



Candidate Handbook

The Academic Language Therapy Association
Competency Exam for
Multisensory Structured Language Education



OVERVIEW

For over 30 years, the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) has been a pioneer in establishing the rigorous standards that assure the highest quality services to those individuals with dyslexia.

ALTA certification is determined by successful completion of all requirements, including acceptable performance on a comprehensive national registration examination administered by Prometric. All minimum requirements must be met as stated in ALTA Bylaws.

BECOMING AN ALTA CERTIFIED MEMBER

Individuals wishing to become a Certified Academic Language Practitioner/Therapist (CALP/CALT) and member of ALTA must pass the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) Competency Exam for Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE).

Exam Applicant Levels

There are two levels at which an individual can complete the ALTA Competency Exam for Multisensory Structured Language Education and become a certified ALTA member. Those levels and their requirements are listed below.

Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP)
Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT)

Related Link: [ALTA Education & Training](#)

CALP/CALT APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP):

“Comprehensive Teacher Level Training” shall be defined as a course under the supervision of an Instructor of Certified Academic Language Practitioner (ICALP) or Qualified Instructor of Certified Academic Language Therapists (CALT-QI) that includes:

Completion of comprehensive teacher level training in a Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE) program that must include:

Minimum of 45 instructional hours,
Minimum of 60 clinical/ teaching hours, and
Minimum of 5 demonstrations.

Clinical/teaching documentation must be signed by the supervising instructor with the instructor’s proof of credentials.

A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

Acceptable performance on a teaching level comprehensive examination administered by ALTA. The Academic Language Therapy Association Competency Exam for Multisensory Structured Language Education is available to applicants, at the CALP level, with a **minimum of nine months from the beginning of training, and a maximum of two years from the completion of CALP training.**

Reference the [members-only website](#) to get the most up-to-date pricing for the ALTA Competency Exam for Multisensory Structured Language Education and CALP dues.

Certified Academic Language Therapy (CALT):

To earn certification from the Academic Language Therapy Association as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) an individual must show successful completion of the following requirements:

I. Successful completion of Comprehensive Therapy-Level Training

II. Successful completion of the ALTA Competency Exam - Therapy Level

III. Hold a master's degree (Effective May 31, 2023)

a. Candidates who successfully complete comprehensive therapy-level training and the ALTA CALT exam without a master's degree, may join ALTA as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT)-Candidate and will have an additional five years to complete the master's degree. A CALT-Candidate will enjoy all the benefits of a full voting member of ALTA for up to 5 years while they pursue a master's degree. If a CALT-Candidate does not complete a master's degree within this time period, the CALT-Candidate status will automatically convert to a CALP level.

I. COMPREHENSIVE THERAPY-LEVEL TRAINING

"Comprehensive Therapy-Level Training" shall be defined as training under the supervision of a Certified Academic Language Therapist-Qualified Instructor (CALT-QI) that includes:

Completion of comprehensive therapy level training in a Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE) program that must include:

minimum of 200 instructional hours,

minimum of 700 clinical/teaching practicum hours, with a minimum of 3 teaching situations in both intro and advanced levels of instruction, and

minimum of 10 demonstrations.

Note: Clinical/teaching practicum documentation must be signed by the supervising instructor with the instructor's proof of credentials.

II. EXAM

Prerequisite: Successful completion of all Therapy-Level training requirements.

Acceptable performance on the ALTA Competency Exam. The ALTA exam is available to applicants, at the CALT level, with a **minimum of two (2) years (21-24 months) and a maximum of five (5) years** from the beginning of CALT Training. Administration of the ALTA Competency Exam for MSLE is \$180.

A candidate will have up to one year to complete the exam, with an unlimited number of retakes at a fee of \$180 per retake. After one year, the applicant will be required to reapply.

Applicants will have 30 days from the initial application submission date to complete any required paperwork as listed above. If the applicant fails to provide the required documents within the 30 days, an additional \$25 processing fee for each consecutive 30 days will be applied.

Applicants who are deemed ineligible to sit for the Exam or who voluntarily withdraw their application will receive a refund of the initial application fee, less a \$50 non-refundable processing fee.

III. MASTER'S DEGREE

Effective May 31, 2023, a master's degree will be required for a Certified Academic Language Therapist.

The master's may be earned before, during, or after training.

Candidates for Certified Academic Language Therapist should hold a master's degree.

Candidates who successfully complete comprehensive therapy-level training and the ALTA CALT exam may join ALTA as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT)-Candidate and will have an additional five years to complete the master's degree.

APPLYING FOR THE ALTA EXAM FOR MULTISENSORY STRUCTURED LANGUAGE EDUCATION

To begin the application process, visit <https://altaread.org/membership/become-a-certified-member/>

Select the respective level of ALTA membership

- Ensure all required documents have been collected prior to beginning the application.

Upon application submission, the ALTA Review Committee will assess application and supporting documents for approval. Please allow 2-3 weeks for review.

Upon approval, registrant will be assigned and emailed their Prometric registration number to schedule exam.

Once an applicant has received their approval email from the ALTA Certifying Committee, they may [register](#) for the ALTA Competency Exam on the Prometric website. Exam application approvals will remain valid for one year.

SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT

There are now two ways to take your ALTA Competency Exam for Multisensory Structured Language Education. As a candidate, you have the option to take your exam either in a Prometric Testing Center or through a remotely proctored, internet-enabled location of your choice where you must provide a computer with a camera, microphone, and an internet connection.

The exam measures an individual's knowledge of, and skills in, Multisensory Structured Language Education and verifies that the individual has achieved the highest level of competency in the field of dyslexia education. Eight standards are evaluated on the exam:

1. Language development
2. Knowledge of structural linguistics
3. Knowledge of dyslexia and related disorders
4. Psycho-educational tests and informal assessments
5. Diagnostic and prescriptive MSL strategies to improve reading, spelling, and written expression
6. Federal laws which guide professional conduct and advocacy for students
7. Ethical standards of the profession
8. Effective oral and written communication with colleagues, parents, students, and other professionals

To schedule an appointment, please visit prometric.com/ALTA.

Testing Accommodations

Testing Accommodation Solutions enable test takers an equal and fair chance to sit for an exam regardless of a recognized disability or challenge.

If you require testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or other accommodations, please contact the ALTA office.

Candidates seeking testing accommodations must have a diagnosis and supporting documentation from a health care provider. The health care provider who made the diagnosis, or who is treating you, must document the nature of the disability or illness on their portion of the packet and provide their signature. This documentation will help us determine the appropriate testing accommodations.

Generally, at least 30 days advanced notice is required to arrange testing accommodations and there is no additional charge to candidates.

Related Links:

[List of Accommodations](#)

[Accommodation Request Packet](#)

[Accommodation for Breastfeeding Candidates](#)

Canceling or Rescheduling

30 or more days before your scheduled appointment, you can reschedule the testing date without being charged. If you choose to change your appointment date and time within 5- 29 days before your scheduled appointment, there is a \$40.57 reschedule fee. No reschedules are allowed within five days of your appointment date.

To Reschedule/Cancel

[Test Center Exam](#)

[Remote Proctored Exam](#)

Testing fees are generally non-refundable and non-transferable. In extremely limited situations, such as death of the candidate or accidentally signing up for the examination twice for the same date and time, refunds will be considered.

Please contact the ALTA office at office@altaread.org to assist with processing these requests.

PREPARING FOR THE ALTA EXAM

CALP

The CALP exam is comprised of **50** questions. You are given two hours to complete the exam, from start to finish. If you are taking the exam remotely proctored, we recommend allowing yourself three hours for the exam as the first hour will be used to check in, test equipment, etc. The passing score for the CALP exam is **70%**.

CALT

The CALT exam is comprised of **75** questions. You are given two hours to complete the exam, from start to finish. If you are taking the exam remotely proctored, we recommend allowing yourself three hours for the exam as the first hour will be used to check in, test equipment, etc. A passing score for the CALT exam is **76%**.

CALT Study Guide

This purpose of the study guide is to support candidates as they prepare to take the CALT Exam. This guide is comprised of the following three sections:

1. **ALTA Testing Specifications:** The CALT exam measures an individual's knowledge of and skills in Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE). The test specifications include eight domains, each with a different percentage weight, that total 100%.
2. **ALTA Exam Sample Questions:** There are 10 sample questions representing each of the eight domains. Since Domain 2 is weighted 30% and has the largest number of test specifications, there are 3 sample questions for this domain and one question for each of the other 7 domains. The sample questions illustrate the multiple-choice format that is used on the CALT exam. Following the 10 sample questions, there is an answer sheet that includes the rationale for the correct answer as well as the related test specification.
3. **ALTA Exam References:** In order to guide the development of test questions, writers and reviewers used many of the professional references included in this document. While this is not an exhaustive list, candidates may want to use some of these references to help them study and prepare for the exam.

PREPARE FOR TEST DAY

Overview

Many test takers' livelihoods, professional advancement, and professional development depend on the results of the exams they take. Add to that the time and money investment that test takers make to prepare themselves for the test experience. Between study materials, coursework, the cost of the exam itself – and the fact that their careers may depend on how they perform, we realize that taking a test can be stressful and anxiety-producing.

ALTA is committed to being forthcoming and transparent about what you can expect on the day of your exam with Prometric to help minimize your anxiety. We understand that the more you know about what to expect, the more confident and comfortable you'll be on exam day; and the better you'll perform!

What to Expect on Test Day

Watch the step-by-step videos for more on what to expect during your testing appointment.

[ProProctor](#)
[Test Center](#)

What to Bring to the Testing Center

You will be required to present one valid, government-issued photo ID with a signature (e.g., driver's license or passport). If you are testing outside your country of citizenship, you must present a valid passport. If you are testing within your country of citizenship, you must present either a valid passport, driver's license, national ID, or military ID. The identification document must be in Latin characters and contain your photograph and signature. All other personal items must be locked in a locker for test security purposes, so please limit what you bring to the testing center.

Related Links: [Test Center Regulations](#)

Arrival

Plan to arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment to allow time for check-in procedures. If you are late in arriving, you will not be allowed to test and will forfeit your exam fee.

Check-In

Prometric takes their role of providing a secure test environment seriously. During the check-in process, they inspect any and all eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories to look for camera devices that could be used to capture exam content.

You will be required to remove your eyeglasses for close visual inspection. These inspections will take a few seconds and will be done at check-in and again upon return from breaks before you enter the testing room to ensure you do not violate any security protocol.

Personal Belongings

Jewelry outside of wedding and engagement rings is prohibited. Please do not wear other jewelry to the test center. Hair accessories and ties are subject to inspection. Please refrain from using ornate clips, combs, barrettes, headbands, tie clips, cuff links and other hair accessories as you may be prohibited from wearing them into the testing room and asked to store them in your locker. Violation of security protocol may result in the confiscation of prohibited devices and termination of your exam.

Related Link: [Permissible Items](#)

Equipment

Remote-Proctor

If you have scheduled to complete your exam remotely proctored, you must have a computer with a camera, microphone, and an internet connection. You may not complete your assessment on a tablet or other device as it is not compatible with the exam platform.

Exam Session

Breaks

As Prometric continues to enhance security controls for their global network of test centers, they have implemented candidate-friendly reminders that will help you better understand what you can do during your breaks, depending on the exam you are taking. In test centers, you will notice signage to assist you with this information pictured below.



It is important for you to take note of the color-coding designations because, prior to your computer check-in process, a color tag will be attached to your locker key. It will serve as a visual reminder of the permissible activities during your breaks, such as having access to your locker, food, beverages, and medication.

For more information about any modified test center procedures, please click [here](#).

Check-Out

Don't forget to check in with your proctor once you have concluded your exam.

Related Link: [Prometric Exam FAQ](#)

AFTER EXAM

Exam Results

You will receive your score immediately following the exam. ALTA receives this information about a week after you have concluded.

ALTA Exam Certificate

Once the ALTA Office receives your passing exam information, they will update the new perspective ALTA Membership status, prepare a certificate, and notify you of the changes via email. Please allow 14-21 business days to receive your certificate in the mail.

Exam Retakes

You are permitted to retake as many times as you wish within a one-year period. Note that for each retake, there will be a fee. Please check the website to get current rates. If you wish to retake your exam, please request by contacting office@altaread.org.

REFERENCES

Approved CALP Test Specifications

Domain 1: Language Development

1.A	Normative oral language development and its relationship to literacy development
1.B	Instructional approaches for those not progressing through typical stages of literacy development
1.C	Relevance of phonological processing, and its individual components, to reading development (e.g., phonological awareness [includes phonemic awareness], phonological working memory, naming speed/retrieval)

Domain 2: Structural Linguistics

2.A	Phonology
2.A.1	Continuum of phonological skills from word awareness to manipulation
2.A.2	Difference between phonemes and graphemes
2.A.3	Difference between phonemes and morphemes
2.A.4	Relationship between phonemic awareness and reading (decoding)
2.A.5	Relationship between phonemic awareness and spelling (encoding)
2.A.6	Articulatory features (e.g., voicing and the position of mouth, tongue, teeth, lips during production of individual phonemes) and how they correspond to distinguishing between vowel and consonant sounds
2.B	Alphabetic Principle
2.B.1	The alphabetic principle, i.e., the concept of how letter(s) represent individual speech sounds and are sequenced to form written language
2.B.2	Letter identification/naming as the foundation of students' learning to read and spell
2.C	Syllables
2.C.1	Definition of a syllable and the relevance of syllables to teaching phonics
2.C.2	Six syllable types (e.g., r-controlled vowels)
2.C.3	Syllable division patterns, rules, and frequency of occurrence (e.g., VC'/CV)
2.C.4	Situation(s) that may influence the sound-symbol relationship (position, accent, adjacent letters, number of syllables, syllable type)

2.C.5	Accent placement generalizations and the way accents affect pronunciation, meaning, and function of a word
2.D	Morphology and orthography
2.D.1	Base words, affixes, and derivatives
2.D.2	The impact affixes (i.e., prefixes and suffixes) have on word meaning and part of speech
2.D.3	Rules governing the addition of affixes to words (just add, doubling, dropping, changing, assimilated prefixes, etc.)
2.D.4	Word origins (e.g., Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and Greek) and their effect on reading, spelling, meaning, and pronunciation
2.E	Syntax and sentence structure
2.E.1	Grammatical structure of language and the parts of speech
2.E.2	Basic grammar rules in written expression
2.E.3	Significance of punctuation in sentences and paragraphs and its importance to prosody and meaning
2.E.4	Word order and its influence on meaning
2.F	Semantics and pragmatics
2.F.1	Importance of vocabulary development (e.g., synonyms, analogies, multiple-meaning words, figurative language)
2.F.2	Terms related to comprehension (e.g., inferencing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, predicting, making connections, analyzing)
2.F.3	Instructional strategies to engage metacognition and other techniques for teaching comprehension (e.g., KWL charts, graphic organizers, asking ourselves questions as we read, annotating)
2.G	Nature of written language
2.G.1	Graphic presentation of cursive and manuscript letters, including formation (e.g., sizes and positions in relation to lines, space, and other letters)
2.G.2	Physical mechanics of writing (e.g., pencil grip, height at table, posture)
2.G.3	Reasons for teaching cursive to students with dyslexia

Domain 3: Dyslexia and Related Disorders

3.A	Definition of dyslexia
3.B	Reasons for instructional approaches for students with dyslexia
3.C	Brain anatomy and function involved in the reading process for both typical readers and students with dyslexia
3.D	Behavioral, social and/or emotional issues related to dyslexia
3.E	Comorbid disorders including specific learning disorders, processing disorders, speech-language disorders, and AD/HD

3.F	History of the field of dyslexia
3.G	Current research related to dyslexia and related disorders

Domain 4: Formal and Informal Assessments and Test Data

4.A	Essential components included in a dyslexia evaluation (e.g., phonological skills, spelling, alphabet knowledge, sight word fluency, decoding)
4.B	Characteristics and uses of formal and informal assessment instruments
4.C	Error analysis for reading, spelling, and written expression

Domain 5: Multisensory Structured Language Education Strategies

5.A	Simultaneous multisensory visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile (VAKT) strategies
5.B	Features of systematic and cumulative instruction in reading, spelling, and written expression
5.C	Differences between synthetic and analytic instruction to improve reading, spelling, and written expression
5.D	Characteristics and application of direct, explicit instruction
5.E	Importance of accurate decoding and how that leads to improved fluency and comprehension
5.F	Relevance of automaticity to literacy (e.g., phonemic awareness, reading, spelling, handwriting, fluency, comprehension)
5.G	Importance of adjusting instruction based on needs and progress
5.H	Appropriate learning environments for MSLE instruction
5.I.	Theoretical models and how they relate to MSLE instruction (e.g., Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's rope)

Domain 6: Federal Laws That Govern Professional Conduct and Advocacy for Students

6.A	Federal laws related to dyslexia (e.g., ADA, IDEA)
6.B	Accommodations to support instruction and testing

Domain 7: Ethical Standards for the Profession

7.A	ALTA Code of Ethics [www.altaread.org]
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Domain 8: Ethical Standards for the Profession

8.A	Mechanics and language usage in professional written and verbal communication regarding students
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Approved CALT Test Specifications

Domain 1: Demonstrate knowledge of language development, 15%

1.A	Sequence the continuum of language skills from oral to written
1.B	Use terms related to receptive oral language development appropriately
1.C	Use terms related to expressive oral language development appropriately
1.D	Describe stages of receptive oral language development
1.E	Describe stages of expressive oral language development
1.F	Use terms related to receptive written language development appropriately
1.G	Use terms related to expressive written language development appropriately
1.H	Describe stages of receptive written language development (reading and listening)
1.I	Describe stages of expressive written language development (spelling, writing)
1.J	Identify appropriate remediation instruction for those not progressing through typical stages (reading, writing)
1.K	Identify the similarities and differences between oral and written language development
1.L	Differentiate terms related to phonological processing: (a) phonological awareness [includes phonemic awareness], (b) phonological working memory, and (c) naming speed/retrieval
1.M	Explain the importance of phonological processing to oral and written language acquisition
1.N	Explain research regarding language development

Domain 2: Demonstrate basic knowledge of structural linguistics, 30%

2.A	Apply understanding of phonology
2.A.1	Sequence the continuum of phonological skills from word awareness to manipulation
2.A.2	Analyze words by segmenting and blending to create a new word as a result of manipulation
2.A.3	Differentiate between phonemes and graphemes in written words
2.A.4	Explain the difference between phonemes and morphemes
2.A.5	Describe the relationship between phonemic awareness and reading and spelling
2.A.6	Explain the way the relationship between phonemic awareness and reading/spelling changes over time
2.A.7	Demonstrate knowledge of articulatory gestures: the position of mouth, tongue, teeth, and lips during speech production
2.B	Apply understanding of alphabetic principle

2.B.1	Define terminology related to letter and/or sound recognition
2.B.2	Explain the relevance of rapid word recognition (sight words) to comprehension
2.B.3	Sequence the stages of decoding that lead to fluency
2.C	Apply understanding of syllables
2.C.1	Demonstrate syllable division patterns by segmenting words into syllables
2.C.2	Identify six syllable types (e.g., r-controlled vowels)
2.C.3	Explain the relevance of syllables to teaching phonics
2.C.4	Identify accent placement generalizations and the way accents affect pronunciation, meaning and function of a word
2.C.5	Identify the situation(s) that influence the sound-symbol relationship (position, accent, adjacent letters, number of syllables)
2.D	Apply understanding of morphology and orthography
2.D.1	Sequence events that correlate with the development of the English language
2.D.2	Demonstrate the way affixes can impact word meaning and part of speech
2.D.3	Define and use roots and affixes
2.D.4	Demonstrate the rules governing the affixing of words (doubling, dropping, changing, assimilated prefixes, just add, etc.)
2.D.5	Explain how a word's origin affects its spelling, meaning and pronunciation
2.E	Apply understanding of syntax and sentence structure
2.E.1	Demonstrate the grammatical structure of language
2.E.2	Demonstrate the basic grammar rules in written expression
2.E.3	Explain the significance of punctuation in sentences and paragraphs
2.E.4	Demonstrate the way word order influences meaning
2.F	Apply understanding of semantics and pragmatics
2.F.1	Use terms correctly that are necessary to teach and learn semantics
2.F.2	Use terms correctly that are necessary to teach and learn pragmatics
2.F.3	Describe instructional strategies and techniques for teaching semantics
2.F.4	Describe instructional strategies and techniques for teaching pragmatics
2.F.5	Identify terms related to comprehension (making inferences, summarizing, etc.)
2.F.6	Describe instructional strategies and techniques for teaching comprehension
2.F.7	Demonstrate the progression of comprehension skills (words to sentences to paragraphs)
2.F.8	Identify text structures (chronological, compare/contrast, etc.)
2.F.9	Describe the challenges with semantics that a student with language disabilities may encounter
2.F.10	Describe the challenges with pragmatics that a student with language disabilities may encounter
2.F.11	Describe the connection between oral reading fluency and comprehension
2.G	Apply understanding of the nature of written language
2.G.1	Describe the stages of handwriting using appropriate handwriting terminology

2.G.2	Explain the relationship between handwriting skills and expressive writing using appropriate handwriting terminology
2.G.3	Demonstrate appropriate letter formation for cursive and manuscript
2.G.4	Use terms related to composition (e.g., examples of literary devices, steps in the writing process)
2.G.5	Identify text structures (chronological order, cause/effect, etc.) and genres (realistic fiction, narrative nonfiction, etc.)
2.G.6	Demonstrate knowledge of instructional strategies and techniques for teaching informal and formal expressive written language
2.G.7	Explain research regarding structural linguistics

Domain 3: Demonstrate knowledge of dyslexia and related disorders, 15%

3.A	Define dyslexia
3.B	Discuss the impact of dyslexia on instructional decisions
3.C	Identify brain anatomy and function involved in the reading process
3.D	Discuss the neurological aspects of learning disabilities
3.E	Identify the behavioral, social and/or emotional issues related to dyslexia
3.F	Compare comorbid disorders including all specific learning disorders, processing disorders, speech-language disorders, and AD/HD
3.G	Identify historical pioneers in the field of learning disabilities and dyslexia
3.H	Describe research related to dyslexia and related disorders
3.I	Explain the relationship between executive function and dyslexia

Domain 4: Interpret psychoeducational test data and administer informal assessments, 10%

4.A	Use essential assessment terminology to discuss the purposes of formal and informal assessments (CBM, criterion referenced, normed, standardized, etc.)
4.B	Identify the essential components to be included in a dyslexia evaluation (phonological skills, etc.)
4.C	Identify the relevance of informal assessment tools for dyslexia and related disorders
4.D	Identify characteristics and uses of formal and informal assessment instruments
4.E	Use essential assessment terminology to describe types and characteristics of psychoeducational tests (standard scores, stanines, etc.)
4.F	Interpret and use test results to provide appropriate services
4.G	Conduct error analyses for reading, spelling, and written expression (work samples)
4.H	Apply understanding of psychoeducational research

Domain 5: Use diagnostic and prescriptive Multisensory Structured Language Education strategies to improve reading, spelling and written expression, 15%

5.A	Identify simultaneous multisensory visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile (VAKT) strategies
5.B	Describe features of systematic and cumulative instruction in reading, spelling and written expression
5.C	Differentiate between synthetic and analytic instruction to improve reading, spelling and written expression
5.D	Differentiate between examples of direct and indirect instruction to improve reading, spelling and written expression
5.E	Define the importance of automaticity in literacy development (reading, spelling, PA, handwriting, etc.)
5.F	Define diagnostic teaching and identify its role in instruction
5.G	List the necessary content and principles of Multisensory Structured Language Education programs
5.H	Discuss the purpose of metacognition
5.I.	Describe appropriate learning environments for Multisensory Structured Language Education instruction
5.J	Demonstrate understanding of theoretical models and how they relate to Multisensory Structured Language Education instruction (simple view of reading, Scarborough's rope, etc.)

Domain 6: Use federal laws to guide professional conduct and advocacy for students, 5%

6.A	Identify the differences among federal laws related to disabilities
6.B	Describe professional conduct and advocacy using terminology related to IDEA, §504 and/or ADA
6.C	Describe the federal eligibility guidelines for §504, ADA and/or IDEA
6.D	Interpret documentation and data regarding §504 and IDEA to provide guidance for educational decisions
6.E	Recommend appropriate accommodations to support instruction and testing
6.F	Describe historical development of laws related to disabilities

Domain 7: Follow ethical standards for the profession, 5%

7.A	Demonstrate knowledge of the ALTA Code of Ethics [www.altaread.org]
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Domain 8: Demonstrate effective oral and written communication with colleagues, parents, students, and other professionals, 5%

8.A	Evaluate professional, comprehensive written student reports (from sample report)
8.B	Evaluate word choices (orally and in text) for describing student strengths and weaknesses (examples)
8.C	Evaluate examples of appropriate and inappropriate communication with parents, students, and colleagues

ALTA Study Guide Sample Questions – CALP

(Note: the answers to these questions can be found beginning on page 22)

1 Question Text:

Which of the following is an expressive oral language skill?

- A Speaking
- B Listening
- C Reading
- D Spelling

2 Question Text:

Mastery learning occurs when a

Options

- A student is performing on grade level
- B student has passed a criterion referenced formal evaluation
- C student performs the task automatically and accurately on a consistent basis
- D student has been exposed to all curriculum information and performs a task accurately

3 Question Text:

Which of the following is the best example of multisensory instruction?

Options

- A Tracing a letter shape on sandpaper
- B Writing the letter three times on paper
- C Naming the letter seen on the paper
- D Tracing and naming a letter shape on sandpaper

4 Question Text:

The ability to respond or react without attention or conscious effort is referred to as

Options

- A Automaticity
- B Multisensory
- C Systematic
- D Cumulative

5 Question Text:

An open syllable ends with a

Options

- A suffix
- B silent e
- C vowel
- D consonant

6 Question Text:

In MSL teaching, the term synthesis means

Options

- A arbitrary learning
- B recognition of whole words
- C part to whole
- D inductive reasoning

7 Question Text:

The amendment to Public Law 94-142 (1975) passed in 1997 and known as IDEA states that

Options

- A all handicapped children have the right to free, appropriate education
- B ESL students are entitled to private schools
- C Chapter One funds will be used for intensive phonics instruction
- D juvenile delinquents must be offered alternative, appropriate education

8 Question Text:

An affix is added to

Options

- A the end of a base word
- B the end of a derivative
- C the beginning or end of a base word
- D the beginning or end of a derivative

9 Question Text:

Which sounds within a word are the most difficult for students to manipulate?

Options

- A initial
- B Medial
- C Final
- D I, M, and Final are equally difficult to manipulate

10 Question Text:

Which of the following assessment methods compares a child's achievement to that of children in a normed sample?

Options

- A Observation
- B Standardized test
- C Criterion-referenced test
- D Case history

ALTA Study Guide Sample Questions & Answers - CALP

1 Question Text:

Which of the following is an expressive oral language skill?

- A Speaking
- B Listening
- C Reading
- D Spelling

The correct answer is A.

Answer Rationale:

Oral language can be receptive or expressive. Receptive language includes the words a child hears and (later) reads. Expressive language refers to the words a child speaks and (later) writes.

2 Question Text:

Mastery learning occurs when a

Options

- A student is performing on grade level
- B student has passed a criterion referenced formal evaluation
- C student performs the task automatically and accurately on a consistent basis
- D student has been exposed to all curriculum information and performs a task accurately

The correct answer is C.

Answer Rationale:

The ease and automaticity with which a skilled reader is able to read individual words is known as instant word recognition. Instant word recognition is achieved by repeated encounters with words and by over learning (i.e., learning to automaticity) the orthographic and phonological patterns of language. The ultimate goal of decoding instruction is the immediate, facile,

translation of a printed word into its spoken equivalent.

Automaticity with this translation has a significant impact on the reader's attitude toward reading.... word recognition makes reading effortless, and reading becomes enjoyable.

3 Question Text:

Which of the following is the best example of multisensory instruction?

Options

- A Tracing a letter shape on sandpaper
- B Writing the letter three times on paper
- C Naming the letter seen on the paper
- D Tracing and naming a letter shape on sandpaper

The correct answer is D.

Answer Rationale:

Another area of study that supports the effectiveness of multisensory instructional strategies is the research on Triple Word Form Theory (TWFT), based on phonology - orthography - morphology integration. In their review of interdisciplinary research studies and literature that continues to accumulate, Richards and colleagues found compelling empirical support for TWFT. Evidence demonstrates the cross-coded integration is critical during the earliest ages and grades during which children learn to spell and read... in order to develop greater efficiency and automaticity, teaching based on TWFT principles intentionally includes activities requiring integration of phonological, orthographic, and morphological processing, which requires integration of auditory and kinesthetic motor regions (phonological system), visual regions (orthographic system), and Wernicke's area of the brain (where language comprehension occurs). Simultaneous multisensory instruction purposefully integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-motor (for speech and writing) pathways to support memory and learning of both oral and written language skills.

4 Question Text:

The ability to respond or react without attention or conscious effort is referred to as

Options

- A Automaticity
- B Multisensory

C Systematic

D Cumulative

The correct answer is A.

Answer Rationale:

Automaticity is the ability to respond or react without attention or conscious effort.

5 Question Text:

An open syllable ends with a

Options

A suffix

B silent e

C vowel

D consonant

The correct answer is C.

Answer Rationale:

An open syllable ends in one vowel. The vowel in an open, accented syllable is long.

6 Question Text:

In MSL teaching, the term synthesis means

Options

A arbitrary learning

B recognition of whole words

C part to whole

D inductive reasoning

The correct answer is C.

Answer Rationale:

Synthetic instruction presents parts of the language and teaches how the parts work together to form a whole; synthetic instruction is deductive.

7 Question Text:

The amendment to Public Law 94-142 (1975) passed in 1997 and known as IDEA states that

Options

- A all handicapped children have the right to free, appropriate education
- B ESL students are entitled to private schools
- C Chapter One funds will be used for intensive phonics instruction
- D juvenile delinquents must be offered alternative, appropriate education

The correct answer is A.

Answer Rationale:

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), enacted in 1975 and then updated as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990 and updated again in 2004, is designed to ensure that grade-school and secondary-school students with a disability are provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) tailored to their individual needs.

8 Question Text:

An affix is added to

Options

- A the end of a base word
- B the end of a derivative
- C the beginning or end of a base word
- D the beginning or end of a derivative

The correct answer is C.

Answer Rationale:

An affix is a letter or group of letters attached to the beginning or ending of a base word or root that creates a derivative with a meaning or grammatical form that is different than the base word or root.

9 Question Text:

Which sounds within a word are the most difficult for students to manipulate?

Options

- A initial
- B Medial
- C Final
- D I, M, and Final are equally difficult to manipulate

The correct answer is B.

Answer Rationale:

Once a child is successful at matching sounds, he is ready for the more difficult task of pulling apart words: first the beginnings, then the endings, and then the middle sounds.

10 Question Text:

Which of the following assessment methods compares a child's achievement to that of children in a normed sample?

Options

- A Observation
- B Standardized test
- C Criterion-referenced test
- D Case history

The correct answer is B.

Answer Rationale:

Norm-referenced assessments or tests are assessments of performance in relation to that of the norm group (cohort) used in the standardization of the test. Norm-referenced tests produce scores that permit comparisons between a student and other children of the same age or grade level. All norm-referenced tests are standardized.

ALTA Study Guide Sample Questions – CALT

(Note: the answers to these questions can be found beginning on page 31)

1 Question:

Which of the following consonant phonemes require the use of the lips for articulation?

E /sh/, /y/, and /n/

F /p/, /m/, and /f/

G /th/, /d/, and /s/

H /k/, /ng/, and /h/

2 Question:

A middle school student is unfamiliar with the meaning of the word *anthropomorphic*. What linguistic knowledge would best enable the student to understand this word?

A phonemic awareness

B phonics

C syllable division

D morphology

3 Question:

What is the rationale for teaching pragmatics through the use of oral language to prepare students to comprehend text?

Options

- A The physical and environmental cues used to understand oral language are the same for written language.
- B Teaching pragmatics through oral language may positively impact a student's decoding and encoding abilities.
- C The function, content, and structure aspects of oral language are the same for written language.
- D Teaching pragmatics through oral language may positively impact a student's understanding of implied meaning in written language.

4 Question:

In addition to phonological processing, which of the following is an essential component of an effective evaluation for dyslexia?

Options

- A Intelligence
- B visual processing
- C math skills
- D Spelling

5 Question:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, enacted in 1975 as PL 94-142, was updated in 1990 and reauthorized in 2004. Under IDEA, “Specific Learning Disability” is an identifiable category of disability with eight academic domains. Dyslexia is included as one condition under the SLD umbrella ensuring which of the following for students with an identification under IDEA:

Options

- A a 504 Plan
- B eligibility for special education and related services
- C reevaluation before a significant change in placement
- D protection under civil rights law

6 Question:

The component of phonological processing that includes the skills of word retrieval from long-term memory and word recoding and has a strong impact on reading fluency is phonological _____.

Options

- A memory
- B awareness
- C naming
- D sensitivity

7 Question:

Which subtype of executive function that includes the capabilities of processing, storage, and retrieval impacts the decoding difficulty seen with dyslexia?

Options

- A metacognition
- B working memory
- C inhibitory control
- D cognitive flexibility

8 Question:

Which of the following factors interrelate to affect overall reading comprehension achievement?

Options

- A vocabulary and oral expression
- B language comprehension and decoding
- C phonological awareness and expressive language
- D spelling and syntax

9 Question:

What steps should an academic language therapist take if a local school district reaches out requesting the records of a former student?

Options:

- A Receive written consent from the adult student, or from the parent or legal guardian of the minor student.
- B Give the records to the school district.
- C Contact the school and request why they need the records.
- D Determine if the school is trustworthy before giving them the records.

10 Question

How can the following communication between an Academic Language Therapist and a teacher be revised and improved?

Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her and she does not attempt to read unfamiliar words on her own and she looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know."

Options

- A Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her. However, she does not attempt to read unfamiliar words on her own. Instead, she looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know."
- B Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her, but often she just looks acts frustrated and says, "I don't know."
- C Melissa could read 2nd grade level text if she were not so stubborn. Instead, she just looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know." She can understand text if it is read to her.
- D Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text if it is read to her. She could understand the same text she reads by herself if she didn't give up and look at the teacher and says, "I don't know."

ALTA Study Guide Sample Questions & Answers - CALT

1 Question:

Which of the following consonant phonemes require the use of the lips for articulation?

- A /sh/, /y/, and /n/
- B /p/, /m/, and /f/
- C /th/, /d/, and /s/
- D /k/, /ng/, and /h/

The correct answer is B.

Answer rationale:

/p/ is a bilabial stop; /m/ is a bilabial nasal; /f/ is a labiodental fricative. All three require the lips to produce.

Test Spec: 2.A.7

Demonstrate basic knowledge of structural linguistics. Apply understanding of phonology. Demonstrate knowledge of articulatory gestures: the position of the mouth, tongue, teeth, and lips during speech production.

2 Question:

A middle school student is unfamiliar with the meaning of the word *anthropomorphic*. What linguistic knowledge would best enable the student to understand this word?

- A phonemic awareness
- B phonics
- C syllable division
- D morphology

The correct answer is D.

Answer Rationale:

If a student recognizes the Greek combining forms (morphemes) *anthropo*, *morph*, and the adjectival suffix *ic*, the word is not only easily decoded, but the student also has an educated guess as to its pronunciation, meaning and usage.

Test Spec: 2.D.5

Demonstrate basic knowledge of structural linguistics. Apply understanding of morphology and orthography.

Explain how a word's origin affects its spelling, meaning and pronunciation.

3 Question:

What is the rationale for teaching pragmatics through the use of oral language to prepare students to comprehend text?

Options

- A The physical and environmental cues used to understand oral language are the same for written language.
- B Teaching pragmatics through oral language may positively impact a student's decoding and encoding abilities.
- C The function, content, and structure aspects of oral language are the same for written language.
- D Teaching pragmatics through oral language may positively impact a student's understanding of implied meaning in written language.

The correct answer is D.

Answer Rationale:

If one has difficulty understanding implied meaning in conversation given physical cues, he will have even more difficulty with this in written form with no such cues.

Test Spec: 2.F.10

Demonstrate basic knowledge of structural linguistics. Apply understanding of semantics and pragmatics.

Describe the challenges with pragmatics that a student with language disabilities may encounter.

4 Question:

In addition to phonological processing, which of the following is an essential component of an effective evaluation for dyslexia?

Options

- A intelligence
- B visual processing
- C math skills
- D spelling

The correct answer is D.

Answer Rationale:

Spelling is an essential component and a dyslexia related area of difficulty.

Test Spec: 4.B

Interpret psychoeducational test data and administer informal assessments. Identify the essential components to be included in a dyslexia evaluation (phonological skills, etc.)

5 Question:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, enacted in 1975 as PL 94-142, was updated in 1990 and reauthorized in 2004. Under IDEA, “Specific Learning Disability” is an identifiable category of disability with eight academic domains. Dyslexia is included as one condition under the SLD umbrella ensuring which of the following for students with an identification under IDEA:

Options

- A a 504 Plan
- B eligibility for special education and related services
- C reevaluation before a significant change in placement
- D protection under civil rights law

The correct answer is B.

Answer Rationale:

A, C, and D are intended for students under Section 504.

Test Spec: 6.F

Use federal laws to guide professional conduct and advocacy for students.

Describe historical development of laws related to disabilities.

6 Question:

The component of phonological processing that includes the skills of word retrieval from long-term memory and word recoding and has a strong impact on reading fluency is phonological _____.

Options

A memory

B awareness

C naming

D sensitivity

The correct answer is C.

Answer Rationale:

Rapid automatic naming is important for the development of reading fluency and affects reading comprehension.

Test Spec: 1.L

Demonstrate knowledge of language development.

Differentiate terms related to phonological processing: (a) phonological awareness [includes phonemic awareness], (b) phonological working memory, and (c) naming speed/retrieval.

- 7 Question:**
Which subtype of executive function that includes the capabilities of processing, storage, and retrieval impacts the decoding difficulty seen with dyslexia?

Options

- A metacognition
- B working memory
- C inhibitory control
- D cognitive flexibility

The correct answer is B.

Answer Rationale:

Working memory is the process of holding on to (i.e., short term memory) and manipulating information.

Test Spec: 3.I

Demonstrate knowledge of dyslexia and related disorders.
Explain the relationship between executive function and dyslexia

8 Question:

Which of the following factors interrelate to affect overall reading comprehension achievement?

Options

- A vocabulary and oral expression
- B language comprehension and decoding
- C phonological awareness and expressive language
- D spelling and syntax

The correct answer is B.

Answer Rationale:

According to Gough and Tunmer, language comprehension and decoding skills are the two components in the simple view of reading that work together to develop a student's overall reading comprehension achievement.

Test Spec: 5.J

Use diagnostic and prescriptive Multisensory Structured Language Education / Structured Literacy strategies to improve reading, spelling and written expression.

Demonstrate understanding of theoretical models and how they relate to Multisensory Structured Language Education / Structured Literacy instruction (simple view of reading, Scarborough's rope, etc.).

9 Question:

What steps should an academic language therapist take if a local school district reaches out requesting the records of a former student?

Options:

- A Receive written consent from the adult student, or from the parent or legal guardian of the minor student.
- B Give the records to the school district.
- C Contact the school and request why they need the records.
- D Determine if the school is trustworthy before giving them the records.

The correct answer is A.

Answer Rationale:

Maintain strictly confidential student records in accordance with the highest professional integrity and release this information only under the following circumstances; when required by law; with written consent from the adult student, or from the parent(s), legal guardian(s), or caretaker(s) of the minor student; when there is clear and imminent danger to the student, another individual, or society.

Test Spec: 7.A

Follow ethical standards for the profession.

Demonstrate knowledge of the ALTA Code of Ethics [www.altaread.org]

10 Question

How can the following communication between an Academic Language Therapist and a teacher be revised and improved?

Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her and she does not attempt to read unfamiliar words on her own and she looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know."

Options

- A** Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her. However, she does not attempt to read unfamiliar words on her own. Instead, she looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know."
- B** Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text that is read to her, but often she just looks acts frustrated and says, "I don't know."
- C** Melissa could read 2nd grade level text if she were not so stubborn. Instead, she just looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know." She can understand text if it is read to her.
- D** Melissa can understand 2nd grade level text if it is read to her. She could understand the same text she reads by herself if she didn't give up and look at the teacher and says, "I don't know."

The correct answer is A.

Answer Rationale:

The revision includes conjunctions (however, instead) that build cohesion in describing Melissa's reading behaviors.

Test Spec: 8.B

Demonstrate effective oral and written communication with colleagues, parents, students, and other professionals.

Evaluate word choices (orally and in text) for describing student strengths and weaknesses (examples)

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