

## Reading for Virginia Educators: Reading Specialist (5304)

### Test at a Glance

Test Name	<b>Reading for Virginia Educators: Reading Specialist</b>		
Test Code	<b>5304</b>		
Time	<b>3.5 hours</b>		
Number of Questions	<b>100 multiple-choice questions (Part A)</b> <b>1 constructed-response question and 1 case study (Part B)</b>		
Format	<b>Multiple-choice and constructed-response questions</b>		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	<b>Part A: Multiple-choice questions</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75%</b>
	I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching	18	13%
	II. Oral Language and Oral Communication	12	9.5%
	III. Reading Development	40	30%
	IV. Writing and Research	12	9.5%
	V. Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills	18	13%
<b>Part B: Constructed-response questions</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25%</b>	
VI. Analysis and Integration			
A. Analysis of Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills (Constructed-response)	1	10%	
B. Integrated Knowledge and Understanding (Case Study)	1	15%	
Pacing and Special Tips	In allocating time on this assessment, it is expected that approximately 120 minutes will be spent on Part A (the multiple-choice section) and approximately 90 minutes on Part B (about 30 minutes on the constructed-response question and about 60 minutes on the case study). Please note that Parts A and B are not independently timed.		

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## About This Test

The Reading Specialist test is intended primarily for persons who have advanced academic preparation and/or who are being considered for supervisory or instructional positions related to the teaching of reading instruction in grades K–12. The test is most appropriate for candidates with advanced preparation (i.e., those with a master’s degree or course work comparable to the training needed for a master’s degree) who expect to have specialized responsibilities related to the teaching of reading at any level from kindergarten through twelfth grade. It is also appropriate for individuals who wish to be considered for supervisory or instructional positions related to the teaching of reading — those seeking positions as reading clinicians, consultants, supervisors, specialists, coordinators, or resource persons and thus intending to be responsible for more than the teaching of developmental reading in a regular classroom setting.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

## Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

### I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching

- Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students’ language proficiency and reading skills.
  - Distinguish between formal and informal assessment and screening measures to evaluate students’ oral and written language proficiency.
  - Distinguish between formal and informal assessments and screening measures to evaluate emergent readers’ and beginning readers’ knowledge and skills, e.g., concepts of print, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sound-symbol knowledge, single-word recognition, and decoding.
  - Distinguish between formal and informal assessments and screening measures for monitoring the ongoing development of students’ reading skills and strategies, e.g., word-attack skills, vocabulary, word recognition in context, reading fluency, and oral and silent reading comprehension.
- Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction.
  - Describe methods for using assessment data to diagnose the reading needs of, and tailor instruction for, individual students.
  - Describe methods for using diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to accelerate the development of students’ reading skills.
  - Describe methods for using diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to address the needs of students with reading difficulties.
  - Describe the uses of flexible groupings in instruction to address students’ changing reading needs.

## II. Oral Language and Oral Communication

- Understand the development of oral language and oral communication skills.
  - Explain appropriate instructional strategies to promote growth in students' use of oral language, to develop their listening and speaking skills, and to expand their listening and speaking vocabularies.
  - Explain appropriate instructional strategies to build students' oral communication skills, to help students use oral language for different purposes, and to facilitate the use of oral language for critical thinking and creative expression.
  - Explain appropriate instructional strategies to promote students' use of oral and nonverbal communication skills in various settings, including group activities and oral presentations.
  - Explain appropriate instructional strategies to promote student's understanding of oral language structures.
  - Explain appropriate effective methods for facilitating the learning of Standard American English by speakers of other languages and dialects.
  - Explain the relationship between the complex nature of language acquisition and the unique needs of students with language delays and disorders.
  - Explain how to create a learning environment that is respectful of, and responsive to, linguistic and cultural diversity.
- Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness.
  - Describe phonological awareness and effective instructional strategies for promoting students' phonological association skills.
  - Describe phonemic awareness and the role of phonemic awareness in reading development.
  - Differentiate types of phonemic awareness skills, e.g., phoneme isolation, identity, categorization, blending, segmentation, deletion, addition, and substitution.
  - Describe instructional strategies to promote development of phonemic awareness skills by helping students hear, say, and manipulate phonemes in spoken words containing one or more syllables.

### III. Reading Development

- Understand how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles.
  - Describe instructional strategies for helping students learn concepts of print and begin to match voice with print.
  - Describe ways to promote students' automatic recognition of high-frequency sight words.
  - Describe ways to help students recognize and name uppercase and lowercase letters.
  - Describe instructional strategies to promote students' understanding of basic phonetic principles by helping students grasp the alphabetic principle, match consonant sounds and short vowel sounds to appropriate letters, and identify beginning consonant sounds in single-syllable printed words.
  - Explain the relationship between students' invented spellings and their understanding of phonetic principles.
- Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction.
  - Describe basic phonic elements.
  - Describe explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers blend consonant and vowel sounds to decode single-syllable words with regular spellings.
  - Describe explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers recognize common consonant-vowel patterns and apply knowledge of these patterns to read single-syllable words and decode unfamiliar words through analogy with known words containing familiar patterns.
  - Describe explicit instructional strategies for developing and reinforcing students' skills in using phonics to decode multisyllabic words and read words containing consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel combinations, and r-controlled vowels.
- Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development.
  - Describe the way phonics, syntax, and semantics interact as the reader constructs meaning.
  - Describe methods for improving students' reading proficiency by helping students apply word-analysis skills and word-attack strategies.
  - Describe instructional strategies for helping students read unfamiliar multisyllabic words, including compound words, by using syllabication and structural analysis to identify common spelling patterns and morphemes within the word.
  - Describe instructional strategies for helping students use context, including sentence structure as well as meaning clues, to identify unfamiliar words and technical terms, determine the relevant meaning of a word with multiple meanings, and verify the relevant meaning and/or pronunciation of a homonym or homograph.
  - Demonstrate advanced knowledge of instructional strategies for building and extending vocabulary knowledge.
  - Describe instructional strategies for helping students make effective use of a dictionary, thesaurus, glossary, or other word-reference materials to clarify understanding of a word's denotative and connotative meanings.

- Understand the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension.
  - Describe the role and importance of automatic word recognition.
  - Describe instructional strategies for promoting development of students' reading fluency.
  - Differentiate the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, and psychological bases of the reading process and how they influence students' reading comprehension.
  - Differentiate literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension.
  - Describe ways to help students apply comprehension strategies before reading, during reading, and after reading.
  - Explain the importance of independent reading in the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.
  - Explain ways to promote independent reading and family and community involvement in literacy activities.
- Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry.
  - Explain how to select a wide variety of literature at appropriate reading levels to encourage independent and reflective reading and to promote students' comprehension and enjoyment of, and appreciation for, fiction and poetry.
  - Describe instructional strategies to help students comprehend fiction by identifying basic story elements, retelling familiar stories, and making predictions based on information and pictures in the text.
  - Describe different genres and types of literature and use this knowledge to improve students' comprehension.
  - Identify instructional strategies to help students recognize different genres and types of literature.
  - Describe ways to strengthen students' comprehension by developing their literary response and analysis skills.
- Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction.
  - Describe how to select and use a variety of informational, descriptive, and persuasive materials at appropriate reading levels to promote students' comprehension of nonfiction, including content-area texts.
  - Describe instructional strategies to help students distinguish main ideas and supporting details in a nonfiction text and identify the author's purpose.
  - Describe how to use a variety of comprehension strategies to clarify understanding of a text.
  - Describe instructional strategies to promote students' comprehension by helping them identify logical organization and recognize structural patterns in nonfiction text.
  - Describe instructional strategies for helping students locate and use evidence from a nonfiction text to support their predictions, opinions, and conclusions.

#### IV. Writing and Research

- Understand writing skills and processes.
  - Describe writing as a developmental process.
  - Describe how to write in various forms and for various audiences and purposes.
  - Describe strategies for promoting students' writing skills.
  - Describe the recursive stages in the writing process and appropriate strategies for conferencing with students to provide effective feedback during all phases of writing.
  - Describe the characteristics of effective composing.
  - Describe the principles of effective written expression.
  - Describe the interdependence of reading and writing development and the role of writing activities in promoting reading comprehension.

- Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics.
  - Describe spelling as a developmental process.
  - Describe systematic spelling instruction, including strategies for helping students recognize common orthographic patterns and strategies for helping students generalize spelling knowledge by transferring what they learn in spelling lessons to their own writing.
  - Describe appropriate instructional strategies for promoting student's knowledge and use of writing mechanics, including correct usage, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research.
  - Describe ways to promote students' research skills by helping the students apply effective reading techniques and writing techniques to locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of print and electronic sources.
  - Describe how to help students use text organizers to help locate and categorize information.
  - Describe strategies for helping students make effective use of reference materials.
  - Describe how to promote students' skills in using technology, including electronic media, to conduct research and create final products of research.
  - Describe ways to evaluate and select a variety of media resources.

## V. Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills

- Understand specialized knowledge and skills required to perform the role of a reading specialist.
  - Describe the processes involved in language acquisition in order to diagnose reading difficulties.
  - Distinguish types of disabilities and their implications for literacy development and reading instruction.
  - Integrate knowledge of the reading needs of high-achieving students and effective instructional strategies to challenge them at appropriate levels.
  - Integrate knowledge of developmental psychology, including theories of personality and learning behaviors in relation to literacy development.
  - Describe in-depth knowledge of, and respect for, the influence of cultural contexts on language and literacy development.
  - Integrate knowledge of the principles of educational measurement and evaluation as they apply to reading assessment and screening.
  - Apply current research and recognize exemplary practices in literacy instruction.

- Understand leadership roles of the reading specialist in organizing and supervising reading programs and promoting staff development.
  - Describe strategies for planning, organizing, coordinating, and supervising the reading program within the classroom, school, or division.
  - Integrate appropriate strategies for instructing and advising teachers in the skills necessary to differentiate reading instruction for all students.
  - Describe ways to initiate, implement, evaluate, and participate in professional development to enhance the quality of reading instruction and address the goals of the reading program.
  - Describe principles, procedures, and issues involved in designing, implementing, evaluating, and improving the reading curriculum.
  - Describe strategies for selecting, organizing, and using appropriate reading materials and instructional resources, including instructional technologies, to create a learning environment that promotes students' reading development.
- Understand strategies for communicating and collaborating with all members of the educational community to address the goals of the reading program.
  - Integrate communication and facilitation skills to promote effective collaboration among colleagues, students' families, and the wider community in addressing the goals of the reading program.
  - Describe how to apply techniques for consensus building and conflict resolution to facilitate communication about issues relating to the reading program.
  - Describe how to interpret and communicate to colleagues and other members of the educational community relevant research findings about reading and their implications for reading instruction.
  - Describe how to help advocate for public support of reading education by communicating effectively with policymakers, the media, and the general public
  - Describe strategies for developing effective partnerships between schools and community agencies to help address reading goals.

## **VI. Analysis and Integration**

- The candidate will apply knowledge of the elements of reading, reading instruction, and leadership skills to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question.
- The candidate will apply knowledge of reading assessment and instruction to prepare an organized written response to a case study of an elementary school student.

## Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE) General Scoring Guide

**Note:** The *elements of reading and reading instruction* assessed in constructed-response questions are those included in the RVE assessment domains.

### Score 3

**The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Clearly and specifically answers all parts of the question in a way that directly addresses the instructional situation described.
- Shows strong knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question. Any errors of fact or terminology are minor and do not detract from the thorough understanding shown.
- Provides strong supporting evidence and rationales.

### Score 2

**The response demonstrates general understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Adequately answers most or all parts of the question in a way that is appropriate for the instructional situation described.
- Shows general knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question. Any errors do not detract from the general understanding shown.
- Provides adequate supporting evidence and rationales.

### Score 1

**The response demonstrates a weak or limited understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Answers some part (or parts) of the question at a basic level.
- Has one or more of the following weaknesses:
  - Fails to answer most parts of the question and/or fails to address crucial aspects of the instructional situation described.
  - Shows weak or limited knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question. The weakness may be indicated by errors or misconceptions.
  - Any evidence or rationales provided are weak or limited.

### Score 0

**The response demonstrates no understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Fails to respond appropriately to any part of the question.
- Shows no knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question; or any information presented about reading and reading instruction is seriously in error.

Note: The mere presence of reading-specific words or phrases that might be used in an adequate response does not by itself indicate knowledge.

Also receiving a score of 0 would be responses that are blank, completely off-topic, or not written in English.