NCLB Paraeducator Competency Test
Study Guide:
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EGUSD
Why should you use the NCLB Paraeducator Competency Test Study Guide? The study guide will give you examples of the most commonly missed questions on the test, and it will give you the instructions for working through some of the questions. Included with the Study Guide is a worksheet to practice what you’ve learned.

Here are a few tips to help you succeed on the Competency Test:

- Read all directions and questions carefully and completely.
- Pick the single best answer. All multiple-choice questions have four answer choices. There are no “trick” questions.
- Answer every question. If you get stuck on a question, move on. Complete the rest of the test, and then come back to the questions you skipped. Eliminate the responses that you know are wrong, and pick the best remaining answer. Even if you are unsure, mark a response for every question because you will not be penalized for wrong answers.

If you need additional help, test preparation classes are offered through the Elk Grove Adult and Community Education. For more information, please call 916.686.7717.

We wish you much success as you work through this guide and prepare for the Competency Test.
Prefix

- A prefix is a group of letters added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning. Some common prefixes include:

  - ab - away from
  - be - on all sides, overly
  - de - reversal, undoing, downward
  - dis / dif - not, reversal
  - ex - out of, former
  - pre - before
  - re - again, restore
  - un - do the opposite of
  - ad - to, toward
  - com / con / co - with, together
  - en / em - in, into, to cover or contain
  - in - into, not
  - pro - in favor of, before
  - sub - under, beneath
A suffix is a group of letters added to the ending of a word to change its meaning and sometimes change its spelling. Some common suffixes are:

- *-ing* verb form
- *-ly* characteristic of
- *-er, -or* person connected with
- *-ion, -tion, -ation, ition* act, process
- *-ible, -able* can be done
- *-al, -ial* having characteristics of
- *-ness* state of, condition of
- *-ty, -ty* state of
- *-ment* action or process
- *-ic* having characteristics of
- *-ous, -eous, -ious* possessing the qualities of
- *-en* made of
- *-er* comparative
- *-ive, -ative, -itive* adjective form of a noun
- *-ful* full of
- *-less* without
- *-est* comparative
Apostrophe

- Use an apostrophe to indicate the missing letter in contractions.

  Should not = shouldn’t
  Do not = don’t
  I will = I’ll
Possessive

- **RULE 1:** Make a singular noun possessive by adding an apostrophe and “s.”
  
  - man = man’s
  - Sharon = Sharon’s

- **RULE 2:** Make a plural noun that ends in “s” possessive by adding an apostrophe after the “s.”
  
  - bears = bears’
  - trucks = trucks’

- **RULE 3:** Make a plural noun that does not end in “s” possessive by adding an apostrophe and “s.”
  
  - sheep = sheep’s
  - women = women’s
Semicolon

- A semicolon ( ; ) is “halfway” between a period and a comma. It represents a longer pause than a comma but shorter pause than a period.

**RULE 1** - Use a semicolon to join two related sentences when you do not use a conjunction.

**RULE 2** - Use a comma to join main clauses with the conjunctions and, but, or, nor, for, and yet.
Colon

• A colon (:) is a mark that says to the reader, “Pay attention. Something important is coming.”

RULE 1 - Use a colon before a list of items.
  ▪ We eat these cereals for breakfast: shredded wheat, oatmeal, and cream of wheat.
  ▪ Pat has three children: Ed, Zachary, and Melissa.

RULE 2 - Do not use a colon if the list follows a verb or preposition
  ▪ For breakfast, we eat shredded wheat, oatmeal, or cream of wheat.
  ▪ Pat’s three children are Ed, Zachary, and Melissa.
Sequence

- As a reader, it is up to you to determine the order of events. Clue words like *first, second, later, then, while, before, during, after, and last* can help you.

  - If the author writes in an order that is not chronological, you can still figure out the sequence.

  - Look for clue words such as *before* or *since* or phrases that might signal a flashback event or memory—something that happened in the past.

  **EXAMPLE** - As Jeremy walked through the snow toward the factory, he saw his life as a blur. He clearly remembered the important events *before* his employment as a mill worker—his marriage, the birth of his two beautiful daughters, the ceremony at the college—but the rest of the memories melted together like a fallen palate of paints.
Practice Sheet

DIRECTIONS: Circle the prefix in each of the following words:

1. asexual
2. impart
3. unacceptable
4. dissatisfied
5. return
6. overwrought

DIRECTIONS: Complete the following chart by adding prefixes to roots:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIX</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>ROOT WORD</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>NEW WORD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. circum-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>locution</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. dis-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. in-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>scribe</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. re-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>cover</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. epi-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>graph</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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DIRECTIONS: Choose the word that is not spelled correctly. Spell it correctly on the lines provided:

12. writing aching sorly ____________________________
13. usaeg lying fiercely ____________________________
14. careful nineth duly ____________________________
15. lovable judgment arguement ____________________________

DIRECTIONS: Underline the correct possessive form for each phrase:

16. the suggestion of James
    James’s suggestion    James’s suggestion

17. the colors of the clouds
    clouds’ colors    cloud’s colors

18. the book of Dickens
    Dickens’ Book    Dicken’s book
DIRECTIONS: Read the following items carefully. Add commas, periods, semicolons, and colons where they are needed.

19. During December, January, and February, the Hendersons live in Florida but their main home is in New Hampshire.

20. Rita visited her sister in Houston for a month then she returned to Denver.

21. I read *Moon Mother A Native American Creation Tale* to my second grade class.

22. Jude said that dinner would be served at 7:30 P.M. sharp.

DIRECTIONS: Identify the word in bold in each of the sentences below as either plural or plural possessive. Add an apostrophe if necessary:

23. The **seals** jumped through the rings at the aquarium show. ________________

24. The **boys** father went with them to the soccer game. ________________

25. The **geese** flight pattern is V-shaped. ________________
Practice Answer Sheet

DIRECTIONS: Circle the prefix in each of the following words:

1. asexual  a
2. impart  im
3. unacceptable  un
4. dissatisfied  dis
5. return  re
6. overwrought  over

DIRECTIONS: Complete the following chart by adding prefixes to roots:

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<tr>
<td>9. in-</td>
<td>scribe</td>
<td>inscribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. re-</td>
<td>cover</td>
<td>recover</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. epi-</td>
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DIRECTIONS: Choose the word that is not spelled correctly. Spell it correctly on the lines provided:

12. writing  aching  sorly  sorely
13. usaeg  lying  fiercely  usage
14. careful  nineth  duly  ninth
15. lovable  judgment  arguement  argument

DIRECTIONS: Underline the correct possessive form for each phrase:

16. the suggestion of James
   Jame’s suggestion  James’s suggestion

17. the colors of the clouds
   clouds’ colors  cloud’s colors

18. the book of Dickens
   Dickens’ Book  Dicken’s book
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DIRECTIONS: Identify the word in bold in each of the sentences below as either plural or plural possessive. Add an apostrophe if necessary:

23. The *seals* jumped through the rings at the aquarium show. __plural__

24. The *boys’* father went with them to the soccer game. __plural / possessive__

25. The *geese’s* flight pattern is V-shaped. __plural / possessive__