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Alabama Foundations of Reading Certification Test



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Question: 1

Which of these is true regarding early signs of reading difficulties in young children?

- A. A child's inability to form rhymes is not a concern, as long as s/he can identify rhymes.
- B. A child's inability to separate words into individual phonemes can indicate a problem.
- C. A child's inability to blend individual phonemes to form words is not a sign of trouble.
- D. A child's inability to count word syllables or spell new words phonetically is immaterial.

Answer: B

Explanation:

If a young child cannot break down a word into its component phonemes, this represents a deficit in phonological and/or phonemic awareness, which will cause reading difficulties. Likewise, the inability to do the reverse and blend individual phonemes to form words (C) is a sign the child will have trouble reading. Young children with good phonological and phonemic awareness can both identify and form rhymes (A). To learn to read well, they should also be able to count the syllables in a word and use phonetic spellings (by sound) for new/unfamiliar words (D).

Question: 2

Reciprocal teaching activities focus on four main reading strategies. What is the fourth strategy, in addition to summarizing, questioning, and predicting?

- A. Evaluating
- B. Connecting
- C. Retelling
- D. Clarifying

Answer: D

Explanation:

Reciprocal teaching is an activity in which students gradually take over the role of the teacher in small groups to discuss texts. The students lead discussions focused on four main reading strategies: summarizing, questioning, predicting, and clarifying. The remaining options are also reading strategies, but they are not typically the focus of reciprocal teaching activities.

Question: 3

Of the following, which statement is true about instruction in the alphabetic principle?

- A. Letter-sound relationships with the highest utility should be the earliest ones introduced.
- B. The instruction of letter-sound correspondences should always be done in word context.
- C. Letter-sound relationship practice times should only be assigned apart from other lessons.
- D. Letter-sound relationship practice should focus on new relationships, not go over old ones.

Answer: A

Explanation:

While there is no consensus among experts as to any universal sequence of instruction for teaching the alphabetic principle during phonics instruction, they do agree that, to enable children to start reading words as soon as possible, the highest-utility relationships should be introduced earliest. For example, the letters m, a, p, t, and s are all used frequently, whereas the x in box, the sound of two in they, and the letter a when pronounced as it is in want have lower-utility letter-sound correspondences. Important considerations for the alphabetic principle are to teach letter-sound correspondences in isolation, not in word contexts; to teach them explicitly, to give students opportunities to practice letter-sound relationships within their other daily lessons, not only separately; and to include cumulative reviews of relationships taught earlier along with new ones in practice opportunities.

Question: 4

Students in the transitional stage of reading development would benefit most from instruction in which area?

- A. Sight word practice
- B. Identifying the theme of abstract texts
- C. Analyzing morphology to determine word meanings
- D. Letter/sound correspondence

Answer: C

Explanation:

Although the names of the stages vary, readers generally progress through four stages of reading development: emergent reading, early reading, transitional reading, and fluent reading. Transitional readers use multiple cueing systems and knowledge of complex spelling patterns to decode many words easily, and they begin to read complex texts that cover a range of genres and topics. These texts contain more complex vocabulary, so it is beneficial for students to analyze word morphology to determine the meanings of unknown words. Transitional readers already know a large number of sight words automatically and use letter/sound relationships to decode words. Identifying the theme of abstract texts is more difficult, and would likely be more appropriate for readers in the fluent stage.

Question: 5

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is found to be helpful for middle school ELL students. What is true of this approach?

- A. It includes content objectives but does not include language objectives.
- B. It includes language objectives but does not include content objectives.
- C. It has content and language objectives, but there are none for learning strategies.
- D. It allows thematically based content or formats using sheltered content.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The CALLA is a content-based approach to language instruction that integrates academic learning strategies that students require to participate in mainstream English-speaking classrooms. It includes objectives for content (a), language (b), and learning strategies (c), and it allows teachers to plan lessons using content based on themes or formats using sheltered content (d).

Question: 6

Of the following activities that promote building vocabulary for young children, which one is most dependent on the teacher?

- A. Repeatedly singing the same familiar song over and over
- B. Reciting the same familiar rhymes and chants repeatedly
- C. Listening to repeated readings of the same favorite story
- D. A word wall in the classroom to illustrate words/concepts

Answer: D

Explanation:

A word wall uses visual illustrations of vocabulary words and the concepts they represent. and includes additional words, concepts, and pictures related to the main words and pictures to enrich vocabulary and relational thinking. The teacher would be most responsible for creating the word wall, using it in lessons/activities, and instructing/assisting young children in its use. The children themselves can and will repeatedly sing the same familiar song (A) and repeat the same rhymes and chants which enhance vocabulary development for both native English-speaking and ESL students. Stories (C) may be read live by teachers, or readings may be recorded. Either way, the children play the same role of listening to repeated readings.

Question: 7

Which statement accurately reflects educational measurement principles relative to how teachers should design reading assessments?

- A. Teachers should design tests to measure a small sample of their learning objectives.
- B. Teachers should design tests to instruct as well as to diagnose or evaluate students.
- C. Teachers should design tests to compare groups using criterion-referenced scoring.
- D. Teachers should design tests to be either valid or reliable, as both are unnecessary.

Answer: B

Explanation:

According to accepted educational measurement principles, teachers should design tests to measure ALL their learning objectives (including through a combination of tests), not just a few (A). While tests' primary uses are diagnosis or evaluation, another principle is that an important additional use is instructional (B), by enabling teachers to identify and re-teach important information students have missed, stimulate additional topic discussions, and integrate instruction and evaluation. Criterion-referenced tests measure achievement relative to preset criteria; norm-referenced tests enable group comparisons (C). Test validity and reliability are both equally necessary (D).

Question: 8

A student is having difficulties comprehending the content-related vocabulary words in his science textbook, even with the available context clues. Which text feature could the teacher direct the student to use to best assist with this difficulty?

- A. Table of contents
- B. Headings
- C. Index
- D. Glossary

Answer: D

Explanation:

A glossary contains an alphabetized list of important vocabulary words found in a text, along with their meanings. It is similar to a dictionary. It would be the most helpful text feature for a student to use to determine the meanings of the content-related vocabulary words in the text. The table of contents helps the reader identify which pages contain which topics in the text. Headings help the reader determine the main idea of each section of the text. The index is an alphabetized list of topics in the text, along with the page numbers on which they can be found.

Question: 9

What is correct about evidence-based instructional strategies to use with ELL students?

- A. Asking ELL students to explain and/or retell what teachers said to classmates is useful.
- B. To get ELLs to concentrate on language, teachers should avoid incorporating visual aids.
- C. Teachers should not "talk down" to ELLs by presenting abstract ideas in concrete forms.
- D. Teachers may have ELLs signal when they don't understand, but not elaborate verbally.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Research finds one helpful instructional strategy¹ for ELL student language acquisition is to have them explain and/or retell what the teacher just said to their classmates. This not only ensures their comprehension, it also gives them practice analyzing the English they hear, restating/paraphrasing English and communicating to others in spoken English. Teachers should incorporate visual aids: studies show supplementing verbal input visually helps ELLS understand concepts in subject content areas as they are learning a foreign language. Research finds that students cannot grasp abstract concepts as readily in a foreign language, so teachers should give the concrete objects, pictures, and the like to illustrate and demonstrate ideas as students gradually transition from concrete to abstract in a new language. Teachers can arrange for ELLS to signal when they don't understand; they also closely observe ELLS, and if they do not indicate or demonstrate understanding, should elaborate by summarizing, paraphrasing, and giving synonyms.

Question: 10

Which instructional practice would NOT be helpful for young children to understand phonics and decode words?

- A. Incidental exposure to implicit phonics in instruction
- B. Systematic, explicit, and direct instruction in phonics
- C. Teaching main ideas or strategic integration
- D. Giving reading and writing activities to apply phonics

Answer: C

Explanation:

Incidental exposure to implicit phonics (A) is found to be much less effective than systematic, explicit, direct phonics instruction (B) in helping young children understand sound-to-letter correspondences and decode words. In addition to teaching phonics directly, explicitly, and systematically, another practice that helps young children understand and use phonics to decode words is giving them reading and writing activities that apply phonics principles.

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