



Test Descriptions





Guiding Principles of EPAS

- The ACT Assessment, PLAN, and EXPLORE are achievement tests. They are tests of acquired or developed abilities**
- The tasks (items) constituting all EPAS tests correspond to recognized middle and high school learning experiences**
- The EPAS tests consists of complex, heterogeneous tasks that require students to use skills and knowledge developed over time to solve them.**





The English Test

- The English Test measures understanding of the conventions of standard written English in punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure.**
- The English Test measures the student's ability to make the kinds of decisions made by good writers related to strategy, organization, and style. Spelling and rote recall of rules of grammar are not tested.**





The English Test - Rhetorical Skills

The rhetorical skills assessed by the English Test are best described as the ability to produce coherent, well-organized and integrated prose that effectively communicates in standard written English for a specific purpose and audience.





The English Test

Students are asked to simulate the decision-making process that takes place while writing: To think about audience, purpose, and the conventions of language and to make decisions about the case at hand, weighing and then adopting or rejecting various options.





English Test Specifications

Content Area	Testing Program					
	EXPLORE		PLAN		ACT	
Punctuation	6	(.15)	7	(.14)	10	(.13)
Grammar & Usage	8	(.20)	9	(.18)	12	(.16)
Sentence Structure	11	(.28)	14	(.28)	18	(.24)
Strategy	5	(.12)	6	(.12)	12	(.16)
Organization	5	(.12)	7	(.14)	11	(.15)
Style	5	(.12)	7	(.14)	12	(.16)
Total	40		50		75	
Passages	4		4		5	
Passage Length	300 Words		300 Words		325 Words	





The Mathematics Test

The Mathematics Test emphasizes the solution of practical quantitative problems involving quantitative reasoning rather than memorization of formulas, knowledge of techniques, or computational skill.





Mathematics - EXPLORE

Pre-Algebra

Items in this category are based on operations with whole numbers, integers, decimals, and fractions. The topics covered include place value, square roots, scientific notation, factors, ratio, and proportion and percent. Formal variables are not used.





Mathematics - EXPLORE

Elementary Algebra

The items in this category are based on operations with algebraic expressions. The operations include evaluation of algebraic expressions by substitution; use of variables to express functional relationships, solution of linear equations in one variable, use of real number lines to represent numbers, and graphing of points in the standard coordinate plane.





Mathematics - EXPLORE

Geometry

Items in this category cover such topics as the use of scales and measurement systems, plane and solid geometric figures and associated relationships and concepts, the concept of angles and their measures, parallelism, relationships of triangles, properties of a circle, and the Pythagorean theorem. All of these topics are addressed at a level preceding formal geometry.





Mathematics - EXPLORE

Statistics/Probability

Items in this category cover such topics as elementary counting and rudimentary probability; data collection, representation, and interpretation; and reading and relating graphs, charts, and other representations of data. These topics are addressed at a level preceding formal statistics.





Mathematics Test Specifications

Content Area	Testing Program					
	EXPLORE		PLAN		ACT	
Basic Statistical/ Probability Concepts	4	(.13)				
Pre-Algebra	10	(.33)	14	(.35)	14	(.23)
Elementary Algebra	9	(.30)	8	(.20)	10	(.17)
Pre-Geometry	7	(.23)				
Plane Geometry			11	(.27)	14	(.23)
Coordinate Geometry			7	(.18)	9	(.15)
Intermediate Algebra					9	(.15)
Trigonometry					4	(.07)
Total	30		40		60	



The Reading Test

The Reading Test is designed to assess students' ability to understand and derive meaning from text by using both stated and implied information to identify main ideas, locate important supporting information, and understand characters' relationships.





The Reading Test (continued)

The Reading Test requires that students demonstrate a grasp of sequences and of cause-effect relationships, make generalizations and comparisons about stated information and characters, and demonstrate understanding of events and complex processes.





The Reading Test (continued)

In the Reading Test, students must determine the meaning of unfamiliar or multiple-meaning words from context, and they must use passage cues to generalize about an author's purpose, attitude, or point of view.





Reading Test Specifications

Content Area	Testing Program					
	EXPLORE		PLAN		ACT	
Prose Fiction	10	(.33)	8	(.32)	10	(.25)
Humanities	10	(.33)	9	(.36)	10	(.25)
Social Sciences	10	(.33)	8	(.32)	10	(.25)
Natural Sciences					10	(.25)
Total	30		25		40	
Passages			3		4	
Passage Length	500 Words		500 Words		750 Words	



The Science Test

The Science Test measures the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in coursework in the natural sciences.





Science Test Specifications

Science Test Specifications for Stimulus Materials

Stimulus Material	Testing Program					
	EXPLORE		PLAN		ACT	
Data Representation	12	(.43)	10	(.33)	15	(.38)
Research Summaries	10	(.36)	14	(.47)	18	(.45)
Conflicting Viewpoints	6	(.21)	6	(.20)	7	(.18)
Total	28		30		40	

Science Test Specifications for Content Area

Content Area	Testing Program		
	EXPLORE	PLAN	ACT
Life Science	3		
Physical Science	2		
Earth/Space Science	1	1-2*	1-2*
Biology		1-2*	1-2*
Chemistry		1-2*	1-2*
Physics		1-2*	1-2*
Total	6	5	7

*At least one topic is required in this content area, and some test forms may have two topics. No more than two topics in a particular content area are allowed.

