Handbook for ESL/ELL Teachers

Focus on WIOA Title II Accountability

An Interactive Resource Guide for New and Experienced Teachers

California Edition 2017
Introduction

The CASAS Handbook for Adult ESL Teachers provides new teachers the instructions and guidelines they need to fulfill program, state and federal accountability requirements. The Handbook gives some basic tools to maximize instruction based on information gained through CASAS testing and demographic data collection. It also functions as a reference guide for more experienced teachers.

As an ESL teacher, you will become familiar with a variety of procedures and terms. After reading this manual, you should have a basic understanding of:

- The CASAS system
- CASAS Testing
- CASAS Reports
- How to determine class and students’ needs based on CASAS testing and reports

This manual is an interactive tool and a reference resource for teachers. It will help you become familiar with accountability procedures at your school site.

Where you see the icon, take time to answer the questions. You may need to ask for assistance from your supervisor or a lead teacher in order to gather all the information. There is an answer key at the end of this Handbook.

Where you see the icon, follow the link to the referenced document on the CASAS Web site at www.casas.org.

For the New Teacher

There is a wealth of information provided in this handbook. It is very important for you to understand how to use the CASAS system to help your students meet their learning goals. It is also important you understand what documents are required. This handbook will help you see how all your work in testing and data collection can benefit you, your students, and your agency.

For the Experienced Teacher

Much of this information may be review for you, but chances are you will find out some things you didn’t know about CASAS. Tips are provided to help with data management, to read various reports, to target instruction based on testing outcomes, and to find corresponding instructional materials.
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Section 1: What is Adult Education English as a Second Language (ESL)?

Adult Education ESL programs provide adults with literacy and language development skills necessary to participate effectively in the United States as productive citizens, workers, and family members. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English are taught in the context of real-life situations.

Types of agencies

In California, Adult Education ESL programs vary in size and program offerings. Agencies providing Adult Education can be

- School districts
- Community colleges Library
- literacy programs
- Correctional facilities
- County offices of education
- Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Faith-based organizations

ESL program characteristics

Depending on the size of the program and community needs, agencies may provide

- One ESL class
- More than one hundred classes
- Classes at the main campus
- Classes at an off-agency location
- Different classes for each skill (reading, writing, listening, speaking)
- Integrated skill classes
- Single level classes (beginning low, beginning high....)
- Multilevel classes (students of multiple levels in the same class)

Adult ESL student characteristics

ESL students come to your program with

- A wide range of educational and cultural backgrounds
- Specific or generalized goals
- Widely varying levels of English language proficiency

How are programs funded?

Agencies may receive funding from a variety of sources, including

- Federal funds - Workforce Investment Opportunities Act (WIOA) Title II funds, including EL
- Civics
- Any number of state programs
- Grants, foundations, private donations for Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs)
Agencies receiving WIA Title II funding are required to collect
• student demographics, including education and labor force status (Entry Records)
• student progress and goals (Update Records)
• pre- and post-tests for each student (Test Records)

This handbook provides teachers with the information they need to meet federal accounting requirements for WIA Title II.

Gather the Information: Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

1. What kind of agency do you work for (adult school, CBO, etc.)?

2. Is your class single-level or multi-level? Is it an EL Civics class? If so, is the focus Civic Participation or Citizenship Preparation?

3. Is your class a single-skill or an integrated skills class?

4. How many ESL classes are offered by your district or agency both on- and off-site?
Section 2: What is CASAS?

CASAS — Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems — is a nonprofit organization. It provides standardized assessments and other tools needed to collect and report student information and learning progress.

With the CASAS system, agencies can establish measurable goals, place students into appropriate instructional levels, document student progress and outcomes, and report program success to students, staff, local boards, and policymakers, while meeting the requirements of the WIA Title II program.

There are four key components of the CASAS system. This teacher’s handbook will direct you through each of the components, and demonstrate how they work together.

Gather the Information: Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

CASAS Training and Accountability contacts at my site:

Name: ______________  Phone: __________  Email: ______________

Name: ______________  Phone: __________  Email: ______________

Name: ______________  Phone: __________  Email: ______________
What is TE?

California agencies use a computer-based management information system called Tracking of Programs and Students Program, or TOPS Enterprise (TE), to track and process CASAS data. Information from Entry, Update, and Test Records are monitored through this software program.

TE can generate reports for students, teachers, and administrators. It also compiles data to meet both state and federal funding requirements. TE provides reports that help instructors target appropriate instruction based on what skills students have and need to have for level completion.

The TE Management Information System:

- Scores CASAS tests
- Identifies missing information in data collection
- Tracks student progress and goal attainment
- Suggests the next test
- Identifies inaccurate scores
- Generates reports for students, teachers, administrators and funding sources
Section 3: Competencies, Task Areas, and Content Standards

Competencies, Task Areas and Content Standards create the foundation for the CASAS curriculum. Separately, they provide life skills contexts, a variety of visual prompts, and the underlying basic literacy skills that together work as the ladder to successful attainment of the curriculum objectives.

What are Competencies?

A competency is a measurable learning objective written in a functional life skills context. CASAS Competencies specifically address essential skills for life and work. CASAS tests are aligned to these competencies.

There are nine CASAS Competency Content Areas:

0. Basic Communication
1. Consumer Economics
2. Community Resources
3. Health
4. Employment
5. Government and Law
6. Math
7. Learning and Thinking Skills
8. Independent Living
Under each of the nine Content Areas are Competency Areas. And finally, more specific Competency Statements give the clear objective for students to achieve.

Each Content Area is identified by a number, 0-8. This is followed by Competency Area and Competency Statement numbers, which creates the 3-digit Competency Coding System.

CASAS Competencies serve as both a reference for program instructional content and as a link to CASAS assessment by providing a numbering system that links reports and curriculum. Agencies are encouraged to align curriculum to the CASAS Competencies so that agencies can identify strengths and weaknesses in their curriculum. The competencies can be used to measure English and Life Skills proficiency across a broad range of levels so programs can teach and measure competency attainment from beginning literacy through high school.

What are Task Areas?

Task Areas are the written or graphic prompts in CASAS tests. These Task Areas are vital to student instruction, as students must not only be able to read a sentence, but must be able to understand vocabulary in the context of advertisements, newspaper articles, utility bills, or recipes. Teachers need to be familiar with these Task Areas so that they can target instruction for students to learn and practice a competency or content standard within these Task Areas.

Note: Each Task Area shows as the fourth digit of the CASAS coding system, seen on many TE reports you will use to plan instruction.
The following sample test item assesses reading in the context of a telephone message. Each test item on a CASAS test is coded by competency and task area. This particular test item has been coded to both 2.1.7 – 3 and to 4.6.2 – 3.

![Telephone Message]

8:30
Sara -
Dan is coming today at 11:00.
Amy

Who is coming?
A. today
B. Sara
C. Dan
D. Amy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item Description and Code Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item Description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competency Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competency Statement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task Type</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difficulty Level</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are Content Standards?

CASAS Basic Skills Content Standards are the underlying skills of the CASAS Competencies. Teaching CASAS Content Standards (e.g., reading numbers, then reading clock times) provide students the literacy skill foundation students need to be successful in mastering the competencies.

CASAS Content Standards are categorized by a letter and numbering system. The letter designates the skill area. For ESL, there are Content Standards for reading and listening skills. Content Standards for writing and speaking are in development.

Within each Content Standard Category there are a number of content standards listed in order of difficulty.
Tie It Together

Imagine you’re planning to teach a lesson on reading medicine labels to an intermediate low class.

What are all the skills you must teach so that students can perform this task?

Look at the

Content Area
3. Health

Competency Area
3.4 Understand basic health & safety procedures

Competency Statements
3.4.1. Interpret product label directions and safety warnings

Once you determine student level and the Competency Statement, ask your agency’s TE staff for your Class by Competency Report that will provide you with the

Task Area
3. Stories, articles, paragraphs, sentences, directions, or pictures
4. Signs, price tags, ads, or product labels

Content Standards (Reading)

Vocabulary
R2.3 Interpret common high-frequency words and phrases in everyday contexts (e.g., labels)
R2.7 Interpret abbreviations in specialized contexts (e.g., tsp.)

General reading comprehension
R3.2 Read and understand simple sentences that contain familiar vocabulary
R3.6 Interpret simple written instructions
R3.10 Follow pronoun references within a text (e.g., This is important.)
R3.12 Use supporting illustrations to interpret text

Text in format
R4.10 Interpret written materials using formatting clues (e.g., headings, captions, bullets, print features such as bold)

Reading strategies
R6.1 Predict the content of a text from title, pictures, type of material
R6.2 Scan simple text (e.g., ads, schedules, forms, paragraphs) to find specific information
Think About It

1. What are two or three things that caught your attention in this section?

2. How can you use CASAS Competencies?

3. How can you use Task Areas?

4. How can you use CASAS Content Standards?
Section 4: Student Registration, Orientation, and Placement

What is the process for student registration?

During the registration process, personal information as well as certain demographic information required by the program is collected from the students. Sometimes this is a scan form (scannable “bubble sheet” form), or a regular paper fill-in form, or an online form. The information obtained at registration is necessary for the student Entry Record.

Additionally, an appraisal (or placement test) of students’ English language skills is conducted at this time for correct placement in their new class. Some agencies include a student orientation during the registration process.

What is the process for student orientation?

For students to meet their language-learning goals, a comprehensive orientation, including goal setting, needs to take place as close to the time of enrollment as possible. Some registration processes include orientations, while others expect teachers to provide an orientation for their students. Minimally, the following information should be shared with students:

- Programs offered/class schedules
- Rules and regulations
- Safety and emergency procedures
- Student expectations
- How to set learning goals and steps to reaching goals

Needs assessments and goal setting are an important part of orientation. Identifying students’ needs and goals is a powerful way to guide instruction and encourage student motivation and retention. There are a variety of goal setting activities that the teacher can do at the beginning of a class. For example, teachers may use a goal-setting questionnaire and steps for goal achievement, list goals and record what students learn in each class in a daily log, or even have the students set a “whole-class” goal for each week or term.

What is the process for placement?

Students are generally placed in class by interest area (ESL, EL Civics, Transitions) and skill level in English or by proximity to a class site. Once a student registers, the student should take an appraisal followed by a CASAS pretest.
Gather the Information

- Locate a registration form that your site uses and place it in this handbook. Is it a fill-in form, bubble-in form, or an online form?

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher – Registration and Placement

1. Where do students go to register at your site?

2. When can they register?

3. What type of appraisal is given?

4. Who gives the appraisal?

5. Who determines class placement for each student?

6. How is class placement determined?

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher – Orientation and Goal Setting

1. When is student orientation at your site?

2. Are there orientation materials available for you to use? If so, what are they? Place a master set in this packet for your reference.

3. What goal setting activities are conducted in your program?

4. What goal setting activities do you plan to use with your class?
Section 5: Accountability

All students in WIA Title II programs who have accumulated 12 or more hours must have an Entry Record and an Update Record along with a Pre- and Post-Test. This section reviews the Entry and Update Records.

What is an Entry Record?

Entry Records are required for every student in your agency and include fields to collect demographics, such as student gender and date of birth. These records are used to monitor the student’s reasons for enrollment, program they are enrolled in (ESL, EL Civics, CBET), and level.

Many agencies complete Entry Records through registration. However, if you are responsible for filling out the Entry Record with your students, remember that it is important to gather all the information. This information will help determine whether the students’ needs are being met by your agency and are vital for state and federal funding.

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

At your site, are teachers required to fill out the Entry Record form?

• If not, who completes it?
• When must it be completed?
**Sample Entry Record**

*Required Elements for TOPSpro Enterprise*

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**Program Entry Record**

- **Student Last Name**: [Name]
- **First**: [Name]
- **Middle**: [Name]
- **Phone Number**: [Number]
- **City**: [City]
- **State**: [State]
- **Zip**: [Zip]
- **Email Address**: [Email]

**Directions for marking answers**
- Use No. 2 pencil only.
- Do NOT use ink or ballpoint pen.
- Erase clearly any answers you change.

**Gender**
- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female

**Date of Birth**
- [ ] Jan
- [ ] Feb
- [ ] Mar
- [ ] Apr
- [ ] May
- [ ] Jun
- [ ] Jul
- [ ] Aug
- [ ] Sep
- [ ] Oct
- [ ] Nov
- [ ] Dec

**Highest Year of School Completed**
- [ ] 9th
- [ ] 10th
- [ ] 11th
- [ ] 12th
- [ ] GED
- [ ] H.S. Diploma
- [ ] H.S. Equivalency
- [ ] Less than 9th Grade

**Ethnicity**
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] Not Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] White
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native
- [ ] Other

**Race**
- [ ] White
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] Other

**Language**
- [ ] English
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] Portuguese
- [ ] Vietnamese
- [ ] Chinese
- [ ] Tagalog
- [ ] Somali
- [ ] Other

**Institutional Program**
- [ ] Workforce Readiness
- [ ] Workforce Education
- [ ] Career and Technical Education
- [ ] Other

**Personal Status**
- [ ] Concurrently enrolled in high school / K12
- [ ] Dislocated worker
- [ ] Veteran
- [ ] Other

**Classification of Instructional Programs**
- [ ] WIOA, Title I
- [ ] WIOA, Title II
- [ ] WIOA, Title III
- [ ] WIOA, Title IV
- [ ] TANF
- [ ] Other public assistance

**Labor Force Status**
- [ ] Unemployed
- [ ] Employed
- [ ] Not in labor force

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For full definitions and explanations, please see the Data Dictionary on our website.

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Focus on California WIA Title II Accountability Requirements
What is an Update Record?

An Update Record provides important information about a student, including status in the program, progress, learner results, instructional level at update, and reason for changing or exiting the program or class. Teachers complete an Update Record to document completed student outcomes.

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

1. Are Update Records automatically generated for your dropped students or do you need to request them?

2. If you need to request them, from whom do you request them?
   Name: __________________________ Phone: __________________________
   Email: __________________________

3. List three ways you know if your students have reached their personal, family, and/or academic goals? (student portfolios, interviews, etc.)
Update Record Sample

*Required Items for TOPSpro Enterprise

Depending on your agency's procedures, you will need to complete an Update Record at the end of a semester, or end of the fiscal year, or once you have dropped a student from your class for various reasons.

Refer to the CASAS Data Dictionary on our website for definitions and explanations of these...
Section 6: CASAS Testing

What is CASAS testing and what is my responsibility?

Appraisal, pre- and post-testing overview


1. Place: Appraisals

The purpose of the Appraisal Process is to:
- determine readiness for a program (ESL, Civic Participation, Citizenship Preparation, VESL, etc.) and instructional level for the student
- identify the correct CASAS pretest level

At the time of registration, students should be given an appraisal to determine their English language skill and literacy level. Some agencies have developed their own appraisal system. Most often, the registration process for new ESL students includes the CASAS Appraisal Form 80.

The appraisal is not a pretest, but a tool to determine the correct pretest.

2. Diagnose: Pretest

The pretest is given upon entry into the program. “Pretest” denotes the first CASAS test administered to students after an appraisal. The pretest measures what a student knows at the beginning of your class. The results of the pretest help determine the learning needs of your students and help guide instruction.
3. **Instruct**

Instruction is a time for ongoing, informal assessment. Instruction is guided by pretest results. You will learn more about test results reports and finding appropriate instructional materials in Section 9.

4. **Monitor: post-tests**

The post-test measures what the student knows after completing a substantial number of hours in your class. These test results help you monitor the progress the student is making in your class.

Each student takes a minimum of two (2) CASAS tests while enrolled in your class: a pretest and a post-test. Additional post-tests may be administered throughout the year to continue to monitor progress.

You must be trained to administer these tests by someone at your agency that has been certified by CASAS. Only staff who has completed the CASAS Implementation Training may train you. These test trainers must re-certify their training each year.

Testing students with standardized tests helps in correct placement for class or level, measures learning from one test to the next, and provides information regarding strengths and weaknesses in particular skill areas so that they can be addressed. While CASAS has also developed assessments that are appropriate to measure writing and speaking skills. California agencies only report reading and listening learning gains to meet federal requirements for ESL programs.

- For pre- and post-testing in **reading**, most ESL programs use the *Life and Work Series*. Some programs use the *Employability Competency Series* (ECS) to test reading if the students are focusing on job skills.

- For pre- and post-testing in **listening**, programs use the *Life Skills Series*.

Each CASAS test series has its own *Test Administration Manual*. It is very important to refer to the *Test Administration Manual* of test series you are using, as score charts and testing instructions are different for each test series.

It is important to remember that if a reading pretest is administered, the post-test must also be a reading test in the same series; a listening pretest must be followed by a listening post-test. They are not interchangeable. However, you may pre- and post-test with a reading test and a listening test. Check with your agency to find out what guidelines have been determined for your agency.

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**Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher**

1. Which CASAS test series is used in your class?
2. Where can you access the Test Administration Manual?
3. Which skills are tested? Reading, Listening, or both?
How do I fill out the Test Record form?

To ensure that all paper/pencil testing data is submitted correctly, you must fill in the Test Record form accurately. On the Test Record form, there are important fields that need to be completed. Some agencies pre-print (or “pre-slug”) the forms with students’ information. Otherwise, each form needs to be filled in by hand.

Sample Test Record

1. **Student Last Name**
   Make sure that the name appears exactly as it does on your attendance records.

2. **Instructor Name**
   Please print if not pre-slugged for you.

Directions for marking answers
Use this box to review with your students how to bubble in their answers.

3. **Student Identification**
   Use the ID number found on your attendance records.

4. **Form Number**
   This number is found on front of the test booklets. Use a leading 0 – for example, write 082R or 082RX (Reading test).

5. **Test Date**
   Mark the date the student takes the test.

6. **Raw Score**
   To scan information for forms 27R and 28R, write the number correct here.

7. **Hours of Instruction**
   If this is a post-test, you can write the number of hours the student has attended class since the pre-test, or since the previous post-test.

8. **Leave Blank**

If you have a student who is unable to get a valid score on a form 27R or 28R, mark this box. Don’t forget to re-test the student after s/he has completed some class time!
The CASAS Scale and Skill Level Descriptors

Results from CASAS tests are translated from a raw score (the number correct) to a scale score, and relate to a unique numerical scale showing level of proficiency.

Each proficiency level defined by this CASAS scale score range corresponds to descriptors of performance in terms of employment and adult life skills. These Skill Level Descriptors describe in positive terms what a person is able to do or learn within a range of the scale scores.

Keep in mind that the descriptors only apply to the type of test given. For example, if a student took a reading test, only the reading descriptors at that determined level are applicable to that student. Do not assume that the listening, speaking, or writing skills are at the same level.

Below is an excerpt from the Skill Level Descriptors for

### High Intermediate ESL

Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy basic survival needs and limited social demands; can follow oral directions in familiar contexts. Has limited ability to understand on the telephone. Understands learned phrases easily and new phrases containing familiar vocabulary. Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic materials on familiar subjects. Can write messages or notes related to basic needs. Can fill out basic medical forms and job applications. Employability: Can handle jobs and/or training that involve following basic oral and written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally. (SPL 5)

### Low Intermediate ESL

Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy basic survival needs and very routine social demands. Understands simple learned phrases easily and some new simple phrases containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly and with frequent repetition. Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simple material on familiar topics. Able to read and interpret simple directions, schedules, signs, maps, and menus. Can fill out forms requiring basic personal information and write short, simple notes and messages based on familiar situations. Employability: Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral and written communication but in which tasks can also be demonstrated and/or clarified orally.
CASAS across the levels

Here are examples of test items (or questions) at three different levels along the CASAS scale. Each test question has a display (a picture or a cue) which the student reads, and then a question with four multiple choice answers to select from.

Competency 2.1.7: Take or interpret telephone messages

A Level: The student reads a simple note, and selects the answer A, B, C, or D to a simple question: “Who is coming?” This question is at a reading level of 185 on the CASAS scale.

B Level: The student reads the message and selects the answer to “When does the caller want to meet?” This type of question is at a reading level of 205 on the CASAS scale.

C Level: The question may require some critical thinking. “What should be done with this message” is a question that is at a reading level of 221 on the CASAS scale.

No entity (individual, school, program or business enterprise) may use or copy displays, questions, or answers that appear on any CASAS test to create materials to teach or to prepare students to answer CASAS test items.
Section 7: Administration and Storage of Tests

Anyone who administers CASAS tests must be trained by a staff person who has been certified by CASAS.

How do I Administer CASAS Tests?

Follow these guidelines to administer all CASAS tests (paper/pencil and eTests.)

Needed for testing day:

- Test Administration Manual
- If using paper/pencil tests:
  - Test booklets (Number your booklets for tracking and security purposes.)
  - Answer sheets and #2 pencils
  - A reliable CD player and the test CD for listening tests
  - Overhead of the answer sheet (optional)

See the “Guidelines for Providing Accommodations for CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities”

(or find it in your Test Administration Manual) for alternate test forms available and for a list of approved accommodations.

Preparation for testing

- Students may not use dictionaries or calculators
- Teachers may not read questions or answers to the students

Getting started

- Provide a quiet testing room
- Space students apart
- Maximum of 25 learners per proctor
- Explain purpose for testing
- Ease student anxiety
- For paper/pencil testing:
  - Pass out pencils, answer sheets, and scratch paper
  - Assist in completing the demographic portion of the answer sheet
  - Demonstrate how to mark answer sheets
Give the test

- For paper/pencil:
  - Pass out test booklets
  - Read the test directions and review practice items
  - Encourage test-takers to review their own answers
  - Write start and end times on the board
  - Begin the test
  - Monitor test-takers

Test timing guidelines

- **Appraisals** — check the appropriate administration manual for the suggested times allotted for each section of the appraisal.

- **Pre- and post-tests** — allow about 45 minutes to one hour.
  - These tests are not strictly timed. See the Test Administration Manual for more information.
  - Allow the same amount of time for pre and post-tests.
  - Students who are not able to complete the test within the hour can be given a few extra minutes to complete the question they are working on.
  - Students are not allowed to “finish” the test at another time. However, please refer to the Test Accommodations section in the Test Administration Manual for students with disabilities.

- For **listening tests**, timing is determined by the CD used for the paper/pencil test.
  - Do not stop the CD once the test begins.

If students are having a great deal of difficulty with test items, and obviously cannot complete them, they may be dismissed. Submit the test as is to your TE staff. They will score the test and let you know if the student received an accurate score or if they need to be retested at a lower level.

**Test security is vital.** All CASAS test materials including test booklets and answer sheets (which contain marks or responses) must be stored in a locked, preferably fireproof file cabinet. After administering assessments, teachers must secure materials according to your local assessment policy. Duplication of any part of CASAS tests is prohibited.

**Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher**

1. Where are the CASAS test booklets stored at your site?

2. What is the check-in/check-out procedure when you take CASAS test booklets to your class?
Section 8: Appraisals, Pretest and Post-Tests

Appraisals

See the Form 80 ESL Appraisal Test Administration Manual for additional Appraisal tools for speaking and writing.

The **raw score** is the number correct on the test. The raw score is not the score you will use. You will use a **scale score**. All CASAS test results are reported as scale scores, and all CASAS reports refer to scale scores, not raw scores.

Convert the raw score to the scale score using the **Score Conversion Chart** for the test that was administered. For example, if **Maria Gonzalez has a CASAS Appraisal Reading raw score of 7, then her scale score is 204**.

There are different **Score Conversion Charts** for test types (reading, listening, etc.), test series and for appraisals. The test administration manuals contain the raw to scale score conversion charts for each type of test. **Use the Score Conversion Chart for the test you are using!**

Once the appraisal has been completed, students can be placed in a particular class or level. For more accurate placement, give the appraisal and the pretest before placing students in class and use the pretest score to place students in class.
What’s the difference between an Appraisal and a Pre/Post-test?

Appraisals

There are 20-25 test items in the CASAS Appraisals (depending on which one is administered.) The items are widely distributed along the CASAS scale. They range from very easy items to difficult items.

Pre- and Post-tests

There can be anywhere from 25 – 35 test items in the pre/post-tests. These test items are clustered at a specific proficiency level, and include items from low to high difficulty within that specified range. The comparison between pre and post-test scores documents learning gains.
Pretests: How do you know which pretest to give?

TOPSpro Enterprise (TE) has a Next Assigned Test Report to help determine which test forms to give next.

Select a Pretest Level based on an Appraisal Score

From the appraisal test score, find the suggested next test level to administer in a CASAS testing progression. The chart below indicates which test level to give your student.

### Appraisal Next Test Chart (excerpt)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Score</th>
<th>Give Pre-Test Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>185</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>AX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>AX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>AX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209</td>
<td>AX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>218</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>227</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>228</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>231</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our student, Maria Gonzalez, had a score of 204 on her reading appraisal. Her pretest level is Level AX.
Then refer to the CASAS Test Forms Chart found in the Test Administration Manual to identify appropriate test form numbers. Select a pretest based on the series used at your agency. (This chart is for the Life and Work Reading Series.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beg. Lit.</td>
<td>27R, 28R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>81R, 82R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AX</td>
<td>81RX, 82RX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83R, 84R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>105R, 106R; 85R, 86R*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>167R, 188R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maria Gonzalez should take an 81RX or 82X for her pretest.

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

1. When is the pretest given at your site?

2. If the pretest is not given at the time of registration, when are you instructed to give the pretest in class?

3. Who is responsible for determining which post-test to give to each student?
Scores Outside the Accuracy Range

In spite of your best efforts to appraise students’ skills, occasionally students will not perform on their pretest as anticipated. Sometimes, students may score lower than expected or higher than expected and “top out” of the test.

For low pretest scores, the student may have been ill, or skipped a line on the answer sheet and marked the rest of the answers on the wrong line, or the wrong Test Form Number was bubbled in on the student’s answer sheet.

For higher than expected test scores, a student may have received “help” on the appraisal.

The technical errors can be easily remedied, but the others cannot. Sometimes you have to re-test the student. Other times a student is given a test form that is below their ability and they “top out” of the test. In any of these cases, the student does not have an accurate pretest score – the base line from which their progress is measured by the post-test.

According to this score conversion chart, if a student only scores 1-3 answers correct on this test, the student should be given a test at a lower level. This test was too hard for them.

If another student scores 29 to 32 answers correct, the student should be given a test at the next higher level. This test was too easy for them.

A diamond ♦ score represents a “conservative estimate” of a student’s true ability. This score may be used if there is no opportunity to re-test the student at a higher level.

For example, a student post-tests at the end of the school year and receives a diamond ♦ score. The agency will be able to document the student’s learning gain by comparing the student’s pretest score to this diamond ♦ score.
Post-tests

The post-test results show the progress the student is making in your class and are an excellent way to monitor that progress.

Post-tests can be given multiple times throughout the year. However, be mindful of under- and over-testing. The California Assessment Policy Guidelines state that students cannot be post-tested before 40 hours of class time has been completed, however 40 hours is not the optimal time to test your students. Research shows that students show learning gains after completing 70-100 hours of class time. Your agency will have a testing policy and/or schedule of post-testing based on how long students typically remain in the program, intensity of program, and program schedule.

Students pretest and post-test (and can continue to post-test) within a test level until they score high enough to move to the next test level. In other words, a student can continue taking tests within Level A, moving from 81R → 82R → 81R. When students score high enough to move to the next test level, according to the Suggested Next Test chart, they should take 81RX.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL A</th>
<th>LEVEL A EXTENDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form 81 R</td>
<td>Form 82 R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw Score</td>
<td>Scale Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>173</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>176</td>
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<td>188</td>
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<td>190</td>
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<td>198</td>
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<td>200</td>
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<td>202</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>208</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>210+</td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>212+</td>
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<td>214+</td>
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<td>218+</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>220+</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>222+</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>224+</td>
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<td>226+</td>
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<td>228+</td>
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<td>230+</td>
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<td>232+</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>234+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>236+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>238+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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TE has a Next Assigned Test Report that determine which test forms to give. Here is an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Class Administered</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Scale Score</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Test Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frattolesi, Sofia</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>05/29/2013</td>
<td>082L</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>189</td>
<td></td>
<td>081L</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang, Khamboon</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>06/29/2013</td>
<td>081RX</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
<td>083R</td>
<td>LW-1, LW-2, LW-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reyes, Ramon</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>05/25/2013</td>
<td>084L</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
<td>083L</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz, Frances</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>03/30/2013</td>
<td>084L</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>212</td>
<td></td>
<td>083L</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomorra, Miguel</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>04/10/2013</td>
<td>082L</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
<td>081L</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martinez, Esmeralda</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>05/25/2013</td>
<td>084R</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>218</td>
<td></td>
<td>086R</td>
<td>LW-1, LW-2, LW-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Scores outside of accuracy range

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**Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher: How are post-tests administered at your site?**

1. Does your site have a testing calendar? If so, get a copy and place it in this handbook.

2. About how often do you post test your students? (Every quarter, before major holidays, etc.)

3. What can you do to ensure that students who are absent during post-testing get tested?
CASAS Test Preparation

CASAS encourages the use of the Competencies, CASAS Basic Skills Content Standards, QuickSearch (introduced later in this handbook), and other materials to link curriculum, assessment and instruction to prepare students for Post-testing.

Test Preparation Guidelines

**Appropriate strategies:**
- Use diagnostic information from test results to “teach to:”
  - Task Areas
  - CASAS Competencies
  - CASAS Content Standards
- Use other CASAS support materials to link curriculum, assessment and instruction (QuickSearch)
- Use CASAS answer sheets to practice test-taking skills
- Use the CASAS Sample Test Items for practice

**Inappropriate strategies:**
- Teaching to a particular test item
- Teaching specific vocabulary in a test item
- Limiting curriculum to what the tests cover
Sample Test Items

Sample Test Items are a resource available to help:
- Familiarize students and teachers with the CASAS test format
- Practice test taking skills and ease test-taking anxiety
- Practice marking the answer sheet (You may use TE Test Records for practice.)

There are Sample Test Items available for Levels A, B, and C in the Life and Work Reading Series and the Life and Work Listening Series. There are 5 to 6 test items for each of the three skill levels. Remember, these Sample Test Items are not a predictor of performance.

Gather the Information

1. Download the Reading Sample Test Items from the CASAS Website. Take the Reading sample test items. Then take the eTests Online sample tests.

2. Identify the task area (type of question – forms, graphs, narratives) for each of the Reading Sample Test Items. See the list of task areas on page 7. There may be more than one task area for an item. Remember, the task area is as important for students to understand as the content of the question being asked.
### Section 8 Appraisals, Pretests, and Post-Tests Summary

1. How is what you’ve read about Appraisal and pre- and post-testing similar to what you’re already doing?

2. What are some of the challenges you face with testing?

3. What are some ways you can improve the testing process in your classroom or agency?
Section 9: Using Test Results

Once all the students in class have taken the pretest, you will receive (or need to request) a report that helps identify the areas your students are having difficulty with, allowing you to target your instruction accordingly.

How do I use test results to guide instruction?

Following testing, TE can provide various reports to help you gauge student level, guide classroom instruction, and inform students of their progress. While there are approximately 150 reports to choose from, the most helpful TE reports for teachers are:

- **Class Performance by Competency**
  - shows percentage of correct answers for a class on a particular test

- **Learning Gains First to Last**
  - shows individual student progress between pretest and most recent test

---

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

- Who provides you with TE reports?
  
  Name: ____________________________ Phone: ____________________________
  
  Email: ____________________________

- How often do you receive them?
The **Class Performance by Competency** report tells which Competencies your class needs to work on.

Refer to the Class by Competency Report above

1. Identify two competencies that this particular teacher should focus on:

2. The task area shows how an item is presented. What is the task area for item #3? Refer to page 7 for the **Reading Task Areas Chart**.
Teachers can use the Learning Gains First to Last report to check the gains for each student from their pretest to their most recent post-test, and to obtain each student’s individual scale scores.

---

Look at the report above

1. What was the point gain between Yee C. Ho’s pretest and post-test?

2. How will you use information about student gains?

3. How can you use information about individual student scale scores for instruction?
How do I share test results with my students?

Encourage your students to track their progress by helping them create charts or graphs, or simply keeping a list of test dates and scores.

The Student Test History report provides the students’ scale scores from their first test of the fiscal year (July 1) to the most recent test. Share these scores with individual students using the Skill Level Descriptors Chart to explain what each score means. You can also give your students individual reports, such as the Individual Skills Profile report that shows how well they did by Competency Area, Content Standard and Task Area.

Note: Remind students that if they receive a negative gain (their score drops from the Pretest score), not to be discouraged. It could be due to a variety of things, including an improper (or inflated) pretest score, personal distractions on the testing day, etc. Reassure the students that they will have another opportunity to post-test and to show gains at that time.

When looking at your class test results, be aware that there are underlying skills that relate to more than that specific competency. Determine the task type (form, narrative, map, etc.) and think of other ways that the skills can be practiced in the competency area you are currently working on.
1. How does this information relate to what you’re already doing?

2. What are some of the challenges you face with using test results?

3. What are some ways you can improve the process for getting and interpreting test results in your classroom or agency?
Practice Activity: Develop a way to practice a competency in another topic area

You’ve received your test results and have found that 58% of your students missed questions about “Filling out a Family Medical History Form” - Competency # 3.2.1

Your class studied Health two months ago. Under what other Competency Areas and Topic Areas could you practice similar skills?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Number Tested</th>
<th>Competency Area of Test Item</th>
<th>Alternate Content Areas</th>
<th>Alternate Sample Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Understand forms related to health care</td>
<td>Employment, Consumer Economics, Health</td>
<td>Complete a job application, Fill out forms related to banking, Complete a health plan application for their job</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Competency # 3.2.1, instead of students learning how to fill out a family medical history form, they could practice the same skill

under “Employment” by

✓ completing a job application

Or under “Consumer Economics” by

✓ filling out forms related to banking

Or under “Health” by

✓ completing a health plan application for their job
How do I find appropriate instructional materials to teach the competencies?

The “Scope and Sequence” section in your textbook, generally found at the beginning of the text, can help you identify which CASAS Competencies are being addressed in each lesson. Most major publishers denote which CASAS competencies are addressed in each chapter.

Competencies are taught in conjunction with grammar, vocabulary, listening, and critical thinking activities.

CASAS offers a selection of helpful instructional resources that assist teachers in selecting appropriate instructional materials to meet the needs of their students.

These resources include:

- **QuickSearch Online**, a user-friendly database that includes more than 2,300 print, audio, visual and computer-based instructional materials that are commercially available. You can also use QuickSearch to find instructional materials that relate to competencies and task area found in TE reports.

- **The Bibliography of Citizenship Materials**, a bibliography that includes information on instructional materials for the following topics: knowledge of U.S. history and government, preparation for completing naturalization documents, and preparation for the CIS naturalization interview

- **EL Civics Objectives Correlated to Instructional Materials**, a bibliography that assists California EL Civics programs in identifying useful instructional materials that relate directly to EL Civics objectives and EL Civics language and literacy objectives

### Gather the Information

1. Which core text series do you use?

2. What level?

3. Is there a “Scope and Sequence” section?
   a. On what page can it be found?
   b. List two ways you can use it:
The CASAS Instructional Materials **QuickSearch Online** is a user-friendly database that includes more than 2,300 commercially available print, audio, visual and computer-based instructional materials. **QuickSearch Online** is updated annually to include new materials from publishers and software companies.

With your class or student test results, you can search for materials to address specific competencies and match curriculum by:

- Title of instructional material
- Competency number
- Program, Level, and Skill (reading, writing, listening or speaking)
- Publisher
- CASAS Test (both level and series)

Below is a sample report from **QuickSearch**

**Competency selected for this report: 4.1.2**
Multiple measures of documenting student progress

While CASAS testing provides useful information about students’ skills and progress, you should monitor student progress through a variety of means.

Keeping a student portfolio (e.g., CASAS scores, tests, quizzes, writing samples, handouts, etc.) is important to provide a comprehensive picture documenting student progress. Items to keep in the portfolio might include:

- a list or graph of CASAS test results
- instructor-generated tests & quizzes
- samples of student work
- needs assessments
- alternative (performance-based) assessments

Portfolios can be created and updated by your students during class. Have students update their portfolios at the end of each week or unit identifying goals they have met or skills they have attained. “Student Record Sheets” can be used to document other achievements. You can also use a copy of your textbook’s table of contents to have students track what they have learned.

Ask a Supervisor or Lead Teacher

1. List two ways you monitor student progress:

2. What Student Portfolio items are required by your agency?

3. How do you have students participate in documenting their own progress?
Review

Review the Table of Contents for this Handbook. Are there any areas that you need more information about? If so, who could you ask at your agency?


CASAS training opportunities

For additional training, consider completing one of the following, either in person or on-line:

- CASAS Initial Implementation Training
- California Accountability for New Users

Go to [www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org) for a current list of regional and web-based training opportunities. You will also find a vast array of information, announcements, and documents about CASAS.

Reflection

Write two things you’ve learned from this handbook:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Write two things you want to learn more about:

________________________________________

________________________________________
If you would like to have a CASAS Teacher’s Handbook with information that is state-specific, please have your state agency contact

Adriana Terry at aterry@casas.org