A Content Secondary Science Newsletter from the
Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program

Science Dissected

Preparing for the Science High School Proficiency Exam

The Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (SNRPDP) is excited to announce an additional resource to help students succeed on the science portion of the Nevada High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE). SNRPDP has developed practice review packets for each of the unifying themes of the Nevada State Science Standards. These packets will provide teachers with a review that contains the benchmarks for each standard, item specifications, and sample HSPE-style questions. Although preparedness for the science HSPE involves quality science education throughout a student's school career, the review packets will provide additional practice prior to taking the exam. The reviews will be beneficial to students who are taking the exam for the first time or for non-proficient students who need to repeat the exam.

The review packets will be useful to students as well as classroom teachers because they provide abbreviated sections of the state science standards. The standards are divided into four strands: Physical Science, Life Science, Earth Science, and Nature of Science. Within each strand are unifying concepts and benchmarks for each standard. The item specifications provide detailed information about the benchmark and are used as guidelines for test item writers. Each review packet lists the benchmarks for each unifying concept and includes the item specifications associated with that benchmark. An answer key is also conveniently included with the review packets.

In order to prepare for the Science HSPE, it is important to know what type of questions will be on the exam. The test is composed of 60 core multiple choice questions which are categorized according to their Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level. A majority of the questions on the HSPE are assessed at DOK level 2. The following matrix provides the number of questions that will be asked from each strand and the DOK level.

DOK Level Review

DOK 1 = Recall

DOK 2 = Application

DOK 3 = Advanced Reasoning

2010 Science HSPE Matrix

	Physical Science	Life Science	Earth Science	Nature of Science	Totals
DOK 1	7	6	4	3	20 (33%)
DOK 2	10	9	8	7	34 (57%)
DOK 3	1	3	1	1	6 (10%)
Totals	18	18	13	11	60
	30%	**30%**	**22%**	**18%**	

SNRPDP is continually creating resources to help teachers promote student achievement. To access the proficiency review sheets, visit the ***Targeted Interventions for Proficiency in Science (TIPS)*** Website at http://rpdp.net/sciencetips_v3/. The review packets are also available from SNRPDP's website (www.rpdp.net) under the Science tab in the NHSPE folder. Visit the TIPS and SNRPDP websites often to find newly added teacher resources.

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