

Assessment

Table of Contents

	Page
Pretest	2
Introduction	3
Test Components	4
Basic Skills Assessment	7
Vocational Preparatory Instruction	9
Post-test for Students	11
Test Security	12
Testing Procedures	13
Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	14
TABE Accommodations	16
Test-taking Strategies	17
Test Anxiety	19
MALDS	20
Prescribing Catalogs	21
Writing a Prescription	22
Progress Checks	23
Post-test	24
References and Resources	25
Appendices	
A. Test Information	27
B. Glossary of Terms	33
C. Pretest Answers	37
D. Post-test Answers	38
E. Prescribing Catalog Ordering Information	39

PRETEST

1. A comprehensive assessment program may include several different assessment measures. Name two.
2. What does the acronym SCANS stand for?
3. Where would you find the curriculum frameworks for Vocational Preparatory Instruction?
4. What does TABE stand for?
5. Explain the five levels of TABE.
6. What is TABE-WR?
7. Students who enroll in a 150-hour Advanced Security Guard program are required to take a basic skills test within the first six weeks after enrollment. True or false.
8. Name two of the Basic Skills tests for career certificate programs listed under Rule 6A-10.040, FAC, *Basic Skills for Postsecondary Career Certificate Education*.
9. A student scores 5.7 grade-level on the TABE pre-test. Can this student enter a career certificate program?
10. What does MALD stand for?

- **Pretest**
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

INTRODUCTION

Vocational Preparatory Instruction (VPI) is a program designed to provide basic-skills instruction and technical literacy based upon the assessed needs of the individual and the academic and employability requirements of Florida's Comprehensive Vocational Education Programs. Students should receive instruction/remediation in one or more of the VPI basic-skills-related instructional components (reading, mathematics, and language) based on their test scores. Developed by practitioners in the State of Florida, the curriculum frameworks reflect student's needs for academic/vocational/technical skills, as well as workplace readiness skills.

The goal of this module is to provide relevant information concerning the assessment instruments approved for students in career certificate education programs and/or placement in VPI by the Florida Department of Education. This module expounds on Florida Laws (State Board Rules and Florida Statutes), SCANS, Curriculum Frameworks, and Florida Department of Education's VPI Prescribing Catalogs and Progress Tests.

In 1996, VPI became an integral part of the Technical Resource Center (TRC) in all Florida's career education centers. The TRC includes VPI, GED/ABE, ESOL, ELCATE (formerly VESOL), SCANS competencies, Workplace Readiness Skills and other skills needed by students to successfully complete their career education training programs and become successful in securing and retaining high skill/high wage employment. The TRC's organized structure creates a flexible, student-oriented lab that can change with the current needs of students and offers the resources necessary to help students become workplace ready.

Since Adult Education (ABE/GED and ELCATE/ESOL) is an important component of the TRC, it is recommended that VPI develop a formal transition process with adult education. This assures a smooth passage from adult education into VPI and/or the job preparatory program for students.

One of the primary purposes of the VPI Lab is to assess students and answer the following: Does a student have the basic skills necessary to successfully complete their chosen career certificate program of instruction. The VPI Labs, with use of the approved assessment instruments, and through basic skills and academic skills instruction, can always assure that the student has the basic skills necessary.

- Pretest
- **Introduction**
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TEST COMPONENTS

Each day millions of American school students take tests. Over 95% of these exams are "pop quizzes," oral presentations, or some other type of teacher-made test. However, standardized assessments developed by test publishers -- the type of test that best evaluates student learning over time in comparison with others -- usually receive the most attention. Typically, such tests are both standardized and norm-referenced and provide objective information about each student's progress in mastering the subjects presented. A standardized test is a large-scale assessment with directions, time limits, materials, and a scoring procedure designed to remain constant each time the test is given to ensure confidence in test validity and reliability. All assessments administered within a state or local testing program should be standardized, no matter what type: performance-based, norm-referenced, or criterion (standards)-referenced.

A comprehensive assessment program may include several different assessment measures; among them are the following basic types and formats:

- **Standardized achievement tests.** These tests are commonly used to measure a students' knowledge in one or more content areas (e.g., reading, mathematics, or language) in which they have received instruction. "Standardized" means that the test is always given and scored the same way. The same questions are asked and the same directions are given for each test. Each student's performance may be compared with that of all the other students taking the same test. Most standardized achievement tests are norm-referenced, multiple-choice tests.
- **Norm-referenced tests.** Norm-referenced tests measure basic concepts and skills commonly taught in schools throughout the country. All students perform under the same testing conditions (e.g., carefully defined directions, time limits, materials, and scoring procedures). These tests are not designed as precise measures of any given curriculum or single instructional program. Test scores from norm-referenced tests provide information that compares students' achievement with that of a specified reference group. This gives teachers the opportunity to compare their student's performances with other students in a specified reference group. All norm-referenced tests are standardized.
- **Criterion-referenced tests.** This type of assessment is designed to compare a student's test performance with clearly defined curricular objectives, skill levels, and/or areas of knowledge. The results from criterion-referenced tests compare the student performances to specific curricular objectives and demonstrated mastery (knowledge) of that specific objective. This objective-based test information is useful in supporting instructional planning.
- **Multiple-choice tests.** Many standardized tests give students

- Pretest
- Introduction
- **Test Components**
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

the opportunity to select responses to test questions from among a number of specific choices. This format, called "selected response" or "multiple choice," is efficient and practical. Carefully designed multiple-choice questions can provide valid information about students' knowledge and their ability to reason logically and apply complex thinking processes to solve problems. Norm-referenced tests are usually administered in a multiple-choice format – a question, problem, or statement (called a stem) that appears on a test followed by two or more answer choices (called alternatives or response choices) with incorrect answers (called distracters). The student's is instructed to choose, from the alternatives provided, the best answer the question posed in the stem. Sometimes an item or group of items is related to a stimulus, such as a passage or graphic display (e.g., a map). Multiple-choice tests are generally scored by computers and provide impartial, accurate results.

- **Constructed-response item** (also called an **open-ended item**) is a question, problem, or set of directions that elicits a written, pictorial, or graphic response from a student. Short-answer items might require a response with several sentences or a written solution to a math problem.
- **Performance assessments** are types of tests that directly assess pupil performance. Students may be asked to write an essay or short response, draw a conclusion, respond to a reading passage, or perform a science experiment. Teachers or other school personnel observe students' performances and rate the outcomes. This kind of assessment is also useful in measuring listening skills, writing, and the process of problem solving. Performance assessments can also be standardized so that the test is given and scored the same way at each administration.

The following is an explanation of scoring and processes used in reporting test results:

- **Scale Score (SS)** is a score on a single scale with intervals of equal size. The scale can be applied to all groups of students taking a given test, regardless of group characteristics making it possible to compare scores from different groups of students.
- **Raw Score (RS)** is the first score obtained in scoring a test, such as the number of correct answers or the number correct minus a fraction of the number wrong. It could be the time required to complete the test, the number of errors, or some other number obtained directly from the test's administration.
- **National Percentiles (NP)** represents the percentage of students in the national norm group whose scores fall below a given student's score; a local percentile is the percent of students in a local group whose scores fall below a student's score. For example, a student whose NP is 65 scored higher than 65 percent of the students in the norm group. NP scores are useful for comparing local student achievement to students' achievement nationally. However, when interpreting

- Pretest
- Introduction
- **Test Components**
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

NP remember percentile rank refers to the percentage of students in the norm group who fall below a particular point, not the percentage of items answered correctly; and, NP intervals are unequal, and are not suitable for computing averages.

- **National Stanine (NS)** is a standard scale score that divides the norm population into nine groups ranging from a high of 9 to a low of 1 with the mean at stanine 5. Stanines draws its name from the fact that it is a standard score unit on a scale of nine units. In general, stanines of 1 through 3 are considered below average, 4 through 6 average, and 7 through 9 above average. Stanines are units on an equal-interval scale; they can be readily compared to percentiles. That is, a given percentile always falls into the same stanine. Stanine 5, for example, always includes percentiles rank 41-59. Stanines are single digit scores and are not likely to be confused with percentage of items answered correctly, and they can be averaged because they are equal interval scores. However, because they categorize test performance into only nine broad units, stanines provide less detail about student performance than other derived scores.
- **Grade Equivalent (GE)** is intended to indicate achievement levels related to typical educational structures (i.e., elementary and secondary schools). These scores do not have comparable meaning in nongraded programs, particularly programs that focus on the education and training of adults. GE indicates the year and month of school for which a student's score is typical. A GE of 6.2, for example, means that the student has scored at a level that is typical of students who had completed the second month of Grade 6 at the time the test was standardized. Grade equivalents should always be interpreted cautiously. For example, if a second grade student obtained a GE of 5.8 on a mathematics test, it does not mean that the student has mastered all the mathematics content taught through the first eight months of Grade 5. It means only that the student's performance on the test is statistically equivalent to the typical performance of students in the norm group who had completed eight months of Grade 5. Grade equivalents should not be used to place students in grades corresponding to the obtained GE. However, GEs are commonly understood reference points for adult examinees and teachers, and can facilitate the organization of instructional groups and the selection of appropriate instructional materials. Source: <http://ctb.com>

- Pretest
- Introduction
- **Test Components**
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Florida Statute Section 1004.91, *Vocational Preparatory Instruction* requires students who enroll in a program offered for career credit of 450 hours or more to complete an entry-level examination within the first six weeks of admission into the program. Each career education program has an associated academic basic skills (reading, mathematics and language) exit score. The basic skills exit scores are determined by state technical advisory committees based on the level of academic skills employees need to demonstrate in order to be successful within that particular career field. The examination is designed to assess student mastery of basic skills.

It is vital that the assessment instruments used are both valid and reliable and are only used with the students they were designed to be used with. The state of Florida has approved standardized tests to meet the requirements of Florida Statute and Florida School Board Rules. The following basic skills tests have been approved in the State of Florida, Rule 6A-10.040, FAC, for the purpose of determining if a student meets the minimum basic skills level required for completion from the career certificate education program in which they are enrolled:

- Computerized Placement Test (CPT) or Multiple Assessment Placement Service (MAPS)
- Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Forms 7 & 8, and 9 & 10, Complete Battery or Survey
- Tests of Adult Basic Education - Work Related Foundation Skills (TABE-WR)
- Wonderlic Basic Skills Test (WBST)

Note: Computerized Placement Test and Wonderlic Basic Skills Test are approved for Abilities to Benefit (ATB) testing.

Rule 6A-10.040, FAC, also lists for diagnostic and remediation several alternative assessment instruments that can be used for students with limited English proficiencies. They are:

- Adult Language Assessment Scales (A-LAS)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)
- Literacy Volunteer of America (LVA) English for Speakers of Other Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA)

Rule 6A-10.040, FAC, also lists for diagnostic and remediation several alternative assessment instruments that can be used for students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities should be provided with accommodations in the testing procedure as needed on an individual basis. They are:

- Brigance Employability Skills
- Brigance Life Skills
- Comprehensive Test of Adaptive Behaviors (CTAB)

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- **Basic Skills Assessment**
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System – (STRETCH)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System - Test for Special Populations
- Kaufman Functional Academic Skills Test (K-FAST)

Students who do not achieve the minimum level of basic skills required for completion from their career education programs will not be awarded a career certificate. However, adults with disabilities, as defined in Rule 6A-6.0132, FAC, and exceptional students as defined in section 1003.01, Florida Statute, may be exempted from meeting basic skills level to earn a career certificate and be reported as a program completer.

The following exempt students from meeting the basic skills exit score requirement:

- Students who possess a college degree at the associate in applied science (AAS) level or higher;
- Students who have successfully completed or are exempt from the college-level communication and computation skills examination pursuant to s. 1008.29;
- Students who are exempt from the college entry-level examination pursuant to s.1008.29; or
- Students who pass a related state; national or industry licensure exam.

Florida Department of Education minimum basic skills levels for career education programs can be found at:

www.firn.edu/doe/dwdframe/pdf/basic_skills.pdf

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- **Basic Skills Assessment**
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

VOCATIONAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION

Vocational Preparatory Instruction (VPI) is a program designed to provide basic-skills instruction and technical literacy based upon the assessed needs of the student and the academic and employability requirements of Florida's Comprehensive Vocational Education Programs. The student who does not meet the basic skills requirement on the pre-test should be referred to either vocational preparatory instruction or adult basic education (ABE) to help improve their basic skills. Students should be placed in one or more of the VPI basic-skills-related instructional components (reading, mathematics, and language) based on their test scores. Remediation may be provided concurrently with enrollment in the career education program or prior to entry into the career education program.

Counseling is an essential element in career preparation. Explaining the demands of the academics involved in the career education program is an important part of the counseling process. It is important for students to understand the relationship between basic skills and success in their chosen career education program and that improving their skills will help promote success in the program and in future employment. It is recommended that 1) students who test below the sixth grade level be referred to Pre-VPI or ABE; 2) students who test two grade levels below the basic-skills requirements for their career program may be provided with counseling and remediation before entry into the career education program; and 3) students who test within two grade levels of the requirements may be provided concurrent remediation while enrolled in a career education program. Also, students who are on a waiting list for entry into a career education program may be provided with remediation prior to entry. These basic skills tests are not to be used for screening purposes. It is critical that all personnel involved in policy, assessment, counseling, and instruction clearly understand this.

Note: If a student wishes to enter a career education program without remediation first, Federal law prohibits denying entry into a career education program based solely on a test score.

The use of standardized, valid, and reliable assessments ensures quality assessment. Quality assessment plays a major role in adult education programs, including the following:

- Students and programs are informed of the students' basic skills levels;
- Instruction can be focused on the students basic skill needs;
- Students are better equipped to determine both short- and long-term goals;
- Students have a better insight to other barriers;
- Students and programs can work together on the student's goals;

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- **Vocational Preparatory Instruction**
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

- Programs can closely monitor/evaluate effectiveness of various instructional strategies, techniques, and practices;
- Programs have accurate data to report to the State and for NRS purposes; and
- Programs are informed of student gains.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- **Vocational Preparatory Instruction**
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

POST-TEST FOR STUDENTS

The final evaluation for VPI students is a post-test using the alternate form of the pre-test given. As an example, if TABE, level D, Form 9 was used as the initial assessment instrument, TABE, Level D, Form 10 should be used as a posttest. Different assessment instruments can be used as evaluation tools to determine if the student is ready to post-test.

If an alternative assessment instrument was used as a pre-test, either form of one of the five basic skills tests listed in Rule 6A-10.040 should be used as the post-test. Some programs allow students to enroll in VPI prior to, or immediately following, the completion of the career education coursework. This allows some students the opportunity to begin (or complete) their basic skills remediation without the combined demands of the career education coursework and basic skills remediation. This is very common in lock-step programs such as nursing and public service. Remember, a student may never be held out of a vocational program based solely on a basic skills examination score.

Pre-test/Post-test Evaluation with TABE includes the following:

Locator → Pre-test → Instructional program (if required) → Posttest →
More instruction if required or exit program

The suggested course of remediation for students scoring low in all areas of a pretest would be: Reading → Math → Language

Reading should be first so that comprehension of all areas is increased. If reading is remediated to such an extent that the student post-tests and passes that section, the student will have a better chance of successful remediation in the other areas.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- **Post-test for Students**
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TEST SECURITY

Test security is an essential component of standardized testing. All assessment instruments, i.e., test booklets, answer sheets, answer keys, etc. should be kept in a locked environment with limited access. The testing area itself should be a secure and quiet location. Test security is covered in Section 1008.24, Florida Statute, *Test Security* and Rule 6A-10.042, FAC, *Maintenance of Test Security*.

s. 1008.24, F.S. Test Security

(1) It is unlawful for anyone knowingly and willfully to violate test security rules adopted by the State Board of Education for mandatory tests administered by or through the State Board of Education or the Commissioner of Education to students, educators, or applicants for certification or administered by school districts pursuant to s.1008.22, or with respect to any such test, knowingly and willfully to:

- (a)** Give examinees access to test questions prior to testing;
- (b)** Copy, reproduce, or use in any manner inconsistent with test security rules all or any portion of any secure test booklet;
- (c)** Coach examinees during testing or to alter or interfere with examinees' responses in any way;
- (d)** Make answer keys available to examinees;
- (e)** Fail to follow security rules for distribution and return of secure tests as directed, or fail to account for all secure test materials before, during or after testing;
- (f)** Fail to follow test administration directions specified in the test administration manuals; or
- (g)** Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist in, or encourage any of the acts prohibited in this section.

(2) Any person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days, or both.

(3) A district superintendent of schools, a president of a public postsecondary educational institution, or a president of a nonpublic postsecondary educational institution shall cooperate with the Commissioner of Education in any investigation concerning the administration of a test administered pursuant to state statute or rule.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- **Test Security**
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TESTING PROCEDURES

Recommended testing procedures established by test publishers should be followed for proper test administration including, but not limited to, the following:

- Preparing the testing room including seating plans
- The room should be comfortable, well lit, with sufficient work space
- The room should be arranged to discourage cheating
- A “do not disturb” sign should be posted on the door
- Securing and storing test materials
- Admitting examinees to the testing room with appropriate identification documents
- Distributing and collecting materials
- Reading the script
- Documenting irregularities
- Reading test instructions and directions to examinees
- Following testing time guidelines
- Providing accommodations for students with disabilities
- Handling unexpected interruptions
- Monitoring test-taking to prevent the opportunity for cheating
- Documenting and reporting problems with materials, disruptive student behavior, cheating, or any other unexpected/irregular incident

Every standardized assessment has a standardized protocol that must be followed to ensure accurate test results. All test administrators must familiarize themselves with the test administrator manual for each test they administer. Florida requires that each person who administers a state approved assessment instrument be trained on the instrument they are administering.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- **Testing Procedures**
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities vary with the limitations of their disability. Many students need only small changes to the way in which they are tested to be successful in their assessment. Students in wheelchairs need access to the testing site, students who are blind or visually impaired can use Braille books, audiotapes or large-print books and students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can have a sign language interpreter present. Alternate testing techniques provide the opportunity for students with a disability to demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge the test is designed to measure without being unfairly restricted by their disability. Documentation of the need for specific testing procedure accommodations should be maintained in the student's confidential records and revealed only on a "need to know" basis. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, *Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities*, provides the basis for accommodations to Florida's statewide assessment system for students with disabilities and provides examples of allowable testing accommodations.

Remember: An adult student with disabilities must self identify.

There are five basic testing accommodations that can be used for standardized testing of students with disabilities. They are as follows:

Presentation Format (Flexible Presentation)

- Enlarged print version of test
- Braille version of test
- Signing or oral presentations for test directions and items other than reading items.
- Reading allowable portions of test - except when testing "reading"

Response Mode (Flexible Responding)

- Student response on word processor
- Student signs responses
- Student responds verbally
- Braille response
- Proctor transcribes student's responses in appropriate format

Flexible Scheduling

- Additional time for test
- Several brief testing sessions during the day
- Frequent rest breaks (same total time)
- Testing at different time of day

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- **Testing Accommodations**
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

Flexible Test Setting

- Individual testing
- Small group testing
- Study carrel or separate room
- Special lighting, acoustics, adaptive equipment and/or special furniture

Assistive Devices

- Use of calculators (except when testing basic calculations as specified in test administration manual)
- Use of visual magnification and auditory amplification devices
- Word processors (without accessing spelling or grammar checking applications)

Some students with disabilities may need special testing accommodations during the testing and instructional process. These testing accommodations must be provided to ensure equal access to programs and activities. Accommodations may be used only if they do not alter the underlying content that is being measured by the assessment or negatively affect the assessment's reliability or validity. Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities, provides the allowable accommodations to statewide assessments for students with disabilities.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- **Testing Accommodations**
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TABE ACCOMMODATIONS

CTB/McGraw-Hill understands the need to include all students in large-scale testing programs as part of the educational process. Federal, state, and local regulations or policies often stipulate that students be provided with appropriate accommodations during testing. CTB supports the use of appropriate testing accommodations for examinees taking standardized tests and supports the efforts of decision makers to make valid and useful interpretations of test data. Not all accommodations have the same impact on the testing process, so CTB has divided common accommodations into three different categories.

Category 1

Category 1 accommodations are not expected to influence examinee performance in a way that alters the interpretation of either criterion- or norm-referenced tests scores. Individual examinee scores obtained using Category 1 accommodations should be interpreted in the same way as the scores of other examinees who take the test under regular conditions. These examinee scores can be included in summaries of results without notation of accommodation(s). Example of a Category 1 Accommodation: Take the test alone or in a study carrel. This and similar accommodations are not expected to affect the interpretation of individual examinee criterion- or norm-referenced scores.

Category 2

Category 2 accommodations may have an effect on examinee performance that should be considered when interpreting individual examinee criterion- and norm-referenced test scores. Example of a Category 2 Accommodation: Use extra testing time for any timed test.

Category 3

Category 3 accommodations are likely to change what is being measured and have an effect that alters the interpretation of individual criterion- and norm-referenced scores. This occurs when the accommodation is closely related to the knowledge, skill, or ability being measured (e.g., having a reading comprehension test read aloud). Example of a Category 3 Accommodation: Use a calculator for a mathematics computation test. Score interpretations should consider the accommodation-assessment combination and whether the accommodation(s) will change what is being measured.

For a full explanation of these categories, see CTB's *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration* at www.ctb.com

TABE editions for students who need accommodations are: Large Print, Braille and Audio.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- **TABE Accommodations**
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Studying is only a part of getting good results on an exam. No matter how hard one studies as a student if they don't know how to go about taking a test, whether multiple choice or essay, they won't score the highest possible mark. When an individual takes a test, they are demonstrating their ability to understand course material or perform certain tasks. Learning proper note taking, studying and test taking strategies are a vital part of improving grades and/or academic success.

Note taking skills and strategies are as follows:

- If the instructor writes something on the chalkboard/overhead or repeats an idea then it is usually a key point and should be written down.
- Use a three-ring binder, it allows for more flexibility in rearranging notes and any handouts that may be given out.
- Sit towards the front and center of the class where there are fewer distractions and for hearing and having a good angle on any visual aids that may be shown.
- Don't rely on notes from others; they may not be understandable or legible and one learns best by taking their own notes.
- Bring an audio recorder and record the lecture while taking notes; if the instructor talks fast.
- Do reading assignments or homework questions before class, it is easier to take notes when one knows what the instructor is talking about.
- Date notes; add titles and subtitles when a new topic is introduced for easy referencing.
- Write down any terminology along with the definition that the instructor may present.

Study skills and strategies are as follows:

- It is best to review the material right after class when it's still fresh
- Don't try to do all studying the night before the test, instead space out studying, review class materials at least several times a week, focusing on one topic at a time.
- Have all of study materials together: lecture notes, course textbooks, study guides and any other relevant material.
- Find a comfortable and quiet place to study with good lighting and little distractions.
- Start out by studying the most important information.
- Learn the general concepts first; don't worry about learning the details until the main ideas have been learned.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- **Test-taking Strategies**
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

- Take notes and write down a summary of the important ideas while reading through study material.
- Take short breaks frequently; memory retains the information that was studied at the beginning and the end better than what was studied in the middle.
- Space out studying, more is learned by studying a little every day instead of waiting to cram at the last minute. By studying everyday, the material will stay in long-term memory.
- Don't just read through the material and try to memorize everything.

Test taking strategies are as follows:

- Arrive early for tests.
- Keep a positive attitude and try to stay relaxed and confident, if nervousness occurs take a few deep breaths to relax.
- When the test is received, and it is okay to open the test booklet, do a quick survey of the entire test to budget time efficiently.
- Do the easiest problems first; don't stay on a difficult problem when time is a factor.
- Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.
- Don't rush, read the entire question and look for keywords.
- Ask for instructor for clarification.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- **Test-taking Strategies**
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

TEST ANXIETY

All students deal with test anxiety and students with disabilities are no different. Test anxiety is when a student excessively worries about doing well on a test. This can become a major hindrance on test performance and cause extreme nervousness and memory lapses among other symptoms. Some of the ways to dissipate some of the anxiety are as follows:

- Provide instruction in test-taking skills.
- Use approved practice tests to help students learn some of the strategies effective test-takers use.
- Conduct a review of the knowledge and skills to be tested several days before the test.
- Practice with timing practice exercises.
- Provide study guides to help students prepare for the test.
- Give the student practice with the testing format.
- Use sample questions and explain the scoring rubric or procedures.
- Read the instructions of the test to the student and simplify the language, if needed.
- Go over enough sample questions to make sure the student knows what to do.
- After testing is over, make sure students review how they did and identify any problem areas that need to be corrected.
- Review corrected tests and provide a debriefing.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- **Test Anxiety**
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

MALDS

The Modular Analysis of Learning Difficulties (MALD) groups test items according to deficiencies and performance levels as indicated by TABE results. Once the MALD has been completed, the Learning Manager references specific pages in the Prescribing Catalog (See Appendix I for ordering information) and then writes an individualized prescription for the student. The VPI Prescribing Catalogs match sub skills with a variety of carefully selected materials in various media. The prescription will then enable students to succeed by mastering small increments of deficiencies in a carefully prepared plan. This individualized treatment of students ensures greater success at becoming a viable participant in a chosen career/technical education program.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- **MALDS**
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

PRESCRIBING CATALOG

The Prescribing Catalog is an integral part of the VPI system and is available on CR-Rom from the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education's product catalog. Instructional materials listed in the Prescribing Catalog have met specific criteria, such as: meeting the skill requirements of the test item; self-instructional learning; providing small increments of information; providing a high level of student involvement; giving immediate feedback; and are both adult oriented and vocationally-related when available. The materials included in the catalogs have been thoroughly reviewed and field-tested in Florida VPI sites. Materials under each skill area start at the highest (advanced) reading level and go to the lowest (literacy) level.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- **Prescribing Catalogs**
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

WRITING A PRESCRIPTION

The steps in writing a prescription are as follows:

1. Determine the assessment instrument and level taken by the student.
2. Complete the MALD (Modular Analysis of Learning Difficulties).
3. Write the prescription by priority as listed on the MALD.
4. Look in the Prescribing Catalog for the material(s) to prescribe for each priority.
5. List the prescribing materials on a prescription data form. List only one item per area so that the student does not feel overwhelmed.
6. Update the prescription as necessary based on teacher's judgment.

In order to ensure the relevance of the VPI Program, supplementary instructional modules for specific occupational programs are developed at VPI sites by the VPI staff and vocational instructors. Each lab should add these materials in the blank sections of their Prescribing Catalogs. These supplementary resources are sometimes disseminated at statewide conferences and workshops.

When writing the prescription, be sure to start with the lowest priority on the MALD. At the present time, MALDs are only available correlated with TABE 7 & 8 and TABE 9 & 10. It is anticipated that MALDs correlated to the other approved basic skills tests will be developed. The prescribing catalog lists subskills and can be used with any of the assessment instruments.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- **Writing a Prescription**
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

PROGRESS CHECKS

VPI progress checks are available in pretest and post-test format for reading, mathematics, and language subskills. These progress checks can be found at www.firn.edu/doe/programs/spec_nds.htm

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- **Progress Checks**
- Post-test
- References
- Appendices

POST-TEST

1. Name two assessment score types.
2. There are three basic test accommodations that can be used for standardized testing of students with disabilities. True or false?
3. The final evaluation for VPI students is a post-test using the _____ form of the _____ given.
4. TABE is what kind of assessment instrument?
5. Students who pass a related state, national or industry licensure exam are exempt from meeting basic skills exit requirement. True or false?
6. A student achieves a GE of 9.9 on an M level TABE. What should occur?
7. A student is registered in the LPN program. The program requires a GE of 11+ to exit. What level of TABE should be used?
8. Any person who violates section 1008.24, F.S. Test Security is guilty of a _____ of the first degree.
9. Name three test taking strategies that are a vital part of improving grades and/or academic success.
10. The WBST evaluates skills for all grade levels. True or false?

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- **Post-test**
- References
- Appendices

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- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- **References**
- Appendices

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- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- **References**
- Appendices

Appendix A

Test Information

The following is ordering information for whichever test your district or community college decides to use.

Computerized Placement Test (Cpt)

The College Board, 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023-6992, 212- 713-8060

Computerized Placement Tests, CPT, is an assessment program based on computerized adaptive testing techniques. This methodology customizes tests according to each student's abilities, presenting a student with a series of test questions at the appropriate level of difficulty for his or her abilities, knowledge, and background.

Five areas are currently tested by CPT: Reading Comprehension, Sentence Skills, Arithmetic Skills, Elementary Algebra Skills, and College-Level Mathematics. The CPT is not timed and requires little proctor intervention. Each test has from 12 to 20 scored questions, and usually takes about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The primary function of CPT is to determine which course placements are appropriate for students and whether or not remedial studies are needed.

The first section, Reading Comprehension, consists of a series of 17 questions of two primary types. The first type is a reading passage followed by a question based on the text.

The second type deals with sentence relationships - two sentences followed by a question regarding the relationship between these sentences. Sentence Skills Test - 17 questions, sentence correction questions and construction shift questions. Arithmetic - 16 questions, operations with whole numbers and fractions, operations with decimals and percents, and applications and problem solving. Elementary Algebra - 12 questions; operations with integers and rational numbers, operations with algebraic expressions and equations, inequalities, and word problems. College Level Mathematics - 20 questions, algebraic operations, solution of equations & inequalities, coordinate geometry, applications and other algebra topics, functions, and trigonometry.

The CPT is normed for student performance compared to a normative sample of entering college students who took the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) in a New Jersey statewide assessment of basic skills. Test Reliability verification was based on a series of simulation studies involving eighteen hundred examinees. Test Validity comes from the pilot period data collected and from the experiences of institutions that depend on the CPT for placement.

The CPT is only used at Community Colleges in Florida.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

CTB McGraw Hill, 20 Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey, CA 93940,
800-538-9547

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (CTB, McGraw-Hill), are the norm-referenced tests most commonly used by the VPI program to measure achievement in reading, mathematics, and language. These tests are specifically normed for adults based on statistical data collected and analyzed by researchers to meet current adult basic education and current job market needs.

The newest member of the TABE test series, TABE 9 & 10, reflects the latest trends in adult basic education, federal legislation, and standards for skills essential to a student's success in the classroom and on the job.

The core TABE 9 & 10 assessment system contains selected-response (multiple-choice) items that measure examinee skills in various content areas. Administrators and instructors have the flexibility to test examinees according to a relevant content grade level. The five levels (L, E, M, D, and A) of TABE 9 & 10 cover a content grade level range from 0 through 12.9.

TABE Test Level	Content Grade Level
L	0 - 1.9
E	2.0 - 3.9
M	4.0 - 5.9
D	6.0 - 8.9
A	9.0 - 12.9

Level L Test

Level L measures the pre-reading, beginning reading, and beginning mathematics skills of adults functioning within a content grade level range of 0 through 1.9. Level L can be used to screen learners entering into literacy programs as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. Additionally, Level L identifies students who should not be placed in classes with skill levels comparable to Levels E through A, where the reading and mathematics skills may be too difficult for them to currently master.

Levels E, M, D, and A Tests

The Levels E, M, D, and A Tests measure reading, mathematics computation, applied mathematics and language. The reading test measures basic reading skills of adults, including the ability to construct meaning from a variety of life skills and prose selections.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

The items include practical, real-life stimuli as well as excerpts from published fiction and nonfiction that reflect topics of adult interest and cultural diversity.

The mathematics computation test addresses a range of low- to high-order operations and provides an appropriate representation of the core computation skills necessary to any successful mathematics program. The applied mathematics test assesses general mathematical literacy (defined as the ability to apply a wide range of basic mathematics skills, methods, and concepts to tasks such as budgeting, planning, designing, predicting results, and interpreting data). Items are presented in contexts that adults find familiar and meaningful.

The language test utilizes several item formats to test skills ranging from textual organization to sentence formation and conventions of formal and informal written communication. The test assesses skills in the areas of usage, mechanics, sentence formation, and paragraph development. It contains a variety of narrative and informative passages, with topics of interest for adults.

When more information is needed the following optional test may be administered: vocabulary, language mechanics and spelling. The algebra/geometry, writing, science and social studies tests are advanced level tests designed to help students prepare for the GED. Additionally, TABE tests can be used as criterion-referenced, to help in:

- Identifying areas of weakness in the basic skills;
- Assisting in prescribing an instructional program to meet students' individual needs; and
- Measuring growth in the skills after instruction.

The TABE 7 & 8, the previous edition is still available. It has both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests, with more emphasis placed on problem solving, decision making, and life skills than in earlier editions of TABE.

Locator tests indicate which level of TABE you should administer to students with unknown levels of ability. The locator test should not be used for instructional placement decisions about a student. The locator test should be given first and the results used to administer the correct level of TABE. The locator test may determine that the same student has different skill levels in separate content areas. For example, the student may test at level M for reading and test at level D for mathematics.

The content ranges are the content level of material included in the test. Therefore, in career education programs requiring seventh through eighth grade level for completion, should use level D, those requiring ninth grade should use level D or A and for programs requiring above the 9th grade level for completion, mastery should be at the A level of the TABE. Rule 6A-10.040(7), FAC, allows school districts to exempt students with disabilities from the requirements of the law. It is required that students with disabilities participate in testing and remediation. When the student is ready to complete the vocational program, the basic skills exemption may be used if needed. Each LEA must develop policy to address

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

this issue.

When student tests two grade levels above or below the content range on any level of the TABE, they fall out of the Standard Error of Measure (SEM) and the test is determined to be inappropriate. If this occurs, the student should be retested on another level of the TABE.

SEM 2 years (below the content range)	Level	Content Range	SEM 2 years (above the content range)
	L- Literacy	0 – 1.9	3.9 and up
	E - Easy	2.0 – 3.9	5.9 and up
Below 2.0	M - Medium	4.0 – 5.9	7.9 and up
Below 4.0	D - Difficult	6.0 – 8.9	10.9 and up
Below 7.0	A - Advanced	9.0 – 12.9	

TABE - Work-Related (TABE-WR) Foundation Skills are available only in the D level for Health, Business/Office, Trade/Technical, and General. TABE-WR is a series of norm-referenced tests designed to measure achievement of basic skills in reading, mathematics and language. Using appropriate content and language to represent the workplace context, WORK-Related Foundation Skills assess skills that an individual needs in order to function in the workplace and society.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

WONDERLIC BASIC SKILLS TEST (WBST)

Wonderlic Personnel Test, Inc., 1509 North Milwaukee Avenue, Libertyville, IL 60048-1380, 800-323-3742

The Wonderlic Basic Skills Test assesses the student's current level of work-related math and language skills in a fraction of the time of traditional basic skills tests. WBST measures not only knowledge, but also the ability to apply that knowledge to specific work-related tasks. The WBST reports students' math and language GED levels, which are matched with the GED levels in the DOT. WBST content was developed in conjunction with educational institutions, government agencies, and all types of businesses and industries. Before the test was released, it was administered to nearly 15,000 people. The questions were formulated by independent experts in language and math. In addition, to ensure fairness the content was evaluated by industrial and organizational psychologists for gender and ethnic sensitivity. WBST is a short form of adult language and math skills. It became available for public distribution on June 30, 1994, after an intensive three-year cooperative development effort. The WBST is designed to measure the job-readiness of teenagers and adults. Job readiness means having sufficient language and math skills to successfully handle the written and computational requirements of the job. To make this work, the WBST matched test scores to specific job requirements for auto mechanics, computer operators, electricians, florists, merchandisers, radiology technicians, and so on.

The WBST may be interpreted in terms of job requirements, occupational norms, or grade equivalents. The WBST evaluates skills at grade levels 4, 6, 8, and 10. The test content includes questions assessing skills commonly taught at the high school level to meet the proposed U.S. Department of Education requirements for assessing non-high school graduates' ability-to-benefit from postsecondary vocational training. Grade level equivalents are provided for grades 6-12.

Alternative Assessment Instruments

Rule 6A-10.040, FAC, lists several alternative assessment instruments to be used with students with disabilities or students with limited English proficiency. These tests are to be used when the basic skills examinations listed in parenthesis are not appropriate for the particular student.

Limited English Proficiency

Adult Language Assessment Scales (A-LAS) - CTB McGraw Hill, 20 Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey, CA 93940, 800-538-9547

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) - CASAS, 910 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-255-1036

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) English as a Second Language Oral Assessments (ESLOA) - Literacy Volunteers of America, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214, 352-377-1434

Students with Disabilities

Brigance Employability Skills - Curriculum Associates, Inc., P. O. Box 2001, North Billerica, MA 01862-1158, 800-255-0248

Brigance Life Skills - Curriculum Associates, Inc., P. O. Box 2001, North Billerica, MA 01862-1158, 800-255-0248

Comprehensive Test of Adaptive Behaviors (CTAB) Educational Achievement Systems, 319 Nickerson Street, Suite 112, Seattle, WA 98109, 425-820-6111

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System STRETCH (CASAS) - CASAS, 910 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-255-1036

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System Test for Special Populations (CASAS) - CASAS, 910 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-255-1036

Kaufman Functional Academic Skills Test (K-FAST) American Guidance Service, 4201 Woodlane Road, Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796, 800-328-2560

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Academic Aptitude Test - An aptitude test that predicts achievement in academic pursuits

Achievement Test - An assessment instrument that measures a student's acquired knowledge in one or more content areas

Adult Accountability Test - An assessment intended primarily for individuals 18 years old or older who are no longer attending elementary or secondary school

Alternative Assessment - An assessment that differs from traditional achievement tests. For example, an alternative assessment may require a student to generate or produce responses or products rather than answer only selected-response items. This type of assessment may include constructed-response activities, essays, portfolios, interviews, teacher observations, work samples, and/or group projects.

Aptitude Test - A test consisting of items selected and standardized so the test predicts a person's future performance not obviously similar to those in the test.

Authentic Assessment - An assessment that measures a student's performance on tasks and situations that occur in real life. This type of assessment is closely aligned with and models what students do in the classroom.

Battery - A test battery is a set of several tests designed to be administered as a unit. Individual subject-area tests measure different areas of content and may be scored separately. Scores from the subtests may also be combined into a single score.

Benchmark - A benchmark identifies the learner expectations. It is what the student should be able to do at the end of a developmental level.

Bias - A situation that occurs in testing when items systematically measure differently for different ethnic, gender, or age groups. Test developers reduce bias by analyzing item data separately for each group, then identifying and discarding items that appear to be biased.

Ceiling - The upper limit of performance that can be measured effectively by a test. Individuals are said to have reached the ceiling of a test when they perform at the top of the range in which the test can make reliable discriminations. If an individual or group scores at the ceiling of a test, the next higher level of the test should be administered, if available.

Checklist - An assessment that is based on the examiner observing an individual or group and indicating whether or not the assessed behavior is demonstrated.

Constructed-Response Item - An assessment unit with directions, a question, or a problem that elicits a written, pictorial, or graphic response from a student. Sometimes called an "open-ended" item.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Conversion Tables - Tables used to convert a student's test scores from scale score units to grade equivalents, percentile ranks, and stanines.

Content Validity - Content validity indicates the extent to which the content of the test samples the subject matter or situation about which conclusions are to be drawn. Methods used in determining content validity are textbook analysis, description of the universe of items, adequacy of the sample, representation of the test content, inter-correlations of subtest scores, and opinions of a jury of experts.

Criterion - A standard or judgment used as a basis for quantitative and qualitative comparison; that variable to which a test is compared to constitute a measure of the test's validity. For example, grade-point average and attainment of curricular objectives are often used as criteria for judging the validity of an academic aptitude test.

Criterion-Referenced Test - A test in which every item is directly identified with an explicitly stated educational behavioral objective. The test is designed to determine which of these objectives have been mastered by the examinee.

Culture-Fair Test - A test devised to exclude specific cultural stimuli so that persons from a particular culture will not be penalized or rewarded on the basis of differential familiarity with the stimuli.

Diagnostic Test - A test intended to locate learning difficulties or patterns of error. Such tests yield measures of specific knowledge, skills, or abilities underlying achievement within a broad subject. Thus, they provide a basis for remedial instruction.

Equal-Interval Scale - A scale marked off in units of equal size that is applied to all groups taking a given test, regardless of group characteristics or time of year. Each test yields its own scale. On TABE, for example, scale scores are expressed in numbers ranging from 0 to 999. The continuity of the scale among levels comes from administering special test forms containing items from adjacent test levels to random groups of students. This allows the TABE scales to be calibrated so that a given adult learner is expected to obtain the same scale score regardless of the form or level of the test he or she takes. However, the standard error of measurement associated with that student's score will vary systematically from level to level.

Grade Equivalent - A score on a scale developed to indicate the school grade (usually measured in months) that corresponds to an average chronological age, mental age, test score, or other characteristic of students. A grade equivalent of 6.4 is interpreted as a score that is average for a group in the fourth month of Grade 6. Grade equivalents do not compose a scale of equal intervals and cannot be added, subtracted, or averaged across test levels the way scale scores can.

Interpretation - The act of explaining test scores to students so they understand exactly what each type of score means. For example, a percentile rank refers to the percentage of students in the norm group who fall below a particular point, not the percentage of items answered correctly.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Item Bias - An item is biased when it systematically measures differently for different ethnic, cultural, regional, or gender groups.

Item Response Theory - The basis of various statistical models for analyzing item and test data. In TABE, the three-parameter model was used in the selection and scaling of items. This model takes into account discrimination, difficulty, and chance level of success (guessing) to describe each item's statistical characteristics.

Literacy Completion Point - An LCP is the attainment of academic and workforce readiness skills that qualify the participant for further basic education, vocational education or employment.

Multiple Measures - Assessments measuring student performance in a variety of ways. Multiple measures may include standardized tests, teacher observations, classroom performance assessments, and portfolios.

Norm-Referenced Test - A standardized assessment, in which all students perform under the same conditions. This type of test compares a student or group of students with a specified reference group, usually others of the same grade and age for K-12 students, or for adults, those with similar characteristics, such as those in an adult basic education class.

Norms - The average or typical scores on a test for members of a specified group. They are usually presented in tabular form for a series of different homogeneous groups.

Objective Test - A test for which a list of correct answers, one for each test item, can be provided so that subjective opinion or judgment is eliminated from the scoring procedure. Multiple-choice, true/false, and matching-item tests are purely objective, while short answer and completion-item tests are less so.

Performance Assessment - An assessment activity that requires students to construct a response, create a product, or perform a demonstration. Usually there are multiple ways that an examinee can approach a performance assessment and more than one correct answer.

Reliability - The consistency of test scores obtained by the same individuals on different occasions or with different sets of equivalent items; accuracy of scores.

Rubric - A scoring tool, or set of criteria, used to evaluate a student's test performance.

Scale - An organized set of measurements, all of which measure one property or characteristic. Different types of test-score scales use different units, for example, number correct, percentiles, or IRT scale scores.

Scale Scores - Scores on a single scale with intervals of equal size. The scale can be applied to all groups taking a given test, regardless of group characteristics or time of year, making it possible to compare scores from different groups of examinees. Scale scores are appropriate for various statistical purposes; for example, they can be added, subtracted, and averaged across test levels. Such computations

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

permit educators to make direct comparisons among examinees, compare individual scores to groups, or compare an individual's pre-test and post-test scores in a way that is statistically valid. This cannot be done with percentiles or grade level equivalents.

SCANS Competencies - Developed by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, the SCANS Report produced a definitive study that outlined eight areas of emphasis needed to produce qualified, productive workers for the 21st century.

Standardization - The process of administering a test to a nationally representative sample of examinees using carefully defined directions, time limits, materials, and scoring procedures. The results produce norms to which the performance of other examinees can be compared, provided they took the test under the same conditions.

Standardized Test - A test constructed of items that are appropriate in level of difficulty and discriminating power for the intended examinees, and that fit the pre-planned table of content specifications. The test is administered in accordance with explicit directions for uniform administration and is interpreted using a manual that contains reliable norms for the defined reference groups.

Stanine - A unit of a standard score scale that divides the norm population into nine groups with the mean at stanine. The word stanine draws its name from the fact that it is a Standard score on a scale of NINE units.

Sunshine State Standards - "The Florida System of School Improvement and Accountability: Blueprint 2000" developed in 1993 established eight goals. Goal 3 of this initiative deals with student performance described in terms of eleven standards. These standards were incorporated into seven specific curriculum areas called the Sunshine State Standards.

Validity - The capability of a test to measure what its authors or users intend it to measure.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Appendix C

Pretest Answers

1. Standardized achievement tests, norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, multiple-choice tests, constructed-response item or performance assessments
2. Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
3. Florida Department of Education Website
http://www.firn.edu/doe/dwdframe/ad/ad_frame.htm
4. Tests of Adult Basic Education
5. L-Literacy, 0-1.9, measures the pre-reading, beginning reading, and beginning mathematics skills. E- Easy, 2.0-3.9, M-Medium, 4.0-5.9, D-Difficult, 6.0-8.9, and A-Advanced, 9.0-12.9, measures reading, mathematics computation, applied mathematics, and language.
6. Tests of Adult Basic Education - Work-Related. TABE-WR is a series of norm-referenced tests designed to measure achievement of basic skills in reading, mathematics, and language.
7. None. They are exempt from testing because the program is less than 180 hours.
8. CPT, TABE, TABE-WR, WBST
9. No, students cannot be denied entry into a career certificate programs.
10. Modular Analysis of Learning Difficulties

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Appendix D

Post-test Answers

1. Scale Score, Raw Score, National Percentile, National Stanine, and Grade Equivalents
2. False – There are five.
3. Alternate, pretest
4. Norm-referenced
5. True
6. The student should be retested on the appropriate level.
7. Level A
8. Misdemeanor
9. Note taking, study skills and test taking
10. False – Grade levels 4, 6, 8, and 10 only.

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**

Appendix E

Prescribing Catalog Ordering Information

Orders can place by telephone, faxed or mailed and should include the following information:

Name

Institution/agency

Telephone with extension, fax number, and e-mail address

Street address, city, county, state and zip code (shipping address if different)

Quantity, product code, product title/description, unit price, and net price

Orders placed by telephone: toll free 1800-342-9271 (Florida only), 850-245-0452, or SunCom 205-0452. Fax orders to 850-254-0995 or SunCom 205-0995. Career Planning and Product Distribution office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mail Orders to:

Florida Department of Education

Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education

Career Planning and Product Distribution

325 West Gaines Street

Turlington Building, Suite 644

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

For additional information and the product catalog visit the website:

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/publicat.htm>

- Pretest
- Introduction
- Test Components
- Basic Skills Assessment
- Vocational Preparatory Instruction
- Post-test for Students
- Test Security
- Testing Procedures
- Testing Accommodations
- TABE Accommodations
- Test-taking Strategies
- Test Anxiety
- MALDS
- Prescribing Catalogs
- Writing a Prescription
- Progress Checks
- Post-test
- References
- **Appendices**