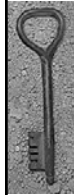




## NESPA PREPARATION

KEY TO SUCCESS



## When to take the NESPA?

- ◆ After having a variety of clinical practicum experiences
- ◆ After completing most of your graduate academic course work
- ◆ NESPA is designed for individuals who have completed all or most coursework and practica



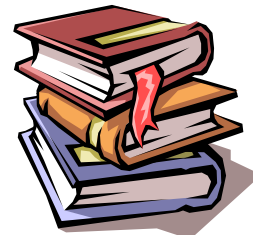
## Preparation Tips

- ◆ Know format of the exam
  - Layout of test booklet and answer sheet
  - Test directions
  - Test content
  - Skills measured
  - Question types
  - Phrasing used in multiple-choice questions
  - Visual elements
  - Time limits (remember 120 minutes/150 questions!)



## Study Preparation

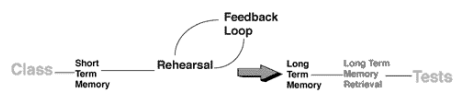
- ◆ Study Habits
  - Study environment
  - Anticipating/handling test anxiety
  - Learning style
  - Goal setting
  - Develop test-taking skills



## NESPA Preparation




What it means to Study

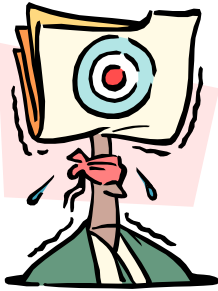


## Immediate Environment

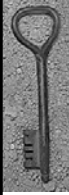
- ◆ Check your place of study for:
  - Noise
  - Interruptions
  - Lighting and Temperature
  - Neatness and Comfort
  - Equipment



## Study and Test Anxiety




- ◆ Causes
- ◆ Coping with feeling of being overwhelmed
- ◆ Confronting and handling test anxiety



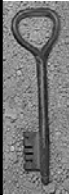
## Causes

- ◆ Apprehension of not living up to others expectations of you.
- ◆ Allowing scores to determine your personal worth
- ◆ Fear of losing your new job
- ◆ Feeling of helplessness with no internal locus of control




## Anticipating Test Anxiety

- ◆ What is it you have to do? Focus on dealing with it.
- ◆ Just take one step at a time
- ◆ Think about what you can do about it.
- ◆ No negative or panicky self-statements; just think rationally.
- ◆ Don't worry; worrying won't help anything.



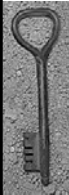
## Coping with the Fears of Being Overwhelmed

- ◆ Learn to relax. When fear comes, just pause.
- ◆ Face your fears and accept the fact that you have a problem
- ◆ Become task oriented and give total attention to the test
- ◆ Engage in positive self-talk



## Coping with the Fears of Being Overwhelmed

- ◆ Learn to recognize signals – increased pulse rate, excessive perspiration, shallow breathing, upset stomach, etc. – then try relaxation exercises.
- ◆ Dress comfortably for test
- ◆ Arrive on time at test site
- ◆ Develop a test-day tradition



## Reinforcing self statements

- ◆ It worked! You did it!
- ◆ It wasn't as bad as you expected.
- ◆ You made more of the fear than it was worth.
- ◆ You're getting better. You're learning to cope more smoothly.



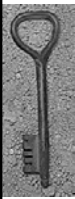
## Top Tips for Reducing Test Anxiety

- ◆ Reduce study materials to outlines, note cards or key study pages – OVERLEARN
- ◆ Learn relaxation techniques – deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization
- ◆ Don't panic if you don't know the answer, eliminate options you know are incorrect
- ◆ If you have time, review your answers. Don't change an answer unless you are sure your new answer is correct.



## Learning Style

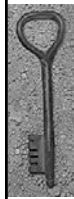
- ◆ Know your strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Identify critical information, especially in questions involving case studies, and practice these skills
- ◆ Prepare a study plan
- ◆ If you learn best through hands-on experience, focus on teaching videos, clinical observation and practice tests



## Study, Study, Study!

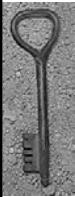


- ◆ Prepare a study plan
  - Don't randomly "attack" material
- ◆ Set & keep to a study schedule
- ◆ Review material from both undergraduate and graduate courses
- ◆ Review content areas of test
- ◆ Consider participating in study groups
- ◆ Take advantage of commercial materials



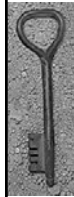
## Goal Setting

- ◆ Set your own goals
- ◆ Put goals in writing
- ◆ Make your goals attainable
- ◆ Goals should be specific
- ◆ Goals should have a target date



## Test Taking Skills - Preparation

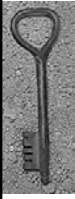
- ◆ Maintain a positive attitude
- ◆ Make a study schedule
- ◆ Predict test questions
- ◆ Practice recall of information
- ◆ Get a good night's rest and eat well balanced meals



## Test Taking Skills - Preparation

- ◆ Improve your skills in taking timed, multiple-choice exams
- ◆ Set up a time schedule. Budget time!
  - Don't get caught with a 100% effort on 20% of the test!





## Increasing Reading Efficiency

- ◆ Push yourself to read faster than is normally comfortable
- ◆ Decrease number of eye fixations. Increase eye span.
- ◆ Avoid faulty reading habits
  - Moving your head
  - Subvocalizing
  - Rereading
  - Word by word reading



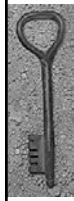
## Increasing Reading Efficiency

- ◆ Reading is a thinking process
  - Concentrate
  - Predict/Anticipate
  - Cluster/Read in phrases
  - Use key words
  - Register the idea



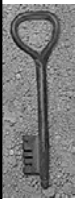
## Increasing Reading Efficiency

- ◆ Practice daily for 15-20 minutes
- ◆ Practice on easy, high interest materials first
- ◆ Check comprehension periodically
- ◆ Find your reading speed
- ◆ Expand to more difficult material



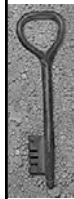
## During the Test Period

- ◆ Survey the entire test and start with the easiest questions first.
- ◆ Read directions carefully.
- ◆ Recall the correct answer after carefully reading the stem of a multiple choice question.
- ◆ Review entire test before turning it in.



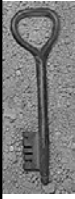
## During the Test Period

- ◆ Skim the stems of multiple choice questions to discover what kind of information is wanted
- ◆ Key words and facts will help solidify the main idea
- ◆ Read with a question in mind
  - Ask who, what, when and where to find key ideas. Ask how and why to find reasons



## During the Test Period

- ◆ Avoid word-by-word reading or backtracking. Try reading at approximately the same time as you are thinking.
- ◆ Stay actively involved to maintain concentration. Read critically.
- ◆ Read through entire section before rereading for clarification



### During the Test Period

- ◆ As you read a selection composed of several paragraphs, determine whether the succeeding paragraphs *expand the ideas or points raised* in preceding paragraphs or whether they *provide and example or illustration of them*.



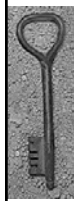
### During the Test Period

- ◆ Don't get too involved with the reading selection. Answer the questions on the basis of only what is presented. Don't read more into it than is there. Don't jump to a conclusion before you have read the whole passage.
- ◆ Make notes on the examination booklet to highlight information you want to remember.
- ◆ Make educated guesses on questions you are unsure about



### Important Skills for Standardized Tests (ETS)

- ◆ Reading comprehension
- ◆ Thinking quickly and accurately
- ◆ Ability to manage time effectively
- ◆ Command of standard English
- ◆ Familiarity with the format of the test
- ◆ Ability to read and interpret charts, graphs, tables and maps



### Important Skills for Standardized Tests (ETS)

- ◆ Ability to apply what is known
- ◆ Ability to use an appropriate guessing strategy
- ◆ Ability to think critically about test content
- ◆ Ability to examine a whole, its elements and their relations
- ◆ Ability to focus on the task in question



### Important Skills for Standardized Tests (ETS)

- ◆ Ability to identify the question
- ◆ Ability to approach the test with the proper perspective
- ◆ Knowledge of the subject matter
- ◆ Ability to attend to detail
- ◆ Ability to deal with technical content.
- ◆ Ability to follow instructions



### Helpful Web Sites

- ◆ <http://NespaExam.com>
- ◆ [http://www.sla.purdue.edu/studenterv/learning\\_center](http://www.sla.purdue.edu/studenterv/learning_center)
- ◆ [www.utexas.edu/student/utlc](http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc)
- ◆ [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)

### *Tests at a Glance: Praxis and NESPA Preparation*

- Janis Jarecki-Liu, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
- Colleen McAleer, Ph.D., CCC-A/SLP
- Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Clarion University of Pennsylvania

### *Introduction*

- Purpose
  - provide information about the NESPA and Praxis exams for teaching certification in PA
  - provide information regarding the content and format of the test
  - provide specific test taking strategies
  - provide an opportunity to review sample questions

### *Purpose of the NESPA*

- Evaluate entry level basic clinical knowledge
- Criteria for professional license
- Criteria for Clinical Certification

### *What are the facts about the NESPA?*

- How many questions are on the test?
- Should you guess?
- How much time is allowed?
- Is the test culturally and linguistically fair?
- Who makes up the test?
- How long does it take to get results?

### *Misperceptions about the NESPA*

- You can not prepare
- Cramming results in a higher score
- ETS sets the passing score
- The test contains “trick” questions
- You are penalized for guessing
- The test is biased against minority students

### *More Misperceptions*

- You can only take the NESPA three times
- The exam always has an emphasis
- You must report your score to ASHA every time you take it.
- Each exam has a whole new set of questions
- If you don't pass the exam you can not get a job in the field

### *Facts about the NESPA*

- 120 questions
- 120 minutes
- multiple choice questions
- specific content areas evaluated

### *Top Reasons for Low Scores*

- Most students pass the NESPA on the first try but studies show that low scores are attributed to:
  - Ineffective time management
    - It is better to guess than to leave an answer blank
  - Test anxiety
    - Prepare for the actual testing situation
  - Taking the NESPA too early in graduate school
    - Take the exam in last semester of grad school or during your CFY.

### *Content Categories - Sp*

• Category	# of questions and %
• Basic Processes	20 / 17%
• Phon. And Lang.	23 / 19%
• Speech Disorders	15 / 13%
• Neurogenic	23 / 19%

### *Content Categories - Sp*

• Category	# of questions and %
• Audiology/Hrng.	6 / 5%
• Clinical Manag.	23 / 19%
• Professional Issues, Psychometrics Research	10 / 8%

### *Content Categories - Aud*

• Category	# of questions
• Basic Comm. Process	31
• Prevention/Iden.	12
• Assessment/Interpret. Behavioral	16
• Electrophys. Measurement/Interp	10

### *Content categories - Aud*

• Category	# of questions
• Rehabilitative Assess.	13
• Rehabilitative Tech.	13
• Rehabilitative Manag.	13
• Professional Issues	12

### *Additional Information About the Content*

- Websites available
  - professional.asha.org/academic
  - ets.org

### *NESPA Exam Question Format*

- Type A
  - assesses basic knowledge
  - factual questions that require knowledge of a piece of information

### *Type A Example*

- 1. A lesion in which of the following locations is most likely to result in chorea?
  - A. Parietal lobe of cerebrum
  - B. Frontal lobe of cerebrum
  - C. VIIth nerve
  - D. Spinal cord
  - E. Basal ganglia \*

### *Type B*

- Designed to test basic knowledge and use it in context
- Require application of information
- Demand more than simple memorization of facts

### *Type B Example*

- 2. The annular ligament is located closest to which of the following?
  - A. The chorda tympani
  - B. The malleus
  - C. The oval window \*
  - D. The round window
  - E. The incus

### *Type C*

- Requires the student to synthesize, evaluate and make decisions.
- Based on hypothetical case information
- Need to use clinical skills to make judgements
- Requires integration of knowledge and critical decision making

### *Type C Example*

- 3. A client reports no major hearing loss, but says she experiences tinnitus in both ears. Although she says she has no difficulty hearing in quiet situations, she does report difficulties understanding others, particularly in noisy surroundings. She reports no difference between the two ears.

### *Type C*

- Which audiometric configuration is most consistent with these complaints?
- A. a moderate unilateral sensorineural hearing loss
- B. a low-frequency conductive hearing loss
- C. a hearing loss at frequencies above 8000Hz

### *Type C*

- D. a high-frequency hearing loss \*
- E. a low-frequency sensorineural hearing loss

### *Question formats that are NOT on the NESPA*

- All of the above
- None of the above
- All except
- a,b, and c; a,c, and d
- True-False
- Fill in the blanks
- Short answer
- Essay

### *Praxis Series Tests for PA Teaching Certification*

Test	Qualifying Passing Score	New Composite Minimum Score
PPST: Reading (0710)	172	170*
PPST: Writing (0720)	173	169*
PPST: Math (0730)	173	170*

\*Required composite score of 521

Fundamental Subjects:  
 Content Knowledge (0511)150

### *Praxis Tests for PA Teaching Certification*

- Specialty Area Test – Teaching Speech to Students with Language Impairment (0880) 590
- two hours long
- 120 questions
- multiple choice questions

Janis M. Jarecki-Liu, Ph.D., CCC-SLP  
 Colleen McAleer, Ph.D., CCC-A/SLP

<i>Content Categories</i>		
• Category	# of questions / %	
– Speech/Lang Dev. and Foundations	25	21%
– Diagnosis & Manag. of Sp and Lang Dis.	44	36%
– Application of Ling. and psycholinguistics	14	12%

<i>Content Categories</i>		
• Audiology, Aural Rehab and alternatives; instrumentation	19	16%
General Special Education	18	15%

*In Summary*

- Review of coursework is recommended especially if you completed your academic study more than one year previous to the exam. Your skills of clinical judgement, critical thinking, test-taking strategies and effective guessing will enhance your ability to complete the NESPA successfully.