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# **NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™**

## **FIELD 130: AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE TEST DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK**

**April 2016**

**Authorized for Distribution by the New York State Education Department**

This test design and framework document is designed to provide information about the content and format of a test for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations™ (NYSTCE®) program. Education faculty and administrators at teacher preparation institutions may also find the information in this framework useful as they discuss the test with candidates. All test components may differ from those presented here. Furthermore, review of this framework, in whole or in part, does not guarantee an increased likelihood of success on any of the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations. The NYSTCE program is subject to change at the sole discretion of the New York State Education Department, and any changes will fully supersede the information presented in this document. As a reminder, candidates are responsible for contacting their certification officer(s) regarding any changes to the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations.

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**FIELD 130: AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE  
TEST DESIGN**

This test consists of selected-response items measuring content knowledge, two constructed-response items measuring American Sign Language productive skills, and one constructed-response item measuring pedagogical content knowledge. The pedagogical content knowledge constructed-response item requires candidates to describe an instructional strategy to help students achieve a specific standards-based learning goal, to provide a rationale for employing that instructional strategy, and to describe an assessment to measure student learning and inform future instruction.

The selected-response items count for 40% of the total test score and the constructed-response items count for 60% of the total test score, as indicated in the table that follows. Each selected-response item counts the same toward the total test score. The percentage of the total test score derived from each of the constructed-response items is also indicated in the table that follows.

The total testing time is 205 minutes. Candidates are free to set their own pace during the test administration. The following estimates were used to determine the total test time:

- The selected-response items are designed with the expectation of response time up to 85 minutes.
- The Presentational Signing constructed-response items are designed with the expectation of a response up to 30 minutes each, including preparation time.
- The Pedagogical Content Knowledge constructed-response item is designed with the expectation of a response up to 60 minutes.

Further information regarding the content of each competency can be found in the test framework.

Competency	Selected-Response		Constructed-Response	
	Approximate Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score	Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score
0001 Receptive Comprehension	30	25%	--	--
0002 American Sign Language Structures and Comparisons	10	7%	--	--
0003 Deaf Culture	10	8%	--	--
0004 Expressive Production	--	--	2	40%
0005 Pedagogical Content Knowledge	--	--	1	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>

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Receptive Comprehension  
American Sign Language Structures and Comparisons  
Deaf Culture  
Expressive Production  
Pedagogical Content Knowledge

The New York State educator of American Sign Language has the knowledge and skills necessary to teach the language and Deaf culture effectively in New York State public schools. The teacher possesses the receptive and productive signing skills in ASL and understands the cultural aspects that are the foundation for purposeful, accurate, and creative expression in language. As a competent communicator, the teacher demonstrates proficiency in the linguistic and cultural conventions and registers of ASL.

The teacher is an attentive communicator and a confident signer who considers the meaning of messages signed in ASL thoughtfully and expresses ideas clearly and persuasively with appropriate attention to audience, task, social and cultural contexts, and registers such as Academic ASL.

The teacher chooses signs, information, structures, and formats to produce complex and nuanced messages in ASL that effectively and accurately meet the needs of specific tasks or situations.

The teacher actively seeks wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement with informational and literary works in ASL, including lectures, storytelling, poetry, drama, humor, and folklore, through means of live and digital communication (e.g., vlogs, video-sharing Web sites, movies in ASL) that build knowledge and broaden experiences and worldviews.

The teacher possesses the pedagogical content knowledge—including knowledge of language acquisition and language development theories; knowledge of content and instructional planning and teaching methods that are appropriate for ASL and are aligned with state learning standards and national ASL standards; knowledge of factors and variables that influence students' learning (e.g., home language, cultural and educational background, learning styles, age, developmental levels); knowledge of curriculum development and theories of ASL curricula; knowledge of research- and evidence-based instructional strategies; and knowledge of assessment tools and processes used to collect data to monitor and plan instruction—necessary to support all students' achievement and learning processes in acquiring ASL as a language other than English.

*As used in this document, the term "research-based" refers to those practices that have been shown to be effective in improving learner outcomes through systematic observation or experiment, rigorous data analysis, ability to replicate results, and publication in a peer-reviewed journal. "Evidence-based" refers to strategies empirically shown to improve learner outcomes, though not necessarily based on systematic experiments or published in a peer-reviewed journal.*

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**COMPETENCY 0001—RECEPTIVE COMPREHENSION**

Performance Expectations

The New York State educator of American Sign Language applies literal, inferential, and critical receptive comprehension skills and knowledge of the linguistic structures and sociolinguistic conventions of ASL to understand and obtain information from a wide variety of signed messages in authentic situations or contexts (e.g., conversations, interviews, news, announcements, lectures). In deciphering signed messages, the teacher demonstrates understanding of the cultural perspectives that underlie the cultural products and practices of Deaf culture, including historical, political, economic, social, intellectual, artistic, scientific, and regional contexts within the Deaf community.

Performance Indicators

- a. identifies explicit and relevant information (e.g., main idea; sequence of steps; stated cause and effect; significant contextual, cultural, or situational details, including cultural details such as practices of Deaf people and products produced by Deaf people or for Deaf people or political, historical, social, or economic details) in a message signed in ASL
- b. demonstrates understanding of the use of appropriate registers, including Academic ASL, and sociolinguistic conventions in a variety of formal and informal as well as familiar and unfamiliar situations and contexts
- c. determines the meaning and nuances of signs and phrases as they are used in messages signed in ASL, including figurative language, common idiomatic expressions, and colloquial and culturally authentic expressions
- d. applies knowledge of discourse strategies used in American Deaf culture (e.g., attention getting, turn taking, interrupting, leave taking, ensuring line of sight)
- e. analyzes the form and use of complex linguistic structures used in ASL (e.g., word order, topicalization, yes/no questions, *wh*- questions, *rh*- /pseudo cleft questions, classifiers/depiction and verb agreement, number incorporation, time and tense formation, nonmanual signals/facial and body articulators), including how these linguistic structures are used to achieve particular effects in a message signed in ASL
- f. demonstrates the ability to summarize key ideas in a message signed in ASL and evaluate the signer's use of reasoning and evidence in presenting these ideas
- g. makes inferences or draws conclusions based on the context, situation, and information given in a message signed in ASL (e.g., infers the relationship between signers, characterizes the mood or tone of a signer, infers the tone of a message, determines the audience of a message, predicts the outcome of a situation described in a message)
- h. analyzes the communicative strategies and social and cultural contexts of a message signed in ASL to determine an assumption, an intent, a perspective, or a point of view

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- i. analyzes the ways in which a signer's point of view or perspectives are influenced by the products, practices, and perspectives of Deaf culture, including the arts; historical events; science; individuals; or the political, economic, social, and intellectual contexts of Deaf culture and the practices of Deaf people and products produced by Deaf people or for Deaf people

**COMPETENCY 0002—AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE STRUCTURES AND  
COMPARISONS**

Performance Expectations

The New York State educator of American Sign Language understands the visual-spatial grammar and the linguistic structures of ASL. The teacher is familiar with the features of the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics of ASL necessary for effective communication and analyzes the similarities and differences between ASL and English. The teacher understands the historical development of ASL and how cultural and regional diversity has an impact on the evolution of ASL. The teacher understands ASL as a natural language and can distinguish between ASL and other forms of signed communication systems.

Performance Indicators

- a. describes the phonological structures (e.g., segmentation), parameters (e.g., handshape, orientation, movement, location, nonmanual signals/facial and body articulators), and phonological processes (e.g., assimilation, metathesis, alternative locations of signs, two-handed relationships) that occur in ASL
- b. describes the morphological structures and features (e.g., types and functions of classifiers/depiction; lexical, derivational, and inflectional features; lexicalization of fingerspelled words) and morphological processes (e.g., reduplication, pluralization, incorporation, compounding) that occur in ASL and how lexical items are incorporated into ASL from English (e.g., fingerspelled words) and from other sign languages
- c. describes the syntactic and semantic structures and features of ASL (e.g., sentence construction, types of sentences, negation and assertion, linguistic markers used to create connected and cohesive discourse, use of space, polymorphemic signs)
- d. analyzes the nonmanual features/facial and body articulators of ASL at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels (e.g., the function of facial features and expressions, eye gaze, body shift and orientation)
- e. describes the pragmatics and sociolinguistics of ASL and Deaf culture (e.g., discourse structure; linguistic functions; variations in ASL based on contextual factors such as regional, cultural, and educational background, gender, age, hearing status, age of ASL acquisition)

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- f. compares and contrasts linguistic features and grammatical structures of ASL and English (e.g., morphological processes, pragmatics and social use of language, word order, structures for expressing time and mood, ways of expressing differences in register such as level of formality and the use of academic ASL, discourse strategies) and how meaning is expressed in ASL and English (e.g., the use of classifiers/depiction, superordinate terms, use of polymorphic signs, lexical nonequivalence, nonmanual markers/facial and body articulators)
- g. recognizes and explains differences between ASL and other forms of signed communication systems such as Language Contact and forms of Manually Coded English

**COMPETENCY 0003—DEAF CULTURE**

Performance Expectations

The New York State educator of American Sign Language understands the practices, products, and perspectives of Deaf culture and recognizes the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through knowledge of ASL and Deaf culture. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the history, sociology, and anthropology of the Deaf community and culture. The teacher understands art and literature products of Deaf culture reflecting the Deaf experience. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the use and impact of technology on the Deaf community both locally and nationally.

Performance Indicators

- a. describes important developments, events, and individuals in the history of American Deaf culture and with the roles, accomplishments, and influence of deaf individuals in popular culture and the arts
- b. analyzes various historical and contemporary models and perceptions about people who are deaf (e.g., medical-audiological versus cultural-linguistic)
- c. recognizes the origins, characteristics, and effects of discrimination on people who are deaf in the United States and important federal and state legislations regarding the education and civil rights of individuals who are deaf (e.g., IDEA, ADA, Part 200 of the New York State Regulations of the Commissioner of Education)
- d. explains the practices and traditions of Deaf culture in the United States and how they reflect the unique perspectives of American Deaf culture
- e. describes the impact of technological advances on the practices of the Deaf community (e.g., Internet video communications, cell phones)
- f. analyzes contemporary issues within the Deaf community such as education, medical advancements, employment, community traditions, clubs, and sports organizations and how they influence Deaf people's lives
- g. analyzes diversity within the American Deaf community (e.g., generational, regional, multicultural, and intercultural diversity; cultural language uses; Deaf identities, perspectives, and experiences)

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- h. demonstrates familiarity with the literary, artistic, and cultural products of American Deaf culture (e.g., storytelling, fiction, Deaf art, poetry, theater, humor) and how they reflect the perspectives of American Deaf culture
- i. describes the role and functions of institutions in the Deaf community (e.g., agencies, organizations, clubs, educational facilities)
- j. describes how Deaf culture is transmitted from generation to generation

**COMPETENCY 0004—EXPRESSIVE PRODUCTION**

Performance Expectations

The New York State educator of American Sign Language applies proficient signing skills, including expressive command of ASL grammatical structures; narrative time frames; culturally, pragmatically, and contextually appropriate vocabulary and idioms; and sociolinguistic conventions to produce an extended narrative or to respond in an extended discourse in ASL to a question about a literary or informational excerpt. In preparing the signed response, the teacher carefully considers task, purpose, audience, and context or situation and, as appropriate, demonstrates understanding of the cultural perspectives that underlie the cultural products and practices of Deaf culture, including individual, historical, political, economic, social, intellectual, artistic, and scientific contexts that have shaped and continue to shape Deaf culture.

Performance Indicators

- a. uses effective, purposeful, and appropriate skills to deliver a well-organized, logically sequenced, clear, and effective response in ASL to a question about a literary or informational excerpt
- b. demonstrates the ability to understand a particular social or cultural context or situation and use pragmatically appropriate language, style or register, and sociolinguistic conventions to respond and adapt to varying demands of audience, situation, task, and purpose in ASL
- c. integrates new ideas and information, uses personal experience and knowledge of language and logic, and uses cultural knowledge to think analytically and address problems creatively in ASL
- d. demonstrates knowledge of effective techniques for introducing, establishing, and supporting ideas in ASL using valid reasoning, relevant and sufficient evidence, and examples and making connections between self, text, and the surrounding world
- e. demonstrates the ability to use a broad range of narrative time frames, ASL discourse structure, sentence structures, cohesive devices, and precise and accurate academic and domain-specific vocabulary and idioms to effectively express ideas in ASL
- f. applies knowledge of how to persuade, explain, and convey experience and how to develop a conclusion that follows from and supports ideas and arguments presented in a response in ASL

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- g. demonstrates effective use of the signing space, precise vocabulary, accurate syntactic structure and nonmanual signals/facial and body articulators; demonstrates intelligible, effective, and clear well-formed signing in ASL; and maintains a strong flow and appropriate pace of signing, with few nonproductive hesitations or pauses

**COMPETENCY 0005—PEDOGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE**

Performance Expectations

The New York State educator of American Sign Language effectively applies pedagogical content knowledge to design research- and evidence-based instruction to help students achieve specific standards-driven learning goals. The teacher assesses students' learning needs and applies knowledge of current research in learning, including theories and processes of language acquisition and language development, to create developmentally appropriate and research- and evidence-based instruction, including the effective use of technology, that will help students achieve a specific learning goal and promote innovation, diverse thinking, and creative problem solving. In helping students achieve their learning goals, the teacher is aware of the influence of prior knowledge; cultural, linguistic, and educational background; learning styles; age; and developmental level on the language acquisition of the students. In developing instruction, the teacher seeks to provide students with opportunities to communicate in ASL in meaningful and authentic ways by providing evidence- and research-based approaches to language instruction that reflect the cultural perspectives that underlie the products and practices of Deaf culture. The teacher understands effective assessment tools and processes to measure and document student learning and uses assessment data to plan and differentiate instruction.

Performance Indicators

- a. identifies a developmentally appropriate learning goal aligned with the New York State Learning Standards (and other standards as appropriate) that demonstrates knowledge of research- and evidence-based approaches, strategies, and tools currently used in language instruction as related to a specified communicative topic and/or function, student characteristic, student grade level, and/or language proficiency level
- b. identifies the content and language skills as well as the conceptual and cultural understandings necessary for students to achieve the stated learning goal
- c. provides a logical rationale for including the learning goal in an instructional unit devoted to the specified communicative topic and/or function
- d. applies knowledge of pre-assessment strategies for determining students' current strengths and readiness (e.g., motivation, learning styles, influence of home language, prior knowledge, cultural and educational background) for learning the concepts and skills associated with the learning goal
- e. describes in detail a research- or evidence-based instructional strategy or activity and learning environment that reflects the cultural perspectives that underlie the cultural products and practices of Deaf culture

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- f. provides a clear and logical explanation of how the strategy or activity supports the learning goal and fosters students' knowledge and skills related to the learning goal
- g. describes strategic ways to use appropriate cultural resources and digital media to enhance understanding and add interest
- h. demonstrates knowledge of the appropriate and effective use of technological tools, techniques, or processes to enhance teaching practices and to improve learning outcomes
- i. describes in detail an appropriate and effective formative or summative assessment strategy or activity designed to evaluate students' learning and how to use the results of this assessment to inform future instructional strategies and methods