

## INTRODUCTION: TESTING SERVICES

Testing serves many purposes for the student, parent and school. It is one way to measure student knowledge, skill, and competence. It may be used for college admission, placement in courses, as a yardstick of what has been achieved, or simply as a snapshot of areas to address for more skill development.

### WHY TEST STUDENTS?

- Measure growth or gains in learning
- Measure achievement
- Provide information so teachers can align instructional practices to learner needs
- Provide information so teachers can evaluate effectiveness of various lessons and programs
- Monitor total performance of the school
- Make informed decisions about appropriate course selection
- Identify special needs and talents

## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR TESTS?

- Physically Prepare: rest, eat healthy foods, be aware of stress levels.
- Support good habits all year—not just at key testing times
- Recognize and encourage good work habits at home and school.
- Discuss expectations, talk about importance of tests, and try to avoid excessive pressure.
- Investigate resources for assistance with concerns such as test anxiety, ACT Prep, organization, and test taking strategies.

### SAMPLE WEBSITES FOR TESTING SERVICES

ARROWHEAD CTBS CODE: 500853

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org) to register for the ACT test, utilize practice ACT services, and order special materials.

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) to register for the SAT test, utilize practice SAT test material, PSAT and AP testing information, and order special materials.

[www.arrowheadschoools.org](http://www.arrowheadschoools.org) for study skills, special announcements, and test information.

ARROWHEAD  
HIGH SCHOOL



GUIDE TO TESTING  
AND ASSESSMENT

## CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS

The most frequent "tests" for students are administered regularly in their classroom. These assessments include oral presentations, lab experiments, unit tests, and semester exams.

## EXPLORE

A 9<sup>th</sup> grade test that measures academic development and provides information about students' interests, needs, and plans. This assessment from ACT is designed to stimulate career exploration and help students to develop appropriate plans to achieve their high school goals. EXPLORE is complementary in content and format to the PLAN and the ACT. Four major areas are tested: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. This is a part of Arrowhead's assessment program on a school day.

## PLAN

A 10<sup>th</sup> grade assessment from ACT designed to help students improve their postsecondary planning and preparation. PLAN contains academic tests, an interest inventory, and a student information section. PLAN is complementary in content and format to the EXPLORE and ACT. The four academic tests include: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. PLAN results provide students with an early indication of their progress in curricular areas measured by the ACT assessment and to help determine student preparedness for future educational or career choice. This is a part of Arrowhead's assessment program on a school day.

## WKCE

Wisconsin Knowledge & Concepts Exam is required for all 10<sup>th</sup> graders over the course of several school days as a part of "No Student Left Behind" legislation. Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies skill proficiencies are evaluated.

## PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test measures 11<sup>th</sup> grade students' critical reading skills, math problem solving ability, and writing strengths that are important for academic performance in college. It assesses ability to reason with facts and concepts with a priority on critical thinking skills. This test is required for juniors to qualify for many national prestigious scholarship and recognition programs. This test is a part of Arrowhead's testing program on a school day.

## SAT

The SAT is available to students at various locations on Saturday national test dates. Students should check with the colleges to see if this test is required for admission. The SAT measures verbal and mathematical reasoning ability and evaluates readiness for college level work.

## SAT SUBJECT TESTS

The subject tests measure student's knowledge and skills in particular areas to demonstrate their mastery of specific subjects: English, history, mathematics, science and languages. Students should check with their colleges to determine the need for these tests.

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAMS

AP is a program of college-level courses and exams that give high school students the opportunity to receive advanced placement and/or credit in college. These exams are administered at Arrowhead on the College Board's national testing schedule for two weeks in May. A list of courses offered and more detail is in the Arrowhead High School Curriculum Guide.

## ACT

The ACT is usually taken during the spring of the junior year. The test includes required sections in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science as well as an optional Writing Test. This test, administered by ACT, is required or recommended by most Wisconsin and Midwest colleges and universities as a part of the admission process. A short overview of each component is below:

### ENGLISH TEST

75 questions, 45 minutes to measure the student's understanding of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, writing strategy, organization, and style.

### MATHEMATICS TEST

60 questions, 60 minutes to assess mathematical skills through advanced algebra. Focus is on the student's reasoning skills and practical problem solving in mathematics.

### READING TEST

40 questions, 35 minutes to measure the student's level of reading comprehension as a product of skill in referring and reasoning. Students need to read several texts and draw conclusions, make comparisons and generalizations, and derive meaning.

### SCIENCE REASONING TEST

40 questions, 35 minutes to assess student's interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills in the natural sciences.

### WRITING TEST

30 minute essay test consisting of one writing prompt to address an issue and write a response on his/her position. This is not a part of the student's composite score. Although not required by many colleges, it is required for admission at Marquette University, UW-Madison, & UM-Twin Cities.