

Implementation Ideas: CASAS Writing Assessments

Presented by:

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Resources: www.tinyURL.com/casas-essay

Welcome, attendees!

- (1) What's your role in Adult Ed?
 - Teachers? Administrators? Counselors? Data Analysts?
- (2) Do you currently offer writing classes at your college?
 - *Which student groups do you serve? (ELL, ABE, HSE, HSD)*

Introducing

Essay Test

Assess student writing skills quickly and provide a roadmap to improvement for your ABE, HSE, and ELL students.

www.casas.org / info@casas.org



UPDATED
culturally relevant and engaging content



ONLINE
secure environment within CASAS eTests



FAST
immediate results with suggestions for improvement



EFFICIENT
eliminates manual scoring of essays



SUCCESS
helps HSE candidates prepare for their exams

tinyurl.com/CASAS-Essay

What is the CASAS Essay Test?

- Autoscored online test
- Delivered within CASAS eTests
- Three prompts to choose from
- Results available immediately!

- www.tinyURL.com/casas-essay

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Are Writing Skills Important in Adult Ed?

- ✓ Helps HSE candidates prepare for the GED/HiSET exams
- ✓ Supports students transitioning into **employment ...and secondary education** where writing skills are required

How else could your students benefit from better writing skills TODAY?

The Writing Assessments



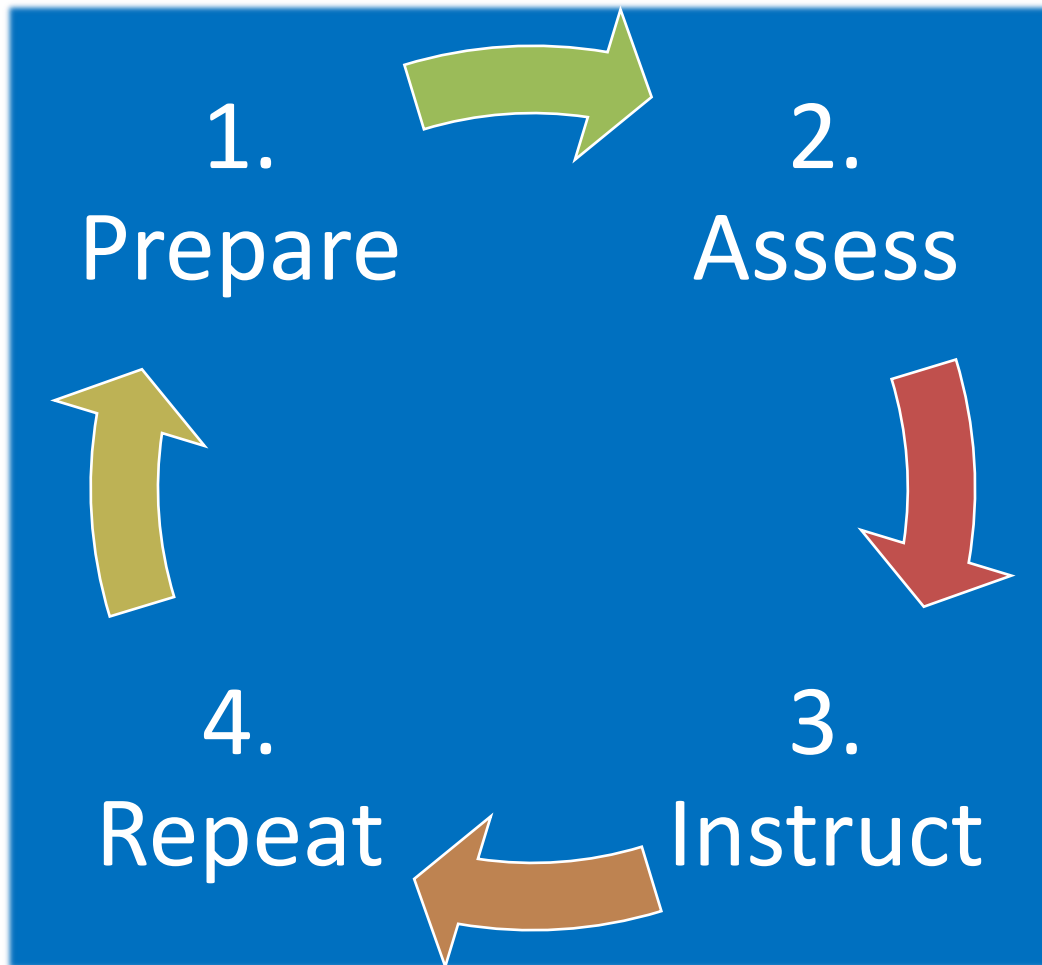
Essay Test



Language Test

[HTTPS://WWW.CASAS.ORG/PRODUCT-OVERVIEWS/RESEARCH-AND-EVALUATION/FIELD-TESTING-OPPORTUNITIES](https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/research-and-evaluation/field-testing-opportunities)

Four Steps: Improving Writing Skills



A Tale of Two Schools



Prepare Proctors & Teachers:



TEST ADMINISTRATION
DIRECTIONS (TAD)



NEW: ESSAY
TEST ADVISORY
NOTES



SUMMER INSTITUTE
WRITING
WORKSHOP

Prepare Students:

SI2023

Do Students Need Extra Preparation for an Essay Assessment?

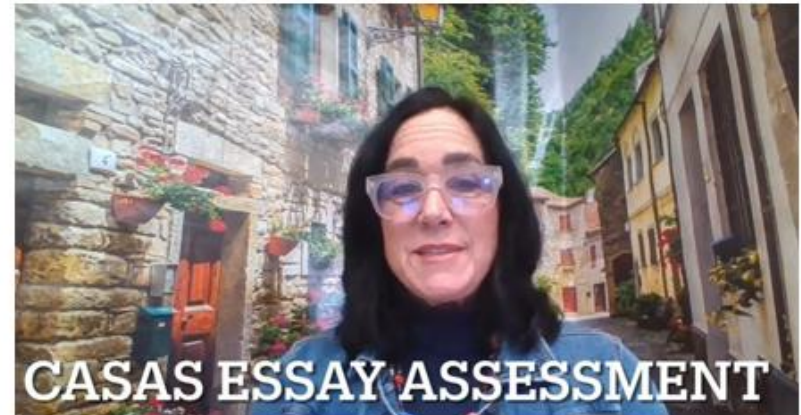
Using a Video for Essay Introduction

- a. Lowers student anxiety
- b. Proctoring consistency
- c. Helps manage late arrivals

[CASAS Essay Assessment Instruction Video*](#)

**We also placed a link on our website for easy access:*

[South Bay Adult School Website](#)





Preparation: CASAS “eTests Sampler”

The screenshot shows the 'CASAS eTests Sampler' interface. At the top, there is a dark header with the text 'CASAS eTests Sampler'. Below this is a light gray background with the title 'Sample Test Items' in bold. A list of test items is displayed in horizontal bars of different colors. A red arrow points to the 'Essay' item at the bottom of the list.

Sample Test Item
Life and Work Reading
Reading GOALS Level A
Reading GOALS Level B
Reading GOALS Level C
Reading GOALS Level D
Math GOALS
Life and Work Listening 980 Level A
Life and Work Listening 980 Level B
Life and Work Listening 980 Level C
Essay

[HTTPS://TEPORTAL.ORG/ETESTS](https://teportal.org/etests)

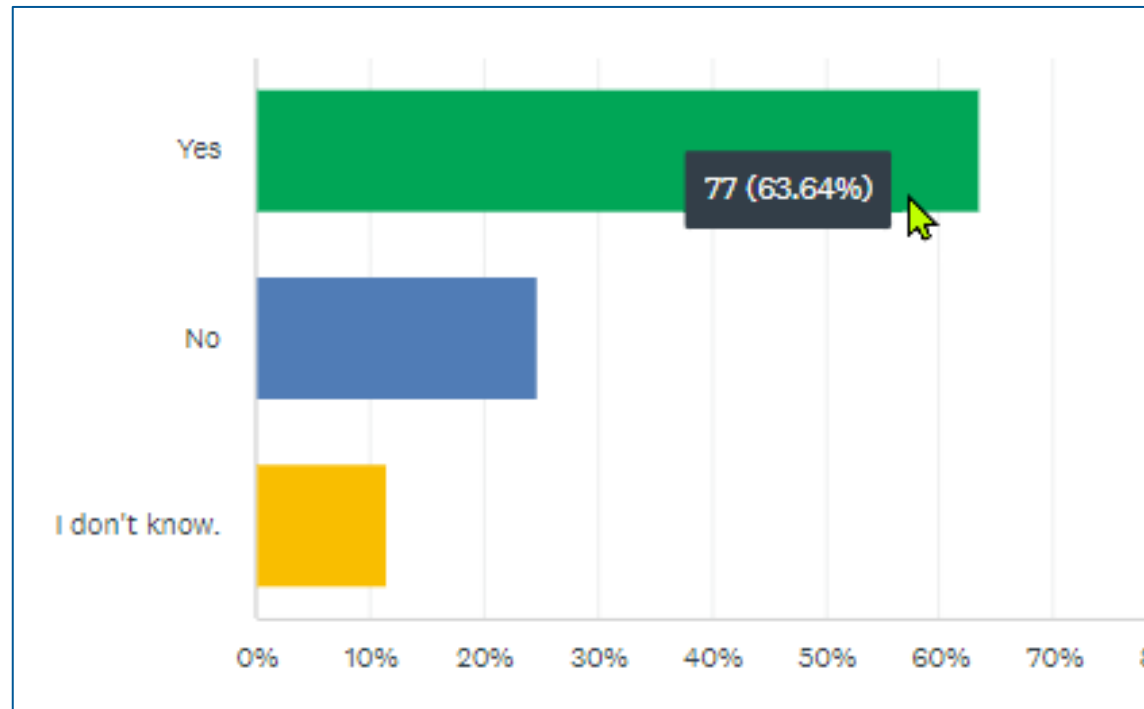
Inside the “Sampler”:

ID:	Name:	Time Remaining: 00:10:00
<p>Healthy eating habits are important but often not followed. Why is this? What can be done about it?</p>		
<p>Maintaining a varied diet is important, but also expensive. It's hard to find time to shop and cook using fresh <u>ingredeints</u>.</p>		
<p> Directions </p>		

More Student Preparation Tips:

HOW ARE YOUR KEYBOARDING SKILLS?

- Over 120 students surveyed felt better **typing skills** would have helped them with their essay test.



Sample Language Test Question:

1. THE CHEF _____ THE MEALS AT THE RESTAURANT.

A. COOK

B. COOKS

C. HAVE COOKED

Sample Language Questions (cont'd)

2. THE CLASS _____ HE SIGNED
UP FOR BEGINS IN THE SPRING.

A. WHO

B. THAT

C. WHOSE

Administer the Essay & Language Tests

eTests Online - Janice Fake Agency 06-Feb-23 8:59:36 AM Janice Fera (jfera@casas.org) [Logout](#)

Testing Sessions (4 records) [Refresh](#)

Filter by: Status

						Site	Lab Name	Template Name	Session Name	Start Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Save table filters						filter	filter	filter	filter	filter
Edit	View	Start	Tests	Delete	Copy	50		Essay Test -- Form 900W (Exercise)	Essay Test - Form 900W	07/01/2022
Edit	View	Start	Tests	Delete	Copy	50		Essay Test -- Form 901W (Employment)	Essay Test - Form 901W	07/01/2022
Edit	View	Start	Tests	Delete	Copy	50		Essay Test -- Form 902W (Advertising)	Essay Test - Form 902W	07/01/2022
Edit	View	Start	Tests	Delete	Copy	50		Language Test Initial Research Study	Language Field Test - DO NOT EDIT	07/01/2022

How Does the Autoscorer Help?

- Reasonably accurate; a 'snapshot score'
- Timesaving for teachers
 - Administered to 250 students
 - 4,000 - 5000 minutes saved
- Ease and speed of this assessment makes writing skills feedback attainable
- Creates immediate discussion points for suggestions to improve
- Recommended immediate interventions to provide students



Raw Scores Between 1 and 4

Rating Scale

- 4 - Very Good Writing Skills**
- 3 - Good Writing Skills**
- 2 - Deficient in Writing Skills**
- 1 - Very Deficient in Writing Skills**
- * - Test was unscorable**

CASAS Personal Score Report
 09/25/2022 18:13:08 by file Page 1 of 4
 JJ Fera - 234567

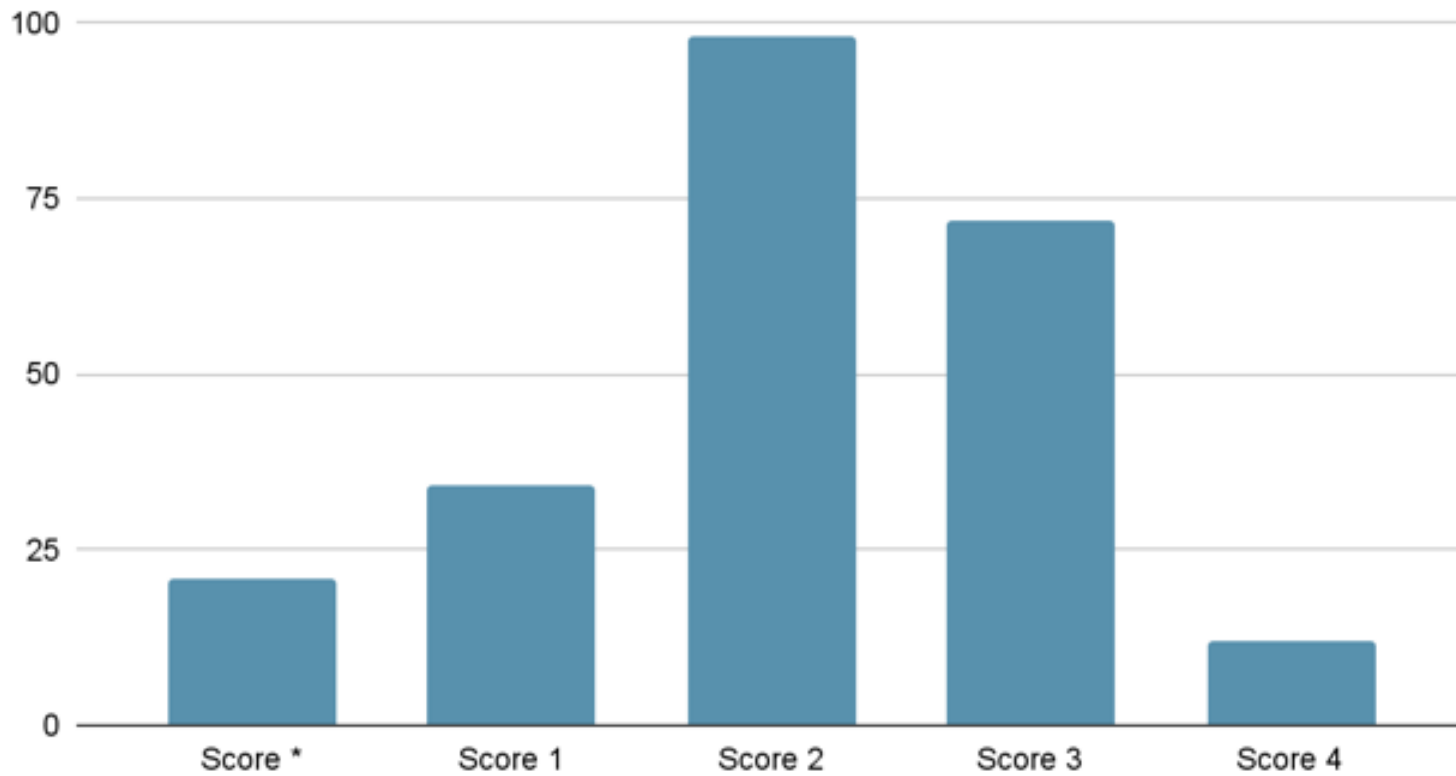
Modality	Test Form	Test Date	Score
Writing	902W	09/21/2022	2

Your Score
2

Becoming a better writer
 What to Work On:

- Main Idea** When you write, make sure your main idea is clearly stated in the beginning. Focus on your main idea throughout the entire essay. Make sure that you include enough details and examples to support your main idea. Also, explain everything in your essay clearly so that the reader is not confused about what you mean. Extra information will help the reader understand what you are writing about.
- Organization** Keep working on putting your sentences together in an organized way, so that your ideas are easy to follow. Using transition words will help to smoothly connect your ideas to each other.
- Word Choice** Try to reduce the number of word-choice errors in your writing. Make sure that you are using words correctly, so the meaning is always clear. Also, use a variety of words and sentence structures in your writing. Avoid repetition where possible.
- Grammar & Mechanics** Try to use more complex sentence structure throughout your essay. Also, continue to check your sentences carefully and fix any errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Fixing these errors will help the reader understand what you are saying.

Initial Testing -- Autoscored



Example: Student Essay – Score “2”

Example Student Work

Exercise is good to a better health because it help keep body in a good working other. but people are some time lazy about it because they did not now the good benefit of it.is very essential to teach people about the need of exercise so that they will see the important of it.

What we would focus on with this student:

- Word Choice
- One idea in a sentence
- Avoiding repetition

Interventions we would offer this student:

- Direct teacher instruction
- Writing Workshops-Sentence Structure
- Writing Individual Tutoring
- Summer Writing Boot Camp



What Generalizations Did Milpitas See?

- Milpitas Adult School – ESL Program
- 60-70 ESL Students (Int High and above)

- *“It’s not their language skills, it’s their ability to stay on the prompt topic, create a couple good ideas, and be organized that needed work.”*

Lisa Lau, ESL Instructor



MILPITAS
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

ESSAY Personal Score Report (PSR)

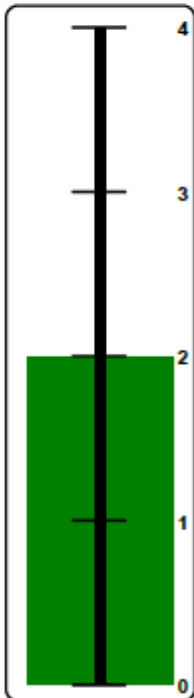
CASAS eTests Online

Personal Score Report

Janice Fera

123456

Modality	Test Form	Test Date	Score
Writing	900W	01/19/2023	2



Your score:

2

Personal Score Report (PSR), page 2

Becoming a Better Writer

Suggestions for Improvement:

Main Idea	When you write, make sure your main idea is clearly stated in the beginning. Focus on your main idea throughout the entire essay. Make sure that you include enough details and examples to support your main idea. Also, explain everything in your essay clearly so that the reader is not confused about what you mean. Extra information will help the reader understand what you are writing about.
Organization	Keep working on putting your sentences together in an organized way, so that your ideas are easy to follow. Using transition words will help to smoothly connect your ideas to each other.
Word Choice	Try to reduce the number of word-choice errors in your writing. Make sure that you are using words correctly, so the meaning is always clear. Also, use a variety of words and sentence structures in your writing. Avoid repetition where possible.
Grammar & Mechanics	Try to use more complex sentence structure throughout your essay. Also, continue to check your sentences carefully and fix any errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Fixing these errors will help the reader understand what you are saying.

TOPSPRO ENTERPRISE:

REPORTS → CASAS ETESTS → PERSONAL SCORE REPORT

Definitions:

- ✓ **Grammar** is the structure of written or spoken language. It refers to the parts of speech and how they combine to form sentences.
- ✓ **Mechanics** refers to the rules of the written language, such as capitalization, punctuation and spelling.



PSR for Language



01/25/2023
00:39:23

Personal Score Report

by Site

Page 1 of 2
PSR3

[REDACTED]

Agency:	[REDACTED]	Class:	N/A
Site:	[REDACTED]	Teacher:	N/A

Modality	Test Form	Test Date	Total	Correct	CCR Language Level
Language	FT-US-LA-001	10/07/2022	20	3	C

Language Content Area	Total Items	Number correct	Percent correct
Nouns and Pronouns	4	0	0%
Verbs, Adverbs and Adjectives	7	2	29%
Phrases, Clauses and Sentences	4	0	0%
Punctuation	5	1	20%

Writing Programs and Curriculum

- Groups vs. Individual Instruction
- Homegrown or Published?

What Classes Should We Offer?



- ABE Reading/Language Arts Academy
- Writing Workshops
- One-on-one Writing Tutoring



➔ ADJUSTED SCHEDULES TO MEET STUDENTS' NEEDS

Instruction -- How to teach writing?

- Create an outline?
- List key words?
- Compose on paper first?
- How to manage their time effectively?
- Will working in pairs help?

→ ADJUST METHODS TO THE STUDENTS' NEEDS

Instruction – How to teach writing?

Instructional approach to writing focuses on three parts:

- Planning
- Drafting
- Evaluating



Curriculum Ideas: Shared Paragraph Writing

- Have students work in pairs or small groups to deconstruct five-sentence paragraphs into main idea (topic) and supporting sentences.
- Start with paragraphs with obvious main ideas.
- Then shift the main ideas into different locations in the paragraph.
- *“Ideas for Teaching Writing Skills”, Kay Hartley, CASAS Summer Institute 2023*

Curriculum Ideas: Transitioning to Essays

Activity: Think about an event you recently attended. On your phone or a piece of paper, list four or five memorable details from the event.

For example:

1. There was great food.
 2. There was a band.
 3. People danced.
 4. I visited with friends.
 5. There was an award ceremony.
- *“Ideas for Teaching Writing Skills”, Kay Hartley, CASAS Summer Institute 2023*

Curriculum Ideas: Using the Activity Results

Suggestions:

- What was great, or not, about the food served?
 - What did the band play? Was it loud?
 - Who was the best, or worst dancer?
-
- Follow with targeted instruction on ‘Introductory Paragraphs’ and ‘Transition Vocabulary’.
-
- *“Ideas for Teaching Writing Skills”, Kay Hartley, CASAS Summer Institute 2023*

Curriculum Ideas:

- GED – Essential Ed
- HSD – Acellus Academy
- HSE -- New Readers Press, Pre-HSE Writing 1 & 2

- “Writing Workshop: Introductory Paragraph”, Andrew Keiler, South Bay Adult School

- “Ideas for Teaching Writing Skills”, Kay Hartley, CASAS Summer Institute 2023

Early Results!

- Milpitas Adult: ESL
- South Bay Adult: ABE/ASE/HSD

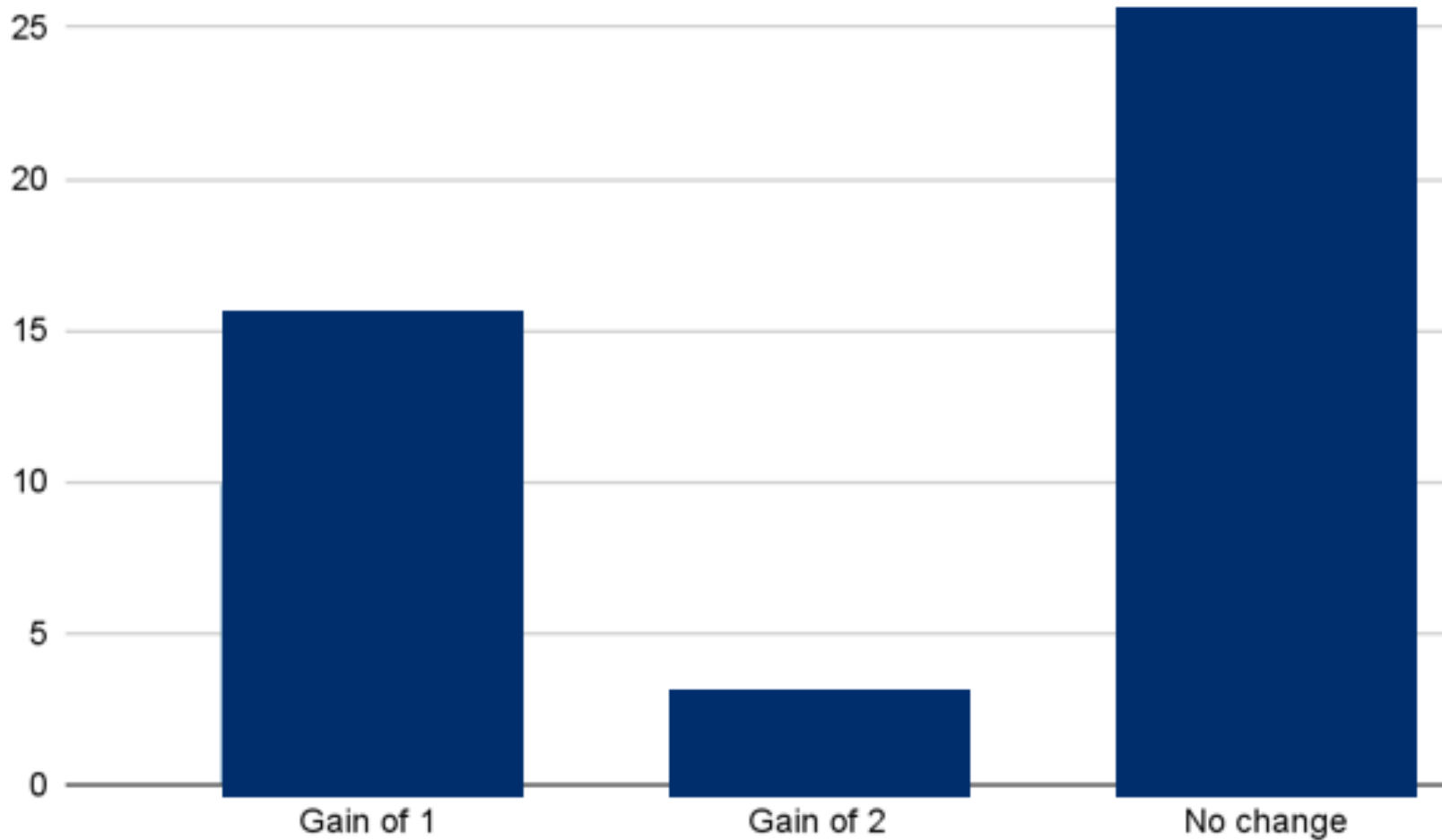
Results From Milpitas Adult Ed

- First Essay Test May 1-5 (60 students)
 - One month of class instruction using the PSR as a guideline
 - Re-tested 27 students last week in May...
-
- 10 had one point improvement!
 - 1 student with 2 points improvement!!



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Results From South Bay Adult



SI2023

Can the Essay Assessment Predict Outcomes?

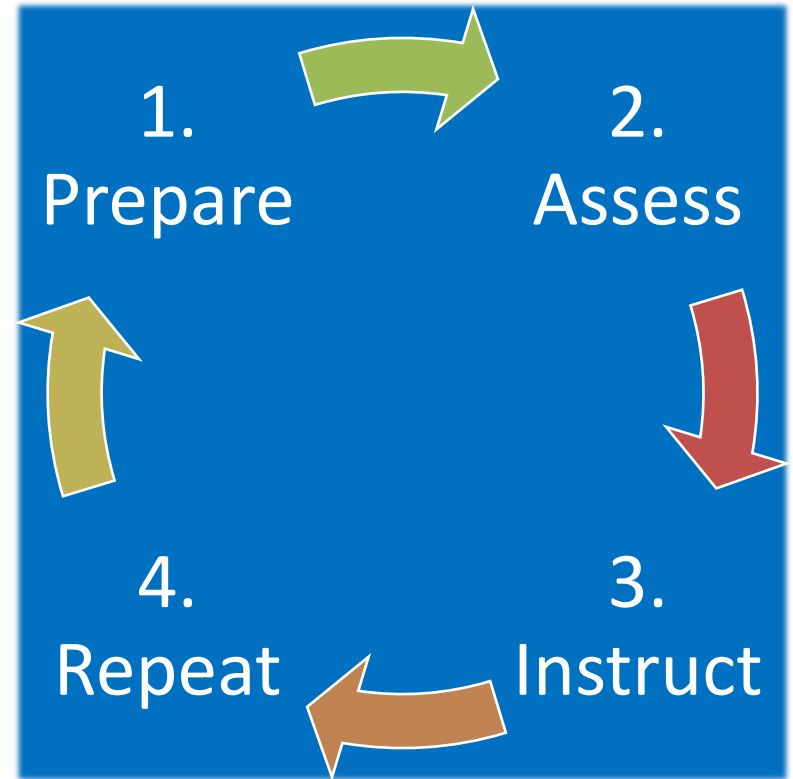
Ten GED students took the essay assessment.



Essay Score = 3

4. Repeat the Process

- Cyclical nature of composition
 - Writing, editing, re-writing
- Re-taking a test to see how your score has improved.



Instructor Feedback:

“ [Essay Test] ... has been an invaluable tool in assessing the writing abilities of our students. It enables us to do writing intervention that just wasn't possible before.”

Andrew Keiler, HSE Teacher, South Bay Adult School,
Redondo Beach, CA

Questions?

How to get started?

- Download the training materials on www.tinyURL.com/casas-essay .
- Schedule an internal meeting with your teachers and counselors to map out your plan.
- Contact techsupport@casas.org to make an appointment to have Essay and Language Test installed into your eTests environment



Thank you!