

CTEL[®]

California
Teacher of
English Learners[™]



[®]

STUDY GUIDE



California Commission
on Teacher Credentialing

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SECTION 1

PREPARING FOR THE CTEL EXAMINATION

Preparing to Take the CTEL Examination: Before the Test

The following suggestions are offered to examinees as one possible way to prepare for the CTEL® Examination.

Study the content of the CTEL Examination. The first step in preparing for the examination is to identify the information that the examination will cover. The CTEL Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) provide the full list of domains, competencies, and descriptive statements that are the basis for the examination. The KSAs are included in Section 2 of this study guide.

First, read through the entire set of the KSAs to get an overall picture of the material covered by the CTEL Examination.

Focus your studies. After obtaining a broad overview of the content, read each part of the KSAs carefully to get a more specific idea of the knowledge that will be required for the examination. When you have become familiar with the content, make a list of the areas about which you feel you know the least. Use this information to set priorities for your study and preparation time.

In planning your study time, focus on the content with which you are less familiar. You should schedule sufficient time to review the content of all of the KSAs, both the familiar and the less familiar, but the focus of your preparation time and the priority in your studying should be placed on the content about which you are less confident.

You may decide, based on this focusing exercise, that you will register for and attempt at any one test administration only some of the examination subtests, leaving one or more for another time. This will permit you to expend preparation time where you judge it will do the most good and to address at a later time the areas of the KSAs in which you need more concentrated study.

Develop study techniques. Develop a sound study plan and schedule if you have not already done so. There are many books available on study skills, and you may wish to consult one. Some people find it helpful to study with other people who will be taking the examination. If you are comfortable with this approach, consider forming or joining a study group. You may also want to contact your employing school district or county office of education regarding the availability of preparation courses in your area.

Review the sample questions. For each subtest of the examination, sample multiple-choice and constructed-response questions are provided. Read each sample question and try to answer it. Write your answers on a plain sheet of paper for later review.

Next, compare your answers to the multiple-choice questions with the annotated responses and your responses to the constructed-response questions with the sample responses provided. You may need to ask a mentor or advisor to help by evaluating your written responses against the scoring guidelines provided.

Section 1: Preparing for the CTEL Examination

Overview of the CTEL Examination Questions

Subtests in the CTEL Examination include both multiple-choice and constructed-response questions that are designed to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities as described in the CTEL KSAs. They are intended to be straightforward questions and assignments, not tricky attempts to elicit a wrong answer.

Multiple-choice questions. The typical multiple-choice question will present a question or an incomplete statement that may be answered or completed correctly by only one of four possible responses, labeled A, B, C, and D. The examinee's task typically will be to identify *the one best answer* to the question. Multiple-choice questions may be preceded by additional materials to which they pertain, such as a passage of text, a drawing, a chart, a table, or a similar stimulus.

To answer each question, examinees will often have to use more than recall of factual information; they may be asked to think critically about the question or the material presented, to analyze it, apply it, consider it carefully, compare it with other knowledge they have, or make a judgment about it.

Constructed-response questions. For the constructed-response questions, examinees will generally be presented with introductory material and a specific assignment relating to that material. For example, examinees may be asked to discuss, describe, analyze, explain, interpret, correct, transform, or evaluate the introductory material or to compare it with another resource presented at the same time.

More specific information about the type of questions that are likely to appear on each subtest of the CTEL Examination is presented in the study guide section for that subtest.

Scoring. Responses to the multiple-choice questions are scored electronically. Scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly. There is no penalty for guessing.

Responses to constructed-response questions are scored by qualified California educators using focused holistic scoring. Using this method, scorers judge the overall effectiveness of each response while focusing on a set of performance characteristics that have been identified as important. Each response is assigned a score based on an approved scoring scale. Score scales for each subtest can be found in the study guide section for that subtest.

An examinee's performance on a subtest is evaluated against a standard determined by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) based on professional judgments and recommendations of California educators. Passing scores are established after the first test administration of the CTEL Examination.

Preparing to Take the CTEL Examination: The Day of the Test

This section includes helpful hints for the day of the examination.

Physical preparations. Leave plenty of time to get to the test session without anxiety. Arrive on time so that you are as relaxed as possible and ready to begin the examination when instructed to do so.

Dress comfortably wearing layers of clothing that can be removed or added as the temperature in the examination room changes. It is best to wear soft-soled shoes so that you will not disturb other examinees when you leave your seat.

Follow directions. At the beginning of the session and throughout the examination, follow all directions carefully, including the oral directions provided by test administrators and any on-screen directions in the examination. The examination will contain general directions for the examination as a whole and specific directions for individual questions.

One subtest at a time. There are three subtests in the CTEL Examination. Each test session is designed to give sufficient time for completion of the subtest(s) for which you registered.

If you are registered to take all three subtests, you will be free to allocate your time within the test session across the subtests as you see fit, devoting more time to one subtest and less time to another, if you choose. You may also address the different types of questions (multiple-choice and constructed-response questions) within each subtest in the order you prefer.

Pace yourself. Since the allocation of available time to each subtest is your own responsibility, pacing yourself is very important. Before the session, you should have a plan regarding how much time you will devote to each of the subtests for which you are registered; in general, try to stick to your plan and finish each subtest within the planned time. At the end of the testing time, your test will end and you will not be allowed to return to any test questions.

It is usually a good idea to avoid spending a great deal of time on a question that you cannot answer right away; it is generally better to skip it and move on. Flag that question for review so you can return to it later.

You may find that you need less time than allotted in a session to complete the subtest(s), but you should be prepared to stay for the entire session. It is wise not to make any other commitments for this time period that may cause you to rush or to leave without answering all of the questions.

Read carefully. Read the directions and the test questions carefully. Read all the response options for multiple-choice questions. Remember that the multiple-choice questions call for the *best answer*. Do not choose the first response option that seems reasonable; read and evaluate all choices to find the best answer. This does not mean that you should read meanings into the questions. They are intended to be straightforward, not tricky. It is often the case that your first choice, based on your knowledge and a thorough reading of the question and all response options, is in fact the best answer.

Read the questions closely so that you understand what they ask. Do not skim the questions in an effort to save time; you may misread key words and select the wrong answer.

Similarly, read all parts of the assignment accompanying constructed-response questions. These questions often involve more than one task (e.g., *summarizing* and *evaluating* an argument); be sure that you address *all tasks* before considering your response complete.

Guess wisely. As you read through the response options for the multiple-choice questions, try to find the best answer. If you cannot quickly determine the best answer, try to eliminate as many of the response options as possible. Then guess among the remaining answer choices. Your score on the multiple-choice section of each subtest will be based on the number of questions you answer correctly. A blank answer and an incorrect answer are scored exactly the same; therefore, it is better to guess than not to respond at all.

Check accuracy. Use some time before ending your test session to review the accuracy of your answers to the multiple-choice questions and the quality and completeness of your responses to the constructed-response questions. Return to flagged questions that gave you difficulty and verify your work on them.