FIELD 95: ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING ASSISTANT SKILLS
TEST FRAMEWORK
June 2005

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Teaching assistants (paraprofessionals/paraeducators) work under the direct supervision of classroom teachers to help students in many different ways. To fill their roles, teaching assistants must have a grasp of basic skills in the core subject areas. Teaching assistants also lend focused instructional support to teachers in a classroom collaboration.

The Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills is organized into four subareas that address the central knowledge and understanding that teaching assistants are expected to possess.
SUBAREA I—READING

0001 Understand the meaning of general vocabulary words.
   For example:
   • determining the meaning of commonly encountered words presented in context
   • identifying appropriate synonyms or antonyms for words
   • recognizing the correct use of commonly misused pairs of words (e.g., their/there, to/too)

0002 Understand the stated main idea of a reading passage.
   For example:
   • identifying the stated main idea of a passage
   • identifying the topic sentence of a passage
   • recognizing introductory and summary statements of a passage
   • selecting an accurate restatement of the main idea of a passage

0003 Understand the sequence of ideas in a reading passage.
   For example:
   • identifying the order of events or steps described in a passage
   • organizing a set of instructions into their proper sequence
   • identifying cause-and-effect relationships described in a passage

0004 Interpret textual and graphic information.
   For example:
   • interpreting information from tables, line graphs, bar graphs, and pie charts
   • recognizing appropriate representations of written information in graphic or tabular form
   • recognizing differences between fact and opinion
SUBAREA II—WRITING

0005 Understand the standard use of verbs.
   For example:
   • identifying standard subject-verb agreement (e.g., number, person)
   • identifying verb tense (e.g., present, past)
   • recognizing consistency of verb tense (e.g., verb endings)

0006 Understand the standard use of pronouns and modifiers.
   For example:
   • identifying agreement (e.g., number, gender, person) between a pronoun and its antecedent
   • using possessive pronouns (e.g., its vs. it's), relative pronouns (e.g., that, which), and demonstrative pronouns (e.g., this, that)
   • using comparative and superlative modifiers (e.g., good/better/best)

0007 Understand standard sentence structure and punctuation.
   For example:
   • distinguishing between sentence fragments and complete sentences
   • distinguishing between run-on sentences and correctly divided sentences
   • identifying correct and incorrect punctuation

0008 Understand the standard use of capitalization and spelling.
   For example:
   • identifying standard capitalization at the beginning of sentences
   • identifying standard capitalization of proper words and titles
   • recognizing standard spelling of commonly encountered words presented in context
SUBAREA III—MATHEMATICS

0009 Understand number concepts.
For example:
- identifying the place value of digits (e.g., hundreds, tens, ones, tenths)
- identifying correctly rounded numbers (e.g., to the nearest ten)
- identifying equivalent weights and measures in different units (e.g., feet and inches, quarts and pints, kilograms and grams)
- estimating the solution to a measurement problem (e.g., height, distance, perimeter)

0010 Understand the addition and subtraction of whole numbers.
For example:
- solving problems involving the addition of whole numbers
- solving problems involving the subtraction of whole numbers
- applying principles of addition and subtraction of whole numbers to solve problems encountered in everyday life

0011 Understand multiplication and division of whole numbers.
For example:
- solving problems involving the multiplication of whole numbers
- solving problems involving the division of whole numbers
- applying principles of multiplication and division of whole numbers to solve problems encountered in everyday life

0012 Understand operations involving fractions, decimals, and percents.
For example:
- solving problems involving fractions (e.g., recipes)
- solving problems involving decimals (e.g., money)
- solving problems involving percents (e.g., grades, discounts)
- solving problems involving conversions between fractions, decimals, and percents
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SUBAREA IV—INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

0013 Understand classroom instruction related to reading.
For example:
- providing support under the guidance of classroom teachers to match student needs, styles of learning, and background experiences (e.g., drilling, using pictorial or video materials, relating reading materials to real-life contexts)
- helping students use instructional resources (e.g., dictionaries, encyclopedias, multimedia materials) to support reading
- helping students use a variety of approaches to understand what they read (e.g., skimming, questioning to tap prior knowledge, monitoring understanding, reviewing, summarizing)
- gathering information about students’ progress as readers to support the teacher’s planning, assessment, and instruction

0014 Understand classroom instruction related to writing.
For example:
- understanding drafting, editing, and proofreading written work
- helping students focus their writing
- helping students use instructional resources (e.g., dictionaries, grammar books, library resources, technological resources) to support writing
- gathering information about students’ progress as writers to support the teacher’s planning, assessment, and instruction

0015 Understand classroom instruction related to mathematics.
For example:
- relating mathematics to everyday situations
- identifying and correcting basic errors in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
- helping students use instructional resources (e.g., hands-on materials, rulers, money, charts, graphs, technological resources) to support mathematical learning
- gathering information about students’ progress in mathematics to support the teacher’s planning, assessment, and instruction

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