

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TABE 9&10

Questions about Administering TABE

Q. Who is eligible to administer TABE?

Adult educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and are willing to abide by the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer TABE. These professional standards require TABE administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed. For additional information, see the Purchaser's Qualification Statement in the back of the CTB/McGraw-Hill Assessment Products and Services Catalog.

Q. How will I know which level of TABE to administer?

For adult basic education or other programs that include students at various levels of ability, administer the TABE Locator Test first. The results will indicate which level of TABE to use by content area. If you are using TABE as a screening tool for a program that requires a certain level of ability, select the appropriate level of TABE commensurate with the content difficulty for the program. For example, if you were screening for a nursing program that requires a 10th-grade reading level for admission, you would select TABE Level A.

Q. How does the TABE Locator Test work?

TABE 9&10 have one locator test· divided into three sections· one each for reading, mathematics, and language. The entire Locator Test takes approximately 35 minutes to complete. Each locator sub-test will determine the appropriate level of test that the student should take. NOTE: One should not assume that each student arrives to be tested with the same level of performance in each content area.

Q. For what target audiences was TABE designed?

TABE can be used with a wide range of audiences: high school equivalency or GED programs; vocational programs; certain community college programs; welfare-to-work programs; occupational or military advancement programs; alternative educational programs; and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programs, which may include basic education, vocational, and life skills assessment.

Q. What types of adult education programs can use TABE?

TABE is useful for any program that needs to assess basic educational skills in an adult population. TABE has been used successfully by adult basic education, correctional education, vocational-technical programs, corporate training, one-stop career centers, military, college, non-profit, and union programs.

Q. Can TABE be used for high school students?

Yes. TABE was normed on a population aged 14 years and above. TABE is a viable option to current norm-referenced tests for high school levels.

Q. How can I improve test security?

Always keep tests, manuals, and answer sheets secure. Never allow examinees to leave the test site with answer sheets or test books. Do not show test items (other than those designated as Sample Items) to students or discuss their answers. Make sure your staff understands the procedures necessary to maintain test security when they administer and score TABE.

Q. How soon can I retest examinees with the same form?

Please allow a minimum of six months between testing to avoid the practice effect in which a student scores artificially high because of familiarity with test items. Also, do not review TABE with students to show them the questions they answered correctly or incorrectly if you plan to retest with the same form at the same level. You may provide the students with instructional booklets such as Getting to Know TABE or Building Skills with TABE to help them gain confidence and master specific learning objectives.

Q. What is the best pre- and post-test model to use with TABE in order to evaluate growth within a program that is using the TABE as an assessment instrument?

CTB/McGraw-Hill recommends any of the following combinations in designing a pre- and post-test program with TABE:

Pre-Test	Post-Test
TABE 9	TABE 10
TABE 10	TABE 9

In each of these recommended pre- and post-test combinations, your program would be testing with different forms of TABE that are on the same scale in order to measure gains. The student is not taking the same set of test questions in these scenarios. If a student were to be pre-tested and post-tested with the same form, CTB's best practices recommendation would be to wait six months before re-testing in order to eliminate a score that might be invalid due to the practice effect, or the effect of seeing the same questions in a short time frame. There is no recommended minimum number of hours of instruction that must occur if a different form or different level of the TABE pre-test is administered as a post-test.

Q. How long does it take to administer TABE?

It depends on which version of TABE you choose. The TABE 9&10 Survey takes about 2 hours, and the Complete Battery takes about 3.5 hours.

Q. Can I administer different levels of TABE as a pre-test and post-test?

Yes. TABE scales are calibrated across levels so scores from various levels of TABE may be compared to show progress. For example, if a student's initial Locator Test scores placed him at Level E, he or she should be pre-tested with TABE Level E.

After a program of study, it should be determined if a student has advanced to a new level before he or she is re-tested. Advancement may be indicated by a very high score on the original pre-test, extraordinary progress in class, or a higher score upon re-administration of the Locator. If the teacher judges that the student has advanced from Level E to Level M, a Level M post-test should be administered. Because all levels of TABE are calibrated on the same scale, results may be compared across levels.

Q. If I only need information about certain subject areas, can I just administer certain sections of TABE?

Yes. Any of the sub-tests can be administered as a stand-alone assessment. If you want to quickly screen a student for basic reading and mathematics application skills, for example, you can administer just the Reading and Mathematics Applications sub-tests from the TABE Survey. This will take less than an hour, yet give a fairly good picture of the student's skills in those two subject areas. A word of caution, however: this use of TABE is not appropriate when detailed diagnostic information is needed, or when extremely valid, reliable data is needed to support a high-stakes decision concerning the student.

Questions about Accommodations

Q. When administering TABE, can we offer accommodations for students with special needs?

A testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. In particular, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation.

TABE-PC is appropriate for some students who have difficulty taking paper-and-pencil tests. Some TABE administrators have made other accommodations such as allowing extra time to complete the test or letting students mark answers in test booklets rather than on separate answer sheets.

Q. May I administer TABE as an untimed test?

If you use different time limits than were used in the standardization process, it compromises the interpretation of the norms. However, CTB recognizes that time extensions may be warranted to accommodate persons with certain disabilities, or when TABE is being used exclusively to diagnose the learning objectives an individual still needs to master.

Q. Are there special editions of TABE for people with visual disabilities?

Yes. Large-print, Braille, and audio editions of TABE Forms 9&10 are available from CTB/McGraw-Hill.

Q. How should we interpret scores when we administer TABE under non-standard conditions?

Whenever non-standard directions and time limits are utilized, norm-referenced comparisons should be treated with great caution, since the only norms available are those based on test administrations using standard directions and time limits. Nonetheless, CTB/McGraw-Hill believes that information about instructional strengths and student needs can be obtained from a non-standard test administration. This is best done by focusing on the curriculum-referenced or objective mastery information the test can provide.

Correlations and Uses of TABE Scores

Q. Can TABE be used as both a pre-test and a post-test?

Yes. TABE 9&10 were designed to serve as a pre-test and post-test for the same group of students. Generally, educators administer different forms of TABE at the same level when pre-testing and post-testing. However, if a student pre-tested near the top of the range, has made extraordinary progress in class, or re-takes the Locator and scores at a higher level, you may elect to use the next higher level of TABE as a post-test. This type of multi-level testing will yield valid results because all levels of TABE are on the same scale.

Q. Can I use TABE for entrance screening or to make employment decisions?

TABE is an excellent tool to assist in making decisions regarding academic programs and employment. However, we do not recommend TABE be used as the sole measure for such decisions. CTB/McGraw-Hill strongly recommends that our customers use multiple measures of assessment for high-stakes decisions such as hiring or acceptance into a training program. TABE works very well as a screening tool when used in conjunction with other information gained from such sources as interviews, transcripts, and references. **Note:** CTB does not set or recommend cut-point scores for screening candidates into programs. Such standards must be determined by the user.

Q. Can I obtain diagnostic information from the TABE Survey?

Yes. Survey results indicate which learning objectives a student has mastered and which still need more work, but the diagnostic information is not as reliable as that obtained from the Complete Battery, which includes more items.

Q. Are TABE scores correlated to GED scores?

Yes. CTB/McGraw-Hill conducted a study to determine the relationship between TABE 9&10 (Survey and Complete Battery) and the GED Tests. Information on examinees' performance on both tests was collected from over 50 institutions, including schools, GED testing centers, and correctional institutions. Participants took both tests within a 12-week period. In most cases, TABE was taken prior to the administration of the GED. The results show that TABE scores are good predictors of performance on the GED Tests. Correlation tables showing the linkage between specific TABE and GED scores are available in the TABE Norms Book.

Q. Can TABE be used to prepare for the GED?

Yes. Many adult educators administer TABE to see if a student is ready to take the GED. Because items on TABE are linked to specific learning objectives, TABE scores help students focus their study on skills that need the most work.

Q. Is TABE equivalent to the GED?

They are different tests. TABE is designed to test basic educational skills using adult content. It measures performance on reading, mathematics computation, applied mathematics, language, and spelling. The GED tests are designed to determine if a person has learned the curriculum that students generally receive in a high school education.

Q. Are TABE scores correlated with NALS?

Yes. The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) measures three categories of applied literacy. Prose literacy is defined as the ability to use information from everyday texts such as news stories, editorials, and poetry. Document literacy is the ability to use printed materials such as job applications, maps, and transportation schedules. Quantitative literacy is the ability to apply arithmetic operations to numbers that are found in printed materials such as restaurant checks, order forms, and advertisements. Many items from the TABE reading and mathematics subtests, as well as those from Work-Related Foundation Skills, Problem-Solving, and TABE Español, measure these same abilities. Correlation tables are given in the Guide to Administering TABE 9&10.

Q. Are TABE scores correlated with SCANS?

Yes. SCANS refers to the Secretary (of Labor) Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, and comprises five workplace competencies plus three sets of foundation skills, needed for solid job performance. The five competencies are: use and allocate resources, use interpersonal skills, use information, work with systems, and use technology. The foundation skills are: basic skills (reading, writing, and so on), thinking skills (such as reasoning and problem-solving), and personal qualities (including individual responsibility, integrity, and others). A correlation table showing which TABE products assess each of these skills is found in the Guide to Administering TABE 9&10.