

Test Preparation and Practice

Theme and Level

Theme: Know Myself

Level: Looking Deeper, Next Steps

At a Glance

Students practice aptitude or ability test-taking using either the PSAT, SAT, ASVAB, or Civil Service practice tests.

Note: requires optional purchase of practice tests.

Time: Varies depending upon test selected; some take 3 hours.

Essential Questions

- What are my strengths and weaknesses at this point in time?
- Where do I need to focus additional study time to perform well on these tests?

Preparation

- Reserve computer lab with overhead projector enabled
- Arrange with counselors to meet with students following test administration to facilitate interpretation
- Establish CIS portfolios before this lesson
- Familiarize yourself with the practice tests available in portfolios
- Decide whether to require students to complete tests on their own time or allocate additional class time for completion

Steps

1. Show PowerPoint (PPT) Slide 1. Tell students that the goal of this lesson is to enhance their test-taking skills.
2. Tell students that you are going to ask them to demonstrate their post high school plans with a show of hands.
3. Show PPT Slide 2. First ask those planning to attend a college, community college, or technical school to raise their hands, and then ask those planning to enroll in a branch of the military to raise their hands. Next ask those planning to go directly into the workforce to raise their hands. Finally, ask if there are others with unique plans to raise their hands and tell what these plans are.
4. Show PPT Slide 3. Explain to students that:
 - Most colleges, the military, and many employers use entrance or hiring exams to help them select candidates or to assess applicants on a level playing field.
 - Resources such as books, online study guides, and preparation classes can help you prepare for college entrance exams, the ASVAB, or civil service tests.
 - Going into the test already familiar with the look, layout and flow of the test can be advantageous, and practice can help you develop test-taking skills.
 - Taking practice tests can help you identify areas of weakness, so that you can work on building these areas before taking the formal exam.
 - There are practice tests for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, ASVAB, AP tests, and several Civil Service exams, and in this lesson you will be taking the practice test most targeted to your goals (college, military, or civil service employment).
5. Tell students the length of the test they will be taking. The tests differ in length. (Check the Overview and Tests section of the test your students will take for this information.)
6. Inform students that test completion will require more time than a single class period. If students will be completing tests on their own, explain your expectations and provide deadlines for completion.
7. Show students how to stop, save, and restore their tests:
 - Save and End Section: Clicking this button finalizes your selections for that section. You will be brought back to the "Review" screen for this section.
 - Pause: Clicking this button pauses the section.

- Save and Exit: Clicking this button allows you to exit the section and resume at a later time. It saves your answers to that point and notes the time remaining so that you may pick up right where you left off.
 - Cancel and Exit: Clicking this button allows you to exit the section and deletes all of your answers.
8. Show PPT Slide 4. Inform students that, unlike other career assessments, the formal tests associated with these practice tests are used by others to predict their success and screen them; however, their scores on the practice tests will not be graded and will only be used by the students for their own edification. Also inform students that, although the tests are not timed, some measure time taken to complete the test and/or have time limits for each item.
 9. Ask if students have questions and answer them.
 10. Ask students to log into CIS using their personal usernames and passwords.
 11. Direct students to their portfolios, where they can find the test most suited to their goals.
 12. Begin testing.
 13. Invite counselors into the class after all tests are completed for interpretation.
 14. Ask counselors to meet with small groups of students who completed the same test or with individual students to discuss what they learned from taking their respective tests. Include in this discussion:
 - What surprised you about your results?
 - What do you want or need to work on before taking the actual test?
 - Would taking another practice test benefit you?
 - What did you learn about your abilities, strengths, skills and talents?
 - What did you learn about taking computerized tests?
 15. Inform students that each practice test can be taken three times.
 16. Show PPT Slide 5. Encourage students to explore CIS:
 - In Occupations: read the Helpful High School Courses, Knowledge, and Skills and Abilities sections for occupations of interest to observe the occupation's requirements, and to compare these requirements to their performance in these areas as evidenced in the practice tests.
 - In Programs of Study: read the Typical Course Work content to observe the coursework expected in postsecondary studies.

Variations and Accommodations

- Ask all students to take one practice test (the ASVAB, for example), and conduct a group interpretation. Then encourage students to take another practice test related to their goals independently.
- Students needing special assistance should be paired with a special education assistant during the assessment.

Assessment

Use the *Test Preparation and Practice Scoring Guide* to evaluate student work.

Portfolio

Students enter their reflections about this activity in the **What did you learn about yourself from the career assessments you used?** text box within the Know Myself section of Career Plan.

Materials

Computer lab with an overhead projector and CIS access

[Test Preparation and Practice \(PPTX\)](#)

[Test Preparation and Practice Scoring Guide \(PDF\)](#)

[Test Preparation and Practice Scoring Guide \(DOCX\)](#)

Goals and Standards

Common Core State Standards

- English Language Arts Career Anchor: Reading Informational Text
- English Language Arts Career Anchor: Reading Literature
- English Language Arts Career Anchor: Language
- Mathematical Practice: Attend to Precision
- Mathematical Practice: Look for an Make Use of Structure
- Mathematical Practice: Make Sense of Problems and Persevere in Solving Them
- Mathematical Practice: Reason Abstractly and Quantitatively
- Mathematical Practice: Model with Mathematics
- Mathematical Practice: Use Appropriate Tools Strategically
- Mathematical Practice: Look for and Express Regularity in Repeated Reasoning

National Career Development Guidelines

- GOAL PS1.K2 Identify your abilities, strengths, skills and talents.

American School Counselor Association

- Academic Development, Career Development

Bloom's Taxonomy: Understanding, Applying

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success

Mindset Standards

- Self-Confidence in Ability to Succeed
- Belief in Using Abilities to their Fullest to Achieve High-Quality Results and Outcomes
- Positive Attitude Toward Work and Learning

Behavior Standards: Learning Strategies

- Demonstrate Critical-Thinking Skills to Make Informed Decisions
- Use Time-Management, Organizational and Study-Skills
- Apply Self-Motivation and Self-Direction to Learning
- Apply Media and Technology Skills

Behavior Standards: Self-Management Skills

- Demonstrate Self-Discipline and Self-Control
- Demonstrate Effective Coping Skills when Faced with a Problem

Behavior Standards: Social Skills

- Use Effective Oral and Written Communication Skills and Listening Skills