

**Illinois Community College Board
Adult Education and Literacy
Assessment Guide**

This assessment guide is used to identify students’ levels at entry, as they progress through instructional activities, and at exit from the program. Post-testing to reflect student achievement should be done in compliance with the test publisher’s guidelines.

Student Assessment

All students are required to be assessed with an ICCB approved assessment based on the student’s enrollment type. Students enrolled in Vocational only or Foreign Language High School Equivalency (HSE) only are the two exceptions to this requirement.

Students enrolled in Foreign Language HSE instruction should be assessed to ensure they are functioning at the ASE level. Foreign Language HSE instruction can only occur at the ASE level. Programs have discretion in selecting the assessment tool to use (i.e., SABE or locally developed instrument), but it should be appropriate for the student population.

Staff Training

Staff administering the approved assessments must be properly trained, and all official assessments used for NRS reporting must be approved by ICCB. Current assessments for ELA include the BEST Literacy, BEST Plus, and the CASAS Life & Work Reading. For Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) or High School Credit (HSCR), the approved assessment is the TABE 11/12 or the CASAS Goals.

In order to obtain valid and reliable results, staff administering these tests must be trained in test administration with an understanding of how forms, levels, and content ranges play a role in interpreting test results. It is important to follow the assessment procedures outlined in the Administration Manual for each test in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the results. ICCB Adult Education and Literacy and the Professional Development Network (PDN) offer training workshops on each of the assessment instruments.

Test Publisher’s Guidelines

TABE 11/12	<p>Minimum of 40 hours of instruction;</p> <p>Alternate Form Testing – 50-60 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with an alternate form (i.e. 11M to 12M or A1 to B1) for students that test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) and NRS Levels 1-6 (ESL) with a minimum of 40 hours</p> <p>Same Form Testing – 60-80 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with the same form (i.e. 11M to 11M or A3 to A3)</p>
CASAS GOALS	<p>Minimum of 40 hours of instruction;</p>

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	Recommend 70-100 hours of instruction
CASAS Life & Work Reading	Minimum of 40 hours of instruction; Recommend 70-100 hours of instruction
BEST Literacy	Minimum of 60 hours of instruction; Recommend 80-100 hours of instruction
BEST Plus 2.0	Minimum of 60 hours of instruction; Recommend 80-100 hours of instruction

* Hours of instruction refer specifically to student attendance hours

Summary of ABE, ASE and HSCR Testing and NRS Levels for TABE 11/12

NRS Levels	TABE 11-12 Scale Score	Grade Level
Beginning Literacy ABE Level 1	Reading 300 – 441 Math 300 – 448	0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Basic ABE Level 2	Reading – 442-500 Math – 449-495	2.0 - 3.9
Low Intermediate ABE ABE Level 3	Reading – 501-535 Math – 496-536	4.0 - 5.9
High Intermediate ABE ABE Level 4	Reading – 536-575 Math – 537-595	6.0 - 8.9
Low Advanced ASE ABE Level 5	Reading – 576-616 Math – 596-656	9.0 - 10.9
High Advanced ASE ABE Level 6	Reading – 617+ Math – 657+	11.0 - 12.9

Summary of ABE, ASE and HSCR Testing and NRS Levels for CASAS GOALS Reading

NRS Levels for Reading	CASAS GOALS Reading Scale Score	Grade Level
Beginning Literacy ABE Level 1	165 – 203	0 – 1.9
Beginning Basic ABE Level 2	204 – 216	2.0 – 3.9

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Low Intermediate ABE ABE Level 3	217- 227	4.0 - 5.9
High Intermediate ABE ABE Level 4	228 - 238	6.0 - 8.9
Low Advanced ASE ASE Level 5	239 - 248	9.0 - 10.9
High Advanced ASE ASE Level 6	249 and above	11.0 - 12.9

Summary of ABE, ASE and HSCR Testing and NRS Levels for CASAS GOALS Math

NRS Levels for Mathematics	CASAS GOALS Math Scale Score	Grade Level
Beginning Literacy ABE Level 1	178 - 193	0 - 1.9
Beginning Basic ABE Level 2	194 - 203	2.0 - 3.9
Low Intermediate ABE ABE Level 3	204 - 214	4.0 - 5.9
Middle Intermediate ABE ABE Level 4	215 - 225	6.0 - 7*
High Intermediate ABE ABE Level 5	226 - 235	7* - 8.9
Adult Secondary Education ASE Level 6	236 and above	9.0 - 12.9

ELA Required Testing

All ELA and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) students must be pre- and post-tested in order to document educational gains. Educational gains are defined as advancement from one functioning level to the next. The three state-approved ELA tests are the BEST Literacy, BEST Plus, and the CASAS Life & Work Reading.

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Summary of ELA Testing

NRS Levels	BEST Plus**	BEST Literacy*	CASAS**
Beginning Literacy ESL Level 1	361 and Below	0 – 20	180 and Below
Low Beginning ESL Level 2	362 – 427	21 – 52	181-190
High Beginning ESL Level 3	428 – 452	53 – 63	191-200
Low Intermediate ESL Level 4	453 – 484	64 – 67	201-210
High Intermediate ESL Level 5	485 – 524	68 – 75	211-220***
Advanced ESL Level 6	525 – 564	76 – 78	221-235***
Exit Criteria	Above 565	NA	Above 235

** Students can be placed into Advanced ESL using Best Literacy, but the test does not assess skills beyond this level, so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Re-testing of students who enter this level with another assessment is appropriate if additional ELA services are needed. Programs should also alternate forms of the BEST Literacy as post-testing is conducted.*

*** A score above 235 on the CASAS or a score above 565 on the BEST Plus places the student in the Exit Criteria range. Students scoring in this range should be transitioned to other services. If the student is in need of additional ELA services, an assessment that reflects the need should be administered. Programs administering the CASAS should alternate forms as post-testing is conducted.*

**** It is strongly recommended that a student scoring in the 215 to 235 range on CASAS be transitioned into ABE programming and administered a TABE Assessment.*

Level Gains

Level gains are measured by improvement (based on point gain) from pre-test (first assessment used for the fiscal year) to the post-test (final assessment for the fiscal year).

- In order for results to be claimed, post-testing must be conducted within time frames established by the test publishers.
- Programs must ensure that students are administered alternating forms of the assessment administered as appropriate.
- Any testing accommodations for assessing special populations must be within the guidelines established by the test publisher.

See the Adult Education and Literacy Provider Manual for more information.