

Which genre?

Read the directions carefully to know what is expected of your writing.
Writers on assignment

- Much of what is written – fiction and nonfiction – follows the instructions given in an assignment.

What genre do you love? What TV shows, what movies? Which magazines or websites?

All of them are written with two things in mind:

Audience and formula
Writing is a craft . . .

- In fact, most things that are the result of craft take into account AUDIENCE and FORMULA.

And that’s not a bad thing, and it doesn’t stifle creativity.

Pottery, cars, clothing, pens, architecture . . .
Poets – the writers most commonly thought of as very creative and exercising great freedom in their work are paying attention to AUDIENCE and FORMULA
The people who score the constructed response are knowledgeable people who know educational theory and lingo (professional terminology).

Therefore: You do not have to explain terminology.

But: You do need to prove that you understand concepts and can apply and describe them to another professional.
Professional Credibility is built every day.

- Communicator’s goal: “Understand me, believe me.”

- Writer’s goal: Achieve that understanding and belief in written text which can travel and speak without me.

- Preserve the professional credibility I need to be read. Learn to write with convincing content and readable style.
Know yourself: Growing as a writer

- Take every opportunity to practice the craft of writing.
  - Do the best possible job on writing assignments
  - Having a semester without much writing?
Diverse Student Populations

Use the exhibits to complete the task that follows.

5. After analyzing the information provided, write a response of approximately 150–200 words in which you:

- identify one issue related to student diversity that Ms. Finnegan should address in her instructional planning related to this lesson;
- describe one strategy Ms. Finnegan could use to address the issue you identified; and
- explain why the strategy you described would be effective in facilitating student learning.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.
Before the test: Know the test

- Part of time management is to read ahead everything you can . . .

AND be sure you understand it!
In the guide, examine the sample responses (and circle, underline, highlight)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Sample Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many paragraphs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What job does the first sentence of each P do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does each sentence refer back to the passage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there an introduction? A conclusion?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Written assignment: Tasks

Knowledge + Application + Support

What you know, applied to the situation, supported with details from the text or support from your background knowledge.
Resources to help you improve your writing

- **CWC Self-Editing Guide** (pdf)
- Contact Eudora to go over your goals and make a plan.
- Work with CWC consultants and steal our techniques for your classroom.
- Potsdam offers Theory of Composition, Theory of Rhetoric, and Writing Center Theory. Consider the Tutoring Practicum or an internship with a COMP teacher.
That’s all for now . . .

- Watch for announcements of workshops on Moodle.
- Contact Eudora Watson if you have questions, comments, suggestions.
Thank you .... And,

- Feedback on this slideshow review is always welcome.

- Please be sure to let us know what was helpful, and what wasn’t.

- If you have questions, feedback now, or more feedback after you take an exam, feel free to contact Eudora at:  
  watsonea@potsdam.edu