



## **Iowa State Assessments Including the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED)**

### **Understanding the Iowa Assessments**

The Iowa Assessments are a well-developed series of tests that are used beyond the state of Iowa. In terms of the use of standardized assessments for reporting on student progress and instruction that is properly aligned to the curriculum, the Iowa Assessments have been a standard that educators have relied upon.

Some of the assessments that have been developed are formative while others are summative assessments. The difference is that a formative assessment is used as a part of instruction that informs the teacher about prior knowledge, strengths, and weaknesses. A summative assessment shows how well a student has mastered the material that has been taught. The Iowa Assessments cover both these types of assessments; they are given at different points in the year given their different uses.

In terms of mandatory testing that is summative in nature, starting in grade 3 students begin taking the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). In grades 3-8 students are tested in science, mathematics, social studies and reading statewide. These test also cover some questions in the social studies, all questions are asked in grade-level appropriate manners.

In grade 11 students take the Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) developed to oversee a child's progress in learning the objectives in the Iowa Core. In high school, there are also Iowa End-Of-Course examinations for students in specific courses. For students who require testing accommodations those are made available. There are also alternate or modified assessments for students with more significant disabilities.

In Iowa, students take many assessments during their school years. Districts must administer local district-wide assessments in reading, mathematics, social studies and science aligned to the district standards. The local assessments must serve as a complement to the state assessments; the district may not use the same assessment as the state.

The material tested on these assessments is derived from the Iowa Core, formerly the Iowa Core Curriculum and Model Core Curriculum. The Iowa Core is the curriculum framework in use in Iowa public schools. It has been developed to see that all students learn the skills for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which are defined as: critical thinking, complex communication, creativity, collaboration, flexibility and adaptability, and productivity and accountability.

## **Format of the Iowa Assessments**

For students in grades 3-8 who take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in science, mathematics, social studies and reading the test is given in a multiple-choice format. Some of the questions are read-aloud others students work on by themselves. New constructed-response question formats are also now being utilized. For students in the earlier grades, the test takes approximately 160 minutes to administer, for older students the assessment is about 250 minutes.

The Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) is for students in grade 11. The areas covered on the assessment are: reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, vocabulary, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and computation. This assessment takes approximately 5 hours in total testing time.

The Iowa Assessment End-of-Course (EOC) examinations are given in English Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies. These are all online tests which provide the test data in real time to teachers and students. Within the test are also questions aligned to the College and Career Readiness standards that states are beginning to put in place. There may be individual student fees for these assessments, school districts will provide all necessary information about times, dates, and possible nominal fees.

## **Taking the Iowa Assessments**

The Iowa Assessments are aligned to the standards of learning that a child is expected to achieve. These standards are laid out in the Iowa Core, the curriculum that describes the content a child needs to become proficient in to be competent in the subject matter.

In English/Language Arts students are expected to develop their abilities in: reading, writing, speaking, listening and language. In Social Studies students need to gain understanding of behavioral science, economic, geography, history, political science, and civic literacy.

In Mathematics, students will be taught over the following areas: numbers and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data and tools. In the Sciences, the framework of learning includes: scientific inquiry, physical, earth, space and life science, science and technology, history and nature of science, and science in personal and social perspective.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills that are being integrated into the curriculum covers the areas of civic literacy, employability, skills, financial literacy, health literacy, and technological literacy. These standards will continue to be integrated into curriculum and assessment.

Students receive more than one type of score report on the assessments they take. Each test will have a scale score that produces a result of the number of questions correct based on the scale. That score can be translated into a grade level indicator of High Performance Level, Intermediate Performance Level and Low Performance Level. Students who score in the lower ranges on these assessments are benefited from how results will also report the areas where focus needs to be given.

## **Get Your Child Ready for Iowa State Testing**

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