

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



PURPOSE

To evaluate a contestant's knowledge of early childhood education based on developmentally appropriate practice for children ages 3–5 years. This is demonstrated through a written test, interview, literary reading and the ability to create and implement a lesson in a designated content area as determined by the committee.

First, download and review the General Regulations at: <http://updates.skillsusa.org>.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to active SkillsUSA members enrolled in technical education programs with early childhood/childcare as the occupational objective.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

Class E: Contest specific — Business Casual

- Official SkillsUSA white polo shirt
- Black dress slacks (accompanied by black dress socks or black or skin-tone seamless hose) or black dress skirt (knee-length, accompanied by black or skin-tone seamless hose)
- Black leather closed-toe dress shoes

These regulations refer to clothing items that are pictured and described at: www.skillsusastore.org. If you have questions about clothing or other logo items, call 800-401-1560 or 703-956-3723.

Note: Contestants must wear their official contest clothing to the contest orientation meeting.

OBSERVER RULE

Observers, who are not participants, will be allowed to be present during the competition. No talking or gesturing shall be permitted. No observers will be allowed in the interview area or be permitted to enter or exit the

demonstration area while a contestant is speaking. *No video/audio recorders will be allowed by observers.*

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Supplied by the technical committee:
 - a. An assortment of consumable and non-consumable materials to assist in the execution of the lesson plan and demonstration
2. Supplied by the contestant:
 - a. Tools of the profession:
 1. 12" ruler
 2. Scissors
 3. Scotch tape — 1 roll
 4. Stapler
 5. Staples — 1 strip
 6. Paper clips — 10
 7. Ink pens — 2 black or blue
 8. Sharpened pencils with erasers — 3
 9. Markers — 10-count
 10. Crayons — 8-count
 11. White school glue — 4 oz. bottle
 12. Glue sticks — 2
 13. Construction paper, white — 10 sheets
 14. Construction paper, assorted — 10 sheets
 - b. All competitors must create a one-page résumé and submit a hard copy to the technical committee chair at orientation. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point penalty.

Note: Your contest may also require a hard copy of your résumé as part of the actual contest. Check the Contest Guidelines and/or the updates page on the SkillsUSA website: <http://updates.skillsusa.org>.

SCOPE OF THE CONTEST

This contest is established by industry standards as set by the current industry technical committee. Contest standards have been cross-checked for applicability to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Department of Education (NAECS/SDE), National Head Start Association (NHSA) and National Child Development Credential (CDA).

Knowledge Performance

The contest includes a multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, written exam assessing knowledge of early childhood education and quality childcare.

Skill Performance

The skill performance of this contest consists of three parts:

1. Ability to interview and answer questions pertaining to working in a childcare facility
2. Ability to create and implement a developmentally appropriate lesson in an assigned curricular area
3. Ability to demonstrate a developmentally appropriate literary reading

Contest Guidelines

Interview

1. Contestant will respond to interview questions regarding knowledge of early childhood, collaboration and working with children and families
2. Contestant shall exhibit professionalism:
 - a. Poise/body position
 - b. Attitude
 - c. Eye contact
 - d. Appropriate grammar/language

Lesson Planning

1. An assortment of materials commonly found in a childcare facility shall be available for use in lesson planning.
2. The assortment of materials will be unknown to contestants prior to the contest.
3. Contestants shall address developmentally appropriate concepts from one of the following curriculum areas: food and nutrition, literacy, math, music and movement, science or social sciences.
4. Contestants shall complete a handwritten lesson plan and prepare materials during the allotted plan time. The plan must be:
 - a. Neatly printed in ink
 - b. Developmentally appropriate for children 3-5 years according to the *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children Birth Through Age 8* (2009, third edition)

c. Follow the specified outline:

1. Curriculum Area
 2. Materials Needed
 3. Goals/Areas of Development
 4. Written Procedure/Sequence
 5. Scaffolding
 6. Mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.)
5. Contestants will have three hours to plan their lesson and prepare materials needed for their presentation. Warnings will be given with one hour remaining and again at thirty minutes.
 6. Contestants may leave presentation area upon completion but will no longer have access to their plan or materials.
 7. **Penalty:** A two-point deduction shall be indicated for each missing or excess item supplied by the contestant.

Lesson Demonstration

1. Contestants should arrive at the demonstration area early.
2. Contestants will be given a lesson plan and materials 15 minutes prior to their assigned presentation time.
3. Contestants will be given five to seven minutes to present their lesson.
4. Contestants shall present as if children are present. Do not present to judges.
5. At end of presentation, judges will ask one question of contestants pertaining to inclusion/adaptations.
6. Follow specified criteria:
 - Verbal/nonverbal communication
 - Presentation technique
 - Appropriate introduction/closure
 - Foster critical thinking
 - Creativity
7. Judges will be unknown to contestants.
8. **Penalties:** Five-point deduction for every 30 seconds greater than *two* minutes allotted for setup and for every 30 seconds under or over the five- to seven-minute demonstration time.
8. Contestants will return all materials to a designated committee member upon completion of the presentation. Materials made by contestants are the property of the contestants.

Book Reading Demonstration

1. Contestants will have access to and choose from designated books.
2. Contestants should arrive to demonstration area early and will have 15 minutes to practice their book prior to presentation.
3. Contestants will be given three to five minutes to present their lesson.
4. Contestants shall exhibit dynamic book reading skills:
 - a. Literacy awareness
 - b. Developmentally appropriate practice
 - c. Verbal and nonverbal communication
 - d. Interactive
 - e. Foster critical thinking
5. Contestants are not required to read the entire book.
6. Contestants shall present as if children are present. Do not present to judges.
7. Judges will be unknown to contestants.
8. **Penalties:** Five-point deduction for every 30 seconds under or over the three- to five-minute demonstration time.
9. Contestants will return all materials to a designated committee member upon completion of the presentation.

Standards and Competencies

ECE 1.0 — Develop a hands-on lesson plan for a small group of children ages 3–5 years in the assigned curricular area

- 1.1 Create a written lesson plan that addresses developmentally appropriate concepts from one of the following curriculum areas: food and nutrition, literacy, math, music and movement, science or social sciences
- 1.2 From provided materials, choose items to incorporate into the lesson
- 1.3 Write a legible plan on the provided lesson plan sheet
- 1.4 Include essential components in the lesson plan
 - 1.4.1 Curriculum area
 - 1.4.2 Materials needed
 - 1.4.3 Goals/Areas of development
 - 1.4.4 Written procedure/sequence
 - 1.4.5 Scaffolding
 - 1.4.6 Mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.)

- 1.5 Prepare developmentally appropriate lesson and materials for children ages 3–5 years
- 1.8 Submit written lesson and all materials to technical committee member

ECE 2.0 — Using applicable teacher skills and developmentally appropriate methodologies, demonstrate the written lesson. (Demonstration 5–7 minutes)

- 2.1 Demonstrate developmentally appropriate teaching techniques
- 2.2 Exhibit attention-gaining techniques in the introduction
- 2.3 Support lesson goals with appropriate procedure and use of materials
- 2.4 Use voice as a teaching tool — expression, grammar, volume, inflection
- 2.5 Promote critical thinking in children
- 2.6 Allow children to interact with materials
- 2.7 Present on child’s level
- 2.8 Conclude the lesson appropriately
- 2.9 Display originality and creativity
- 2.10 Respond to judge’s question following the presentation

ECE 3.0 — Using applicable teacher skills and developmentally appropriate methodologies, demonstrate a literacy experience (Demonstration 3–5 minutes)

- 3.1 Choose a book for demonstration
- 3.2 Read the book using developmentally appropriate teaching techniques
- 3.3 Exhibit attention-gaining technique for introduction
- 3.4 Introduce book using title, author and illustrator
- 3.5 Use voice as a teaching tool — expression, grammar, volume, inflection
- 3.6 Promote critical thinking in children
- 3.7 Provide opportunities for children to interact
- 3.8 Present on child’s level

ECE 4.0 — Apply knowledge of early childhood education and employment skills through an interview process

- 4.1 Exhibit professionalism during interview
- 4.2 Use appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication
- 4.4 Display self-awareness
- 4.5 Demonstrate knowledge of high-quality early childhood programs

ECE 5.0 — Apply knowledge of child development and early childhood education

- 5.1 Display an understanding of theorists and their contribution to the foundation of early childhood education
- 5.2 Describe child growth and development
- 5.3 Explain how to provide a safe and healthy learning environment
- 5.4 Discuss how to encourage development in all areas: physical, social, emotional, cognitive and linguistic
- 5.5 Provide safe and effective classroom management

ECE 6.0 — Demonstrate professional and ethical standards

- 6.1 Maintain a commitment to professionalism
- 6.2 Describe positive techniques for collaborative work with peers
- 6.3 Demonstrate understanding for positive and collaborative relationships with children, family and community

ECE 7.0 — Evaluate developmentally appropriate practices to enhance various learning levels of child growth and development

- 7.1 Assess strategies that promote physical, cognitive, social, emotional and linguistic development in children
- 7.2 Analyze components of an inclusive curriculum that incorporates learning styles, language, home experiences and values
- 7.3 Respect diversity with sensitivity to anti-bias, gender equality, age, culture and ethnicity related to children and parenting
- 7.4 Demonstrate positive guidance techniques
- 7.5 Devise strategies to encourage self-discipline
- 7.6 Educate self in current and emerging research in early childhood practice

ECE 8.0 — Evaluate factors affecting children and families with a variety of disadvantaging conditions

- 8.1 Examine characteristics, needs and interventions related to children with special needs, such as those with physical, emotional, social or developmental delays or socioeconomic disadvantages

- 8.2 Describe the impact of heredity and environment on conditions that affect children

Committee Identified Academic Skills

The technical committee has identified that the following academic skills are embedded in this contest.

Linguistic Skills

- Validate social skills through conversations and oral presentations
- Demonstrate use of verbal communication skills: vocabulary, tone, pitch, fluency, expression
- Usage of nonverbal communication skills: eye contact, posture and movement to gain information
- Display written communication: narrative and informational writing
- Ability to edit written communication: grammar, sentence structure, spelling, proper usage of upper/lowercase and punctuation
- Exhibit reading/literacy skills

Math Skills

- Make predictions using knowledge of probability
- Use standard and nonstandard measurements
- Understand basic geometry
- Practice spatial relationships
- Ability to sort and classify sets
- Aptitude to construct patterns
- Identify numbers and basic addition/subtraction
- Create charts and graphs
- Exposure to time, volume and temperature

Science Skills

- Hands-on scientific experimentation through exploration
- Ability to ask questions and hypothesize
- Use of observations
- Conduct reasoning and make predictions
- Formulate questions using critical thinking
- Describe of living and nonliving things
- Define weather and climate
- Understanding nutrition and body awareness
- Concept of child growth and development

- Recording investigations
- Communicating and sharing ideas

Connections to National Standards

State-level academic curriculum specialists identified the following connections to national academic standards.

Linguistic

- Application of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts. Use prior experience, knowledge of word meaning and identification strategies for understanding contextual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure)
- Adjustment and usage of verbal, written and visual language (e.g., conceptions, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with diverse audiences for a variety of purposes
- Exhibit verbal, written and visual language to accomplish personal success (e.g., learning, enjoyment)
- Recognition, understanding and respect for diversity in language use and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions and social roles
- English Language Learners use native language to develop competency in the English language and develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
- Participation as knowledgeable, reflective, creative and crucial members of a variety of literacy communities

Source: Common Core English Language Arts Standards. To view high school standards, visit: www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/ELA_Standards1.pdf.

National Council of Teachers for English (NCTE). To view high school standards, visit: www.ncte.org/standards.

Math Standards

- Problem solving
- Communication
- Connections
- Representation

Source: Common Core Math Standards. To view high school standards, visit: www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_Mathematics_Appendix_A.pdf

Science Standards

- Understands the principles of heredity and related concepts
- Knowledge of biological evolution and diversity in life
- Recognizes scientific initiative

Source: National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). To view high school standards, visit: <http://ngss.nsta.org/AccessStandardsByTopic.aspx>.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Science and Engineering Practices in NGSS. To view high school standards, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ngss-standards-doc>.