



## Study Guide

## Introduction

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## Introduction

### History

In March 1997, after Dean Robert Barr testified to the Idaho Legislature about the relationship between incarceration and illiteracy nationally, the State Legislature appointed a committee to investigate the reading performance of children across the state. When this committee met in August 1997, it formed three subcommittees: expert best practices, teacher practice survey, and reading research. The State Legislature also created a subcommittee of legislators to devise recommendations for reading interventions. This subcommittee hired the Lee David Pesky Center to assist in writing a report, which resulted in the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan K-3.

In January 1999, House Bill 178 was introduced to test the reading skills of pre-service K-8 teachers and to require K-8 certified teachers and principals to pass either an approved Idaho Comprehensive Literacy course or the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Assessment (ICLA) for re-certification. The assessment would mirror the content of the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy course and include a demonstration of knowledge and skills based on current best practices research for language structures and literacy instruction, comprehension instruction, and assessment and intervention. During the spring of 1999, the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Course was created to review key reading practices referenced in the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

In August of 1999, the ICLA committee began meeting, and test consultants met with ICLA committee members in November to design a process for creating the state assessment. Technical consultants were also hired, and from January to July in 2000, tentative test items circulated among the consultants and committee members.

A pilot version of the ICLA was administered to a small group of reading specialists in September of 2000, after which the ICLA committee revised the pilot and developed vocabulary, instruction identification, and performance sections. College seniors around the state took the first pilot ICLA in February and March of 2001. The committee then analyzed and revised test items, developed scoring rubrics for the scenarios, and began creating a study guide for the exam. At the same time, a separate fairness committee examined the test language items and, with a few changes, approved the test forms. In September and October of 2001, a second administration of the revised ICLA was administered to college seniors. The study guide was completed. A third pilot administration was scheduled for January and February 2002 as a means to further enhance the quality of the assessment.

The ICLA contains three Standards: Standard I, Language Learning and Literacy Development; Standard II, Reading Comprehension Research and Best Practices; and Standard III, Literacy Assessment and Intervention. Each section is given as a separate exam. If pre-service teachers do not pass a Standard on the first attempt, they will retake only the Standard that they do not pass. The ICLA allows teacher preparation programs to design reading courses according to their theoretical perspectives, and it also provides

Idaho-trained teachers sufficient knowledge and skills to communicate effectively with other reading educators and work toward meeting the directive of teaching all children to read by the end of third grade.

Idaho Statute 33-1207A. Teacher Preparation

Title 33: Education

Chapter 12: Teachers

33-1207A. Teacher Preparation

(1) Higher Education Institutions. The state board shall review teacher preparation programs at the institutions of higher education under their supervision and shall assure that the course offerings and graduation requirements are consistent with the state board approved, research based "Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan." To assure the most immediate compliance with this requirement, the board may allocate funds, subject to appropriation, to institutions which require revision of the program.

The state board shall be responsible for the development of a single pre-service assessment measure for all kindergarten through grade eight (8) teacher preparation programs. The assessment must include a demonstration of teaching skills and knowledge congruent with current research on best reading practices. In addition the assessment must include how children acquire language; the basic sound structure of English, including phonological and phonemic awareness; phonics and structural analysis; semantics and syntactics; how to select reading textbooks; and how to use diagnostic tools and test data to improve teaching. It shall also include the pre-service teacher's knowledge base of reading process: phonological awareness; sound-symbol correspondence (intensive, systematic phonemes); semantics (meaning); syntax (grammar and language patterns); pragmatics (background knowledge and life experience); and comprehension and critical thinking. By September 2002, all K-8 teacher candidates from an Idaho teacher preparation program shall pass this assessment in order to qualify for an Idaho standard elementary teaching certificate. The state board shall report the number of pre-service teachers taking and passing the performance-based reading assessment to the legislature and governor annually. All costs associated with administration of this test shall be borne by the institution which administers the test and shall be shown as a line item in the appropriation request of the institution for state reimbursement.

(2) In-service Programs. Each teacher employed in a classroom for kindergarten through grade eight (8), Title I, or special education and each school administrator of a school which includes kindergarten through grade eight (8), Title I, or special education shall complete three (3) credits (or forty-five (45) contact hours of in-service training) of a state approved reading instruction course titled "Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Course" based on the state approved research based "Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan" in order to recertify. Courses which qualify for credit shall be approved by the state department of education, and any educator who completes a state approved reading instruction course prior to September 2001, shall be deemed to have met the requirements of this subsection. Completion of a state approved reading instruction course shall be a one-time requirement for renewal of certification for those currently employed in an Idaho school district and shall be included within current requirements for continuing education for renewal. The department shall provide a waiver of this requirement if the

applicant successfully completes the reading assessment measure developed for pre-service purposes as provided in subsection (1) of this section. The department shall establish a procedure to allow a waiver of this requirement if the applicant teaches in a secondary grade subject, which does not directly involve teaching reading or writing.

The board of trustees of every school district shall include in its plan for in-service training, coursework covering reading skills development, including diagnostic tools to review and adjust instruction continuously, and the ability to identify students who need special help in reading. The district plan for in-service training in reading skills shall be submitted to the state department of education for review and approval, in a format specified by the department.

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### Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Assessment Standards

Notice: Each form of the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Assessment may contain pilot items embedded in the assessment that are not calculated in the candidates' score.

#### Standard I, Language Learning and Literacy Development

The practicing educator has knowledge, strategies, and beliefs about language structures and literacy instruction that are based on current research and best practices to maximize student reading success.

Standard I addresses emergent literacy, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and structural analysis, sight vocabulary, morphemic analysis, and research-based instructional practices for developing accurate and automatic decoding.

#### Standard II, Reading Comprehension Research and Best Practices

The practicing educator understands and applies/promotes research and best practices that maximize student reading success in comprehension.

Standard II focuses on fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension instruction, and text genres.

#### Standard III, Literacy Assessment and Intervention

The practicing educator understands and promotes/applies appropriate strategies, multiple assessments, and interventions to maximize student reading success.

Standard III deals with common assessment procedures, interpretation of assessment results, and instructional activities for struggling readers.

## Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Assessment (ICLA) Study Guide

This study guide is a description of the domain from which the ICLA samples. Therefore, it does not contain all the information a candidate will need to pass. The sample items reflect the format of the items found in the ICLA.

### Testing Requirements and Fees

Each candidate wishing to take the ICLA must sign up for the assessment three weeks in advance of the testing date. They will be required to provide their student identification number, mailing address and a fee. A picture identification will be required at the testing location.

#### Fee Schedule (per standard)

Candidate	Amount in Dollars
Undergraduate	
First Attempt (non-refundable registration fee)	30
Second Attempt (includes registration fee)	50
Postgraduates and in-service teachers (each administration)	75

#### Testing Calendar

Registration	Tests Administered
February 25 – March 25	April 15 – May 10
May 1 – June 15	July 15 – August 10
September 15 – October 15	November 15 – December 10

ICLA Registration: <http://data.ed.uidaho.edu/idread/>

#### Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities/Special Needs

If you have a documented disability or believe that you have a disability that might require “reasonable accommodation” when taking the ICLA, please notify your testing location listed below. As a part of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is the responsibility of the candidate to disclose a disability prior to requesting reasonable accommodation. Some possible accommodations may be:

- Enlarged printed text
- Administration via a computer

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## Test Taking Tips

### General

The following list of hints for test taking are simple and can be found in a number of different sources. Early preparation will make it easier to apply all of these suggestions.

1. As the test day draws near, your familiarity with the material will allow you to review more material in the same amount of time. This also allows you to focus more on the performance demonstration which may require knowledge from all other portions of the test as test.
2. Use this study guide to help you prepare for the types of items on the assessment. Studying with friends in an “ask and answer” format is also helpful for many test takers.
3. Get a good night’s sleep the night before the test.
4. Your brain needs a lot of water to function at peak levels, so be sure and drink water before the test and during any breaks you are given. If your test site permits you to have beverages, bring along a bottle of water to help you through the test.
5. Read the directions for each portion of the test carefully. Be sure you understand the directions before starting on a section. Taking a few extra minutes before beginning could save you a lot of time redoing items later (or missing them).
6. Read all items carefully. Be sure you know what type of response(s) is (are) required for each item. If you are unsure of the answer, go on to the rest of the items in that section and/or the test. Return to any unfinished items when you have completed the section/test.
7. Section Three—Application, when completing the items that depend upon the three level scale (*a, b, c*):
  - a. Before reading the scenario and using scratch paper, mark the items true or false for literacy in general.
  - b. Read the scenario
  - c. Revisit the true responses. Mark an item *a* if it relates to and is true for the context of the scenario. Mark them *b* if they are not appropriate in the context the scenario.
8. After completing the test, take a few minutes to check your work before submitting it. Everyone, at one time or another has submitted a test with a foolish error on it. Try to avoid losing points that could be saved by reviewing the test.

