

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to help you, the candidate, prepare for the Program for Licensing Assessments for Colorado Educators® (PLACE®). The primary purpose of this guide is to help you prepare effectively by becoming familiar with the type, structure, format, and content of the tests you plan to take. Education faculty and program administrators at educator preparation institutions may also find the information in this guide useful as they help candidates prepare for the tests.

KEY FEATURES OF THIS GUIDE

- *Information About How to Prepare for the Tests*
- *Lists of Test Objectives*
- *Practice Questions and Answer Key*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the PLACE after reading this guide, you should consult the current version of the PLACE Registration Bulletin, which can be viewed or downloaded at www.place.nesinc.com.

If after reviewing the registration bulletin you have further questions, please call the offices listed below.

If you have questions regarding **registration, administration procedures, or the receipt of your registration form, admission ticket, or score report**, contact:

**PLACE
Evaluation Systems**
Pearson
P.O. Box 660
Amherst, MA 01004-9009
Telephone: (413) 256-2885
Teletypewriter (TTY): (413) 256-8032
7:00 A.M.– 4:00 P.M. mountain time
(Monday–Friday, excluding holidays)
PLACE Internet address:
www.place.nesinc.com

If you have questions regarding **licensing** or **which test(s)** you must take, consult with your academic advisor or contact:

Colorado Department of Education
Educator Licensing Unit
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 105
Denver, CO 80203-1799
Telephone: (303) 866-6628
8:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M. mountain time
(Monday–Friday, excluding holidays)
CDE Internet address:
www.cde.state.co.us

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Evaluation Systems, Pearson, P.O. Box 226, Amherst, MA 01004

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PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLACE® AND TEST PREPARATION

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE®

Colorado is committed to maintaining a teaching force capable of enhancing student achievement and meeting the demands and expectations of the state's dynamic and diverse society. In 1991, the Colorado General Assembly approved a significant policy for educational reform called the Educator Licensing Act. This act involved changes in the professional standards for Colorado educational personnel. The law called for the implementation of a testing program across an array of categories as part of the licensing process. The purpose of the Program for Licensing Assessments for Colorado Educators (PLACE®) is to help the state meet its goal of ensuring that all educator licensure candidates have the necessary knowledge to serve in Colorado public schools.

There are several components to the educator licensing process in the state of Colorado. In addition to passing the appropriate PLACE test(s), a candidate for licensure must complete required course work in an approved educator preparation program as well as any field and clinical experience required by his or her educator preparation institution.

For current information on requirements and program policies for the PLACE, see the most recent version of the PLACE Registration Bulletin. You are encouraged to read these requirements and policies carefully and to contact your academic advisor to discuss which test(s) you must take and when it would be best for you to take them.

The Evaluation Systems group of Pearson and the Colorado Department of Education are also available to answer any questions you might have (see the front of this guide for Web sites, addresses, and telephone numbers).

Test Development Process

Creating tests for the PLACE program is a complex, ongoing process. The major steps in the process are outlined below.

Task	Description
Develop the Test Objectives	<p>The content of each test is developed and documented in the test objectives. Test objectives are organized into groups known as "subareas" that define the major content areas of the test. Each subarea consists of objectives that are accompanied by descriptive statements that further elaborate the content of the test objective.</p> <p>During preparation of the test objectives, key state and national documents and Colorado educators are consulted. Committees of Colorado educators review the test objectives and make revisions, as necessary, to ensure that the test objectives are accurate, free of bias, job related, representative of the diversity of the state, and consistent with the purposes of the program.</p>
Validate Test Content	<p>A content validation survey is conducted, using randomly sampled practicing Colorado educators in elementary and secondary public schools and educator preparation program faculty to ensure that the test objectives reflect the knowledge and skills considered to be important for performing the job of an educator in Colorado.</p>
Develop Test Questions	<p>Test questions are developed to assess the content defined by the test objectives. Committees of Colorado educators are convened to review and approve the test questions. Test questions are field-tested in Colorado.</p>
Set Passing Scores	<p>A committee of Colorado educators is convened following the first test administration of each field undergoing development to recommend the passing score.</p>

Characteristics of the PLACE

The PLACE includes tests in 39 content areas and a three-part Basic Skills test. All candidates for licensure must pass the content-area test(s) that match the type of license(s) being sought. The Basic Skills test is not required for licensing or certification. However, your college or university may recommend that you take the Basic Skills test. For more information on which tests are required, see the current version of the PLACE Registration Bulletin.

All tests in the PLACE are criterion referenced; that is, they are designed to measure a candidate's knowledge in relation to an established standard of competence (a criterion) rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates. The explicit purpose of these tests is to help identify those candidates who have demonstrated the level of knowledge necessary to perform satisfactorily in their area(s) of specialization. The passing score for each test is based on the professional judgments and recommendations of Colorado educators and is established by approval of the Colorado State Board of Education.

Each content test (except Russian and Japanese) includes multiple-choice questions. Candidates indicate answers on an electronically scored answer sheet. A candidate's score is based on the total number of test questions answered correctly.

In addition, the tests for all languages other than English and the Basic Skills test include performance assignments that require an extended response. These performance assignments may require a written or spoken response to a given prompt. Written responses are entered into a Written Response Booklet. Spoken responses are recorded on audiotape. The test for Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired includes a performance assignment that requires the candidate to transcribe a written passage into Braille.

Test Administration

Test administrations for all the tests offered in the PLACE program consist of two sessions: a morning session and an afternoon session. Each test session includes four and one-half hours of actual testing time. For current information about the scheduling of the test sessions, see the most recent version of the PLACE Registration Bulletin, which is available on the PLACE Web site at www.place.nesinc.com.

Candidates will receive information on their admission tickets about the test sessions to which they have been assigned and the test(s) that have been scheduled in each session. Candidates will be permitted to work at their own pace on the tests. Each test session has been designed to allow sufficient time to complete the test(s) assigned to the test session. Candidates are free to leave at any time during the test session, once their materials have been collected and they have been released by their test administrators. However, do not make any other commitments for the test session to which you are assigned. You should plan to commit the entire test session to the PLACE test administration.

The PLACE is administered several times a year at selected sites in Colorado. See the most recent version of the PLACE Registration Bulletin, available on the PLACE Web site at www.place.nesinc.com, for information about test dates, sites, fees, and registration procedures and policies.

Score Reports

Unofficial scores will be available on the Internet by 5:00 P.M. eastern time on the score report date for each test administration. To access your unofficial scores, go to the PLACE Web site at www.place.nesinc.com and follow the score retrieval instructions provided.

Official candidate score reports will be mailed to candidates on the score report date published in the PLACE Registration Bulletin. Refer to the current PLACE Registration Bulletin, available on the PLACE Web site at www.place.nesinc.com, for score report dates.

Your score report will indicate whether you passed the test. Passing status is determined on the basis of your total test performance. All test results are reported as scaled scores. The scaled score is a conversion of the number of scorable test questions you answer correctly to a score from 100 to 300, with a score of 220 representing the passing score. Your score report will also include information about your performance in the subareas of the test and will provide information to help you interpret your scores. In the event that you need to retake the test, the information on your score report will help you identify your areas of strength and weakness and, in turn, will help you focus your preparation on those areas in which you may need further study.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TESTS



The first step in preparing for a PLACE test is to identify what information the test will cover. The test objective list included in this guide for the test you are taking is the **only** source of this information. Read through the entire set of test objectives for your test area to get a general picture of the material to be covered.

Test objectives are organized into groups known as **subareas**. These subareas define the major content areas of the test. There is a list of subareas at the beginning of each test objective list. The number of test objectives within each subarea reflects the emphasis given to that subarea on the test. In general, subareas with greater numbers of objectives will receive more coverage on the test.

Study the Test Objectives

Once you have a broad picture of what the test includes, read each objective and its descriptive statement carefully to get a more specific idea of the knowledge you will be required to demonstrate on the actual test. When you have become familiar with the test objectives, make a list of those test objectives about which you feel you know the least.

Identify Resources

After you have identified the test objectives on which you will focus your time, consider the resources you may use in studying the content of those test objectives. The most appropriate resources may well be your basic textbooks. You may also wish to consult your class notes and other papers, textbooks currently in use in Colorado public elementary and secondary schools, and publications from local, state, and national professional organizations.

Develop Study Techniques

Develop a sound study plan and schedule if you have not already done so. There are many books available on study skills, and you may wish to consult one. Some people find it helpful to study with other people who will be taking the test. If you are comfortable with this approach, consider forming or joining a study group.

Answer the Practice Questions

After you have become familiar with the test objectives, review the test directions on page 1-5 of this guide, and then try to answer the practice questions for the test you are taking. Set aside about 45 minutes for this exercise, though it may take you less time than that. If possible, answer the practice questions in a room that is relatively quiet but where other people are moving around. One of the rooms in a college library may be most appropriate. As you answer the practice questions, time yourself to get an indication of how long it will take you to complete the actual test.

The test objectives covered by the set of practice questions in this guide may or may not be the same ones covered by questions on the actual test. Each actual test that does *not* include a performance assignment will include about 100 multiple-choice questions. The structures of the tests that *do* contain one or more performance assignments (Basic Skills, all languages other than English, Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired) are described in the practice questions sections for those fields.

Test Directions

The following is a sample directions page for a PLACE content-area test. The directions shown below are general directions. If a test uses directions other than these, those directions will be found in the field-specific section of the study guide. The directions for performance assignments can be found in the practice questions sections for those fields that contain a performance assignment component (Basic Skills, all languages other than English, Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired).

You should have in front of you:

- (1) a test booklet for the test for which you registered (check the field name on the front cover);
- (2) an answer sheet (be sure you have filled in the required information); and
- (3) a No. 2 lead pencil.

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ALL OF THESE MATERIALS, PLEASE INFORM THE TEST ADMINISTRATOR. REMOVE ALL OTHER MATERIALS FROM YOUR DESK.

DIRECTIONS

Each question in this booklet is a multiple-choice question with four answer choices. Read each question carefully and choose the ONE best answer. Record your answer on the answer sheet in the space that corresponds to the question number. Completely fill in the space having the same letter as the answer you have chosen. *Use only a No. 2 lead pencil.*

Sample Question:

1. What is the capital of Colorado?
 - A. Boulder
 - B. Colorado Springs
 - C. Denver
 - D. Grand Junction

The correct answer to this question is C. You would indicate that on the answer sheet as follows.

1. A B C D

You should answer all questions. Even if you are unsure of an answer, it is better to guess than not to answer a question at all. You will NOT be penalized for guessing. You may use the margins of the test booklet for scratch paper, but you will be scored only on the responses on your answer sheet.

FOR SECURITY REASONS, YOU MAY NOT REMOVE YOUR NOTES OR ANY OF THE TEST MATERIALS FROM THE ROOM.

The words "End of Test" indicate that you have completed the test. You may go back and review your answers, but be sure you have answered all questions before raising your hand for dismissal. Your materials must be returned to a test administrator before you are dismissed.

This session will last for four and one-half hours. You may work at your own pace on the test you have selected to take at this session. If you have any questions, please ask them now before you begin.



DO NOT GO ON UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

THE DAY OF THE TEST: HELPFUL HINTS



This section includes strategies you may wish to employ for the day of the test.

Preparing for the Test Administration

START EARLY. Make sure you leave plenty of time to have a good breakfast or lunch and to get to the test center on time. Arrive on time so that you are relaxed and ready to begin the test when instructed to do so.

DRESS COMFORTABLY. Wear layers of clothing that you can easily remove or add on (e.g., a sweater or sweatshirt). This will allow you to make personal adjustments for fluctuations in room or body temperature. Wear soft-soled shoes so that you will not disturb other candidates when you leave your seat.

Test-Taking Tips

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS. At the beginning of the session and throughout the test, follow all directions carefully. This includes the oral directions that will be read by the test administrators and any written directions in the test booklet. The test booklet will contain general directions for the test as a whole and specific directions for individual questions or groups of questions. If you do not understand something about the directions, do not hesitate to raise your hand and ask your test administrator.

PACE YOUR WORK. Each test session is four and one-half hours long. The test schedule is designed to allow sufficient time for most candidates to complete the test(s) assigned to a session. Before starting the test, flip through the booklet to review the number of multiple-choice questions and performance assignments, if included, and to set a pace for answering them. You may find that you need less time than the four and one-half hours in a test session, but be prepared to stay for the entire time. Do not make any other commitments for this time period that may cause you to work more quickly than you should. Do not spend a lot of time on a multiple-choice question that you cannot answer promptly; skip that question and move on. If you skip a multiple-choice question, mark it in your test booklet so that you can return to it later. If you skip a multiple-choice question, be sure to skip the corresponding row of answer choices on your answer sheet.

READ CAREFULLY. Read the directions and the test questions carefully. Read all response options. Remember that the test questions call for the "best answer." Do not choose the first response option that seems reasonable; read and evaluate all choices to find the best answer. Read the test questions closely so that you understand what they ask. Do not skim the test questions in an effort to save time; you may misread key words and select the wrong answer or spend more time than needed on a test question. For example, if a test question calls for an approximate answer and you skip over that detail, you could waste time performing a long computation.

MARK ANSWERS CAREFULLY. Your answers to the multiple-choice questions will be scored by a machine; therefore, the answer you select must be clearly marked and the only answer marked. If you change your mind about an answer, erase the old answer completely. Do not make any stray marks on the answer sheet. You may use any available space in the test booklet for notes, but your answers must be clearly marked on your answer sheet. **If you skip a multiple-choice question, be sure to skip the corresponding row of answer choices on your answer sheet.** If the test you are taking includes a written performance assignment, your answer must be recorded in the appropriate answer document. **If you write your response to a written performance assignment in the test booklet, it will not be scored.**

GUESS WISELY. As you read through the response options, try to find the best answer. If you cannot quickly determine the best answer, try to eliminate as many of the options as possible. Then, guess among the remaining answer choices. Your score on each test will be based on the number of test questions you have answered correctly. There is no penalty for incorrect answers; therefore, it is better to guess than not to respond at all.

CHECK ACCURACY. Use any remaining time at the end of the test session to check your work. Go back to the test questions that gave you difficulty and verify your work on them. Check the answer sheet to be sure that you have marked your answers accurately and have completely erased changed answers.

FOLLOW THE RULES. Review the Rules of Test Participation contained in the registration bulletin. Be aware that actions such as using a cell phone during the testing session, attempting to remove notes written in your test booklet, removing test materials from the site, or other such violations may result in your score(s) being invalidated.