



# ASSESSMENT

## TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE)



Let's get to work.

# OACES

Office of Adult & Career Education Services  
Rochester City School District

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# WHAT IS ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult Education is instruction, often at no cost, for adult students who want to improve their employability, education, or English language skills. Adult Education programs offer basic reading, writing, math, and problem-solving classes, English language lessons, employment preparation and training, Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) preparation, and other basic educational services for adult students. Adult Education includes Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) as well as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL / ESL).

Adult Education programs are for adults 16 years of age and older who are not in school, who have academic skills below the 12th grade level, and/or who need help learning English. The goal of Adult Education is to help adults reach their full potential as workers, family members, and citizens.

Adult Education is funded in part by the federal and state governments, with local and community support. Many programs receive grant funding from private and corporate sources. The New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) unit oversees Adult Education programs in New York. ACCES works with public schools, community-based organizations, colleges, correctional facilities, and other agencies to provide Adult Education services.

In Rochester, the Office of Adult and Career Education Services (OACES) is a workforce preparation organization that helps adult students learn the skills they need for success in the workplace and outside the classroom.

With unique focus on the education and employment needs of New York State's adult citizens, several vital interests and goals can be best served through:

- Ensuring that the needs of adults and out-of-school youth are met through efficient and effective access to relevant services, programs, and opportunities offered by the NYSED.
- Encouraging full participation of adults with disabilities.

- Enhancing post-secondary transitions by developing the capacity of individuals to engage in post-secondary education leading to high-quality employment opportunities.
- Promoting workforce investment through unified collaboration with the New York State Department of Labor and State and local Workforce Investment Boards to assure that individuals have access to a “one-stop” source for a full range of services leading to high-quality employment opportunities.
- Supporting individuals experiencing poverty and relying on public services to develop their capacity to earn income and develop assets toward greater economic independence.
- Utilizing a more comprehensive and effective representation for adults in coordinating services and program initiatives with New York State agencies such as the Departments of Labor and Health, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the Office of Children and Family Services, and the State University of New York (SUNY).

There are multiple literacies addressed by Adult Education.

- Survival Literacy



- Oral/Speaking and Written Literacy
- Cultural/Social and Civic Literacy
- Workplace and Employment Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Financial Literacy
- Technological and Digital/Electronic Literacy
- Geographic Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Environmental Literacy
- Scientific Literacy

The importance of each of these literacies in an individual’s life varies based on specific circumstances. They all, however, have the potential to greatly affect the life of every adult and his/her family. Literacy begins within the family and is reinforced,

whether positively or negatively, in subsequent generations. Adult Education seeks to reinforce, promote, and support literacy to help adults reach their full potential as workers, family members, and citizens and in turn continue the cycle of literacy into the future.

Adult Education provides for the Community in numerous ways:

- Adult Education programs benefit businesses, workers, and job seekers. Businesses encourage Adult Education in order to provide and sustain a highly skilled and specialized workforce a workforce with the skills to perform a variety of tasks or workers with “cross-functional” skills. Workers may receive promotions, gain more power in the job market, or become more valuable employees by enrolling in Adult Education programs.
- Adult Education training facilities often house state-of-the-art equipment such as computers and computer-based training equipment.
- Adult Education programs benefit families. Increased literacy and skills translate to a higher earnings potential for the household. Parents’ literacy levels directly correlate to their children’s educational success (according to the National Center for Families Learning).

# ASSESSMENT - TABE

## **TABE Overview**

The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) is a diagnostic test used to determine a person's skill level and aptitudes and is designed to provide achievement scores that are valid for most types of adult education programs. New York State (NYS) requires administration of the TABE for all students seeking entry into Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs supported with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title 2, Welfare Education Program (WEP), Employment Preparation Education (EPE) and Adult Literacy Education (ALE) funding for the purpose of reporting educational gain as required by the federal National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education.

Many companies use it for hiring and promotion decisions, or for selecting employees for training programs for skilled positions. The TABE is also used by public service agencies who are guiding people into adult education programs, such as getting a high school equivalency diploma, going to trade school, etc.

The TABE should also be used for students seeking entry into Occupational Education Programs to determine whether they have sufficient literacy skills to succeed in the program; these students are not included in the NRS.

The TABE tests skills and aptitudes in reading, math, and English as they would be applied in the workforce or classroom. Although there's really no such thing as passing or failing the TABE, a student's score can determine his/her eligibility for many programs that can have a positive effect on one's life situation as well as a huge impact on future income.

## **When and Where Will the TABE Be Administered?**

The TABE will be administered prior to class placement in the intake office as part of the intake process.

## How Long Does the Assessment Take?

It takes about an hour and a half to complete.

## Assessment

Students must be assessed in both math and reading. Under federal guidelines, the educational gain will be calculated in the lower of the two skill areas.

For the NRS, the use of the Reading, Mathematics Computation, and Applied Mathematics tests is required. The Mathematics Computation and Applied Mathematics tests must be used together to yield a total mathematics score that is reported to the United States Department of Education. Both the mathematics tests and the reading test must be administered in programs focusing on both reading and mathematics.

In the reading portion, students are tested on vocabulary and reading comprehension. The English portion will test for spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, etc. The math section doesn't involve much complex math -- there are some questions on pre algebra, but mostly it's about basic math, fractions, percentages, and the use of decimals.

To compute a total mathematics score it is necessary for the student to take the same form and level of both the Mathematics Computation test and the Applied Mathematics test.

The teacher should review the TABE score and then develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the lowest functioning or NRS level. A Grade Equivalent (GE) reflects such testing results.

## Locator Test

The locator portion of the test helps to determine the appropriate test level of TABE 9 & 10 for students. Beginning readers who cannot take the locator test can take the TABE Level L Test, Form 9 or 10. The locator test must be administered to determine the appropriate level of the TABE to administer. All test assessors should use the locator as one tool in the determination of the student's pre test level.

## Who Administers the Test?

Those who have been certified by official NYS trainers are the only persons authorized to administer a test. Test administrators need not be certified teachers. However, all TABE administrators must receive training in proper test administration through the Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN). This training must be renewed every 3 years.

## How Often Must the Student Take the TABE?

The TABE must be administered within the first twelve hours during intake (a pre test) and then after sixty hours of instruction (a post test). A post test must be administered before a student exits a program even if they did not receive sixty hours of instruction. In addition, teacher discretion should be used if the teacher believes a student will make a gain or if the teacher thinks that a student may be exiting the program for any reason. In any case, a post test can be given before the sixty hours of instruction have been reached. NYS Policy calls for a benchmark of 58% post test rate. This calculation is valued at 20% of a program's total Report Card score.

## TABE Levels

Adult education programs use the TABE 9 & 10 - full batteries. There are four core content areas: Reading, Mathematics Computation, Applied Mathematics, and Language. The TABE offers five overlapping levels – L (Literacy), E (Easy), M (Medium), D (Difficult), and A (Advanced). Programs are required to use at least the E, M, and D levels. Post tests must always be contiguous; students may be post tested on their current level or a higher level providing that the level chosen allows the student to show enough gain to place the student into the next Educational Functioning Level.

The locator test must be administered to determine the appropriate level of the TABE test to administer. The locator is used as follows:

For TABE 9 & 10

Reading	Mathematics	TABE Level to Administer
# Correct	# Correct	
6 and Below	4 to 6	E
7 to 8	7 to 8	M
9 to 10	9 to 11	D
11 to 12	12 to 16	A

Note: The correct locator must be used for the test.

Level L – As stated in the NRS manual, if an agency serves students pre testing on NRS level 1 in reading, either the TABE L or the READ test must be used for the initial test. Once a student tests on NRS level 2, the TABE E should be used.

- **TABE 9 & 10** For the TABE 9 & 10 there is a level L for reading, mathematics computation and applied mathematics. If a student scores on the lowest end of the scale in reading on the locator test, the level L Word List can be used to determine whether level L or E is appropriate. If a student scores in the lowest end of the scale in mathematics, teachers should use previous knowledge of the examinee’s performance to determine whether the E or L level should be administered.

For students on the lowest levels of reading and mathematics, it is not necessary or recommended to place them in NRS level 1 based on a TABE 9 & 10 score in mathematics. In these cases, only the reading score should be entered for NRS purposes. When the student’s skill level increases so that the student can be tested with the level E in mathematics, the scores can be entered if appropriate.

## Re-testing Guidelines

When either a pre or a post test is administered, teachers must refer to the NYS TABE Validity Tables to determine whether the student’s score is within or outside of the acceptable range of scores on that test and level. If the score is within the acceptable range, the test is considered valid. If the score is outside of the acceptable range, the test administrator must follow the directions regarding whether to re-test with a more or less advanced test. The table indicates when more or less advanced tests are not available. Although invalid test scores

may be recorded in the Adult Student Information System & Technical Support (ASISTS) application to maintain the history of the student's assessments, they will not be considered in the Post Test Rate or in the summation of Educational Gains.

A different form of the test must be used when post testing on the same level. For example, the student is pre tested on TABE Level M with Form 9 and is to be post tested on Level M, Form 10 should be used. This same format should be applied even if the student is moving from one level to a higher level. For example, if the pre test is on the higher range of Level M and a Form 9 is given, then the post test should be a Level D and the Form 10 must be used.

## **Additional Resources**

Center for Applied Linguistics  
[www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

National Reporting System  
[www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org)

## **Sources**

Accountability for New York State Adult Education  
[www.adult-education-accountability.org](http://www.adult-education-accountability.org)

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services  
[www.acces.nysed.gov](http://www.acces.nysed.gov)

Central Southern Tier RAEN  
[www.centralsoutherntierraen.org](http://www.centralsoutherntierraen.org)

CTB/McGraw Hill Education  
[www.ctb.com](http://www.ctb.com)

Study Guide Zone  
[www.studyguidezone.com](http://www.studyguidezone.com)





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