

Great Expectations

**A GUIDE TO ALABAMA'S
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAM**

REVISED OCTOBER 2003



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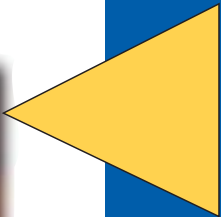
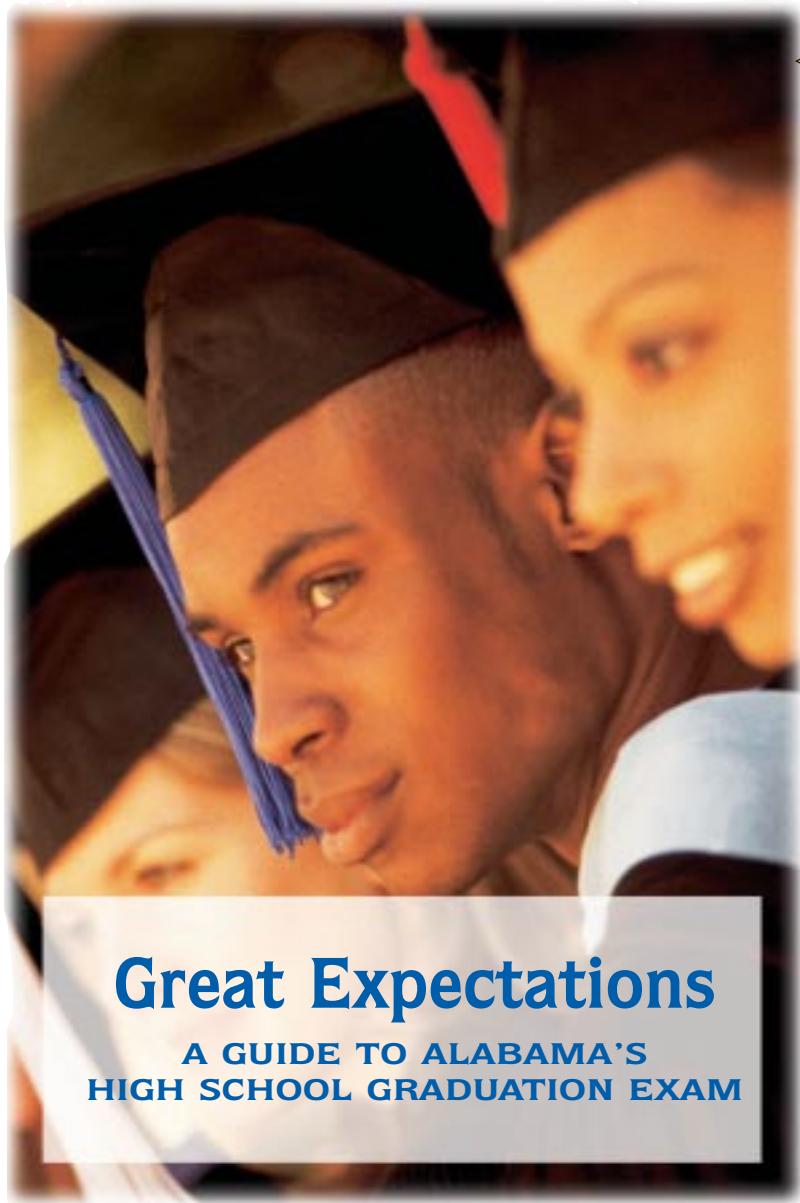
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A GUIDE TO ALABAMA'S
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAM

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As the standards for education are raised in Alabama — and across the nation — we can all work together to provide our young people with the best possible education to meet future challenges.”

— Ed Richardson,

State Superintendent of Education



Like you, I expect great things from our students. Working together — parents, teachers, school board members, business, and community leaders — we can help provide a first-rate public education in Alabama that will better prepare our children to accomplish their individual dreams.

Whether students go to work, military, or college after graduating, it's our job to challenge students to succeed by learning. That means providing both the foundation and tools needed to build a solid education for today's changing work environment. The most important element, desire, must come from within each student. Together, we can help in this area by constantly demonstrating the benefits of a quality education.

Our high school students already must take the state's 4x4 curriculum — four years each of required courses of study in mathematics, science, social studies and English. Students must also earn a minimum of 24 credits in course work. Beginning with the Class of 2001, our state's graduation requirements included a new version of a graduation exam.

The charge to the various committees working with the development of the new graduation exam was to identify the fundamental skills and concepts that students who pass the required courses are expected to know. I believe this was a fair challenge.

To ensure accuracy and fairness of our new graduation exam, the committees were instructed that the content of the subject-area tests should not be basic or advanced, but fundamental. Teachers from more than 100 school systems from across the state worked in various phases of test development and validity checks for more than four years to make certain this goal was met.

Development committees included teachers from a variety of high school programs from special education to career/technical courses to regular classes. In addition, some teachers of Advanced Placement (AP) courses also served on committees, but these teachers were not in the majority and the test is not geared toward AP students.

In addition to constructing well-defined content, we also conducted preliminary testing of the exam. This testing took place in a majority of public high schools over a one-and-a-half year period, which began in the spring of 1998. In all, more than 87,600 Alabama students took the exam during this overall developmental phase.

As a result of these combined efforts, I am pleased our new graduation exam is one that meets real world challenges. Equally important, it is an exam that our students are capable of passing. These skills will be needed to succeed in an ever-changing marketplace.

A good exam is useless without proper instruction and preparation. That's why we must continue to prepare teachers. Their continued exposure to the 4x4 curriculum is vital. In addition, our Pathways for Learning material and workshops include creative activities teachers can use to teach the required skills.

Inside, you'll discover a variety of material to educate you better on what the new graduation exam is and is not. Most important, we hope you find this guide useful, so you'll know more.

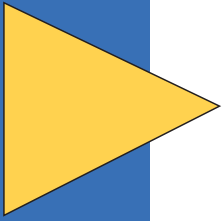
As the standards for education are raised in Alabama — and across the nation — we can all work together to provide our young people with the best possible education to meet future challenges. At the same time, we should not focus simply on passing the graduation exam. We also should look at the big picture and make sure our children and students are better prepared to meet the increased expectations and serve as citizens of this great country.



Ed Richardson

*Ed Richardson,
State Superintendent of Education*

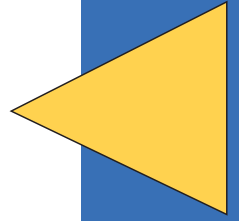
**EXPECT
GREAT THINGS IN
EDUCATION**



QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAM

- 100% of the graduation exam is multiple-choice.
- It is generally written on the eleventh-grade level. (The first graduation exam, given in Alabama in 1983, tested basic knowledge and was on a sixth-grade level. It was later revised to an eighth-/ninth-grade level in 1991.)
- It requires students to demonstrate what they have learned in required high school core course work and emphasizes logic, problem solving, and other thinking skills.
- The reading section requires students to read and comprehend articles, poems, editorials, manuals, and other similar materials.
- The language section focuses on grammar skills, punctuation, word choice, sentence structure, and organizational skills for writing.
- Most of the math section contains questions about basic Algebra I skills. It also covers some pre-geometry taught in grades seven and eight.
- Most of the science section includes biology questions. The rest is physical science taught in grades seven and eight.
- The Class of 2001 was required to pass the reading and language sections of the exam.
- The Class of 2002 was required to pass the reading, language, mathematics, and science sections.
- A social studies section, dealing with U.S. History, will be required beginning with the Class of 2004.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Following are some of the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about high school graduation in Alabama and the new graduation exam.

Q: Why is Alabama raising graduation requirements?

A: State leaders, parents, and business people want to be sure our students truly learn what they are being taught in school. Today, basic skills aren't enough to guarantee our children will find good jobs and become productive citizens. As a result, the Alabama State Legislature passed its *Education Accountability Law* in 1995. The new graduation exam is part of that push to raise standards — and performance — for all students. The need for higher standards was also behind the state Board of Education's decision in 1996 to require all high school students to take the 4x4 curriculum (four years each of required core courses in mathematics, science, social studies, and English) to earn an Alabama high school diploma.

Q: When were these higher standards be applied?

A: Alabama's Legislature required the new core curriculum to be in place for the Class of 2000. As a result, the state Board of Education also began a process in 1996 to develop a new graduation exam to measure mastery of the 4x4 curriculum. Sections of the new exam, which are based on those core courses, took effect beginning with the Class of 2001.

Q: What are the requirements for earning an Alabama high school diploma?

A: There are really two parts. First, students must pass the minimum number of required courses. This includes a minimum of 24 credits in course work. In addition, students must pass the appropriate subject-area tests of the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition.

Q: What are the course requirements?

A: To graduate, students must pass the following courses as minimum:

- 4 credits of English
- 4 credits of Mathematics (including Algebra I and Geometry)
- 4 credits of Science (including Biology and a Physical Science)
- 4 credits of Social Studies
- 1 credit of Physical Education
- .5 credit of Health Education
- .5 credit of Arts Education
- .5 credit of Computer Education (unless waived by the local board of education in which case this half credit becomes an elective credit)
- 5.5 credits of electives

TOTAL = 24 credits (local boards of education may require additional electives)

Q: What are the graduation exam subject requirements?

A: Students must pass the following subject-area tests on the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition:

- Reading – (Began with Class of 2001)
- Language – (Began with Class of 2001)
- Mathematics – (Begins with Class of 2002)
- Science – (Began with Class of 2002)
- Social Studies – (Begins with Class of 2004)

Q: What is the timetable for phasing in the new graduation exam?

A: With the Class of 2003, all five subject areas of the new exam will be in place and count toward graduation requirements.

Here’s how the phase-in schedule works:

- The Class of 2001 was required to pass the reading and language subject-area tests of the graduation exam.
- The Class of 2002 was required to pass the reading, language, mathematics, and science subject-area tests to graduate.
- The Class of 2004, and all classes that follow, must pass all four subject-area tests mentioned above — plus, the social studies subject-area test of the exam.

Q: What are the passing-scaled scores for each subject-area test of the graduation exam?

A: Students must score at least the following:

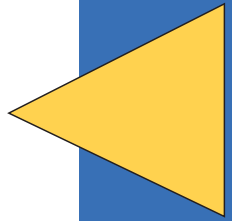
- Reading – 563
- Language – 560
- Mathematics – 477
- Science – 491
- Social Studies – 509

Q: How much time will students be given to take the graduation exam?

A: The graduation exam is administered during a one-week period. Students will take one subject-area test per day. The tests are untimed; however, each day’s testing will last approximately three hours. Necessary arrangements will be made for students who need more time.

Q: How many opportunities will students have to take the graduation exam before exiting school?

A: There are six. Alabama is one of the nation’s leaders in the number of opportunities it gives its high school students to pass a graduation exam. Students will have the following opportunities to pass the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition.



- In the spring of Grade 10 (as the pre-graduation examination)
- In the spring of Grade 11
- In the summer as an optional opportunity (between the 11th and 12th grades)
- In the fall of Grade 12
- In mid-year of Grade 12
- In the spring of Grade 12

Q: Can students take the different subject areas of the exam at a different time?

A: Yes. Students can take the individual subject area test of the exam after they successfully complete the required courses. This flexibility means that students won't have to wait a year or more before taking these subject areas of the graduation exam.

Q: Will students be allowed to use calculators or scratch paper during the math part of the test?

A: Yes. The state Department of Education will provide calculators for all students; students won't be allowed to use their own. They will get practice time and instruction on using the calculators during the week before the test is given.

As for scratch paper, students will be allowed to write in their test booklets. The school must also provide scratch paper. For test security reasons, scratch paper will be collected and shredded after the exam.

Q: Will students have to memorize math formulas for the test?

A: No. In fact, on one objective of the test, formulas are given in the problems. Also, a page of formulas is included in each student's mathematics test booklet.

Q: How will students be notified about individual graduation exam performance?

A: Local schools are responsible for notifying students and parents of the graduation exam results. Approximately six weeks after the exam is administered, the state Department of Education will provide local schools with two copies of an individual student label that indicates "Pass" or "Fail" for each subject area tested. One label must be placed on the student's cumulative folder, and the other must be given to the student/parent.

Q: Will a student receive an Alabama high school diploma if he/she passes all classes, but fails part of the graduation exam?

A: No. The state Board of Education requires students to pass their courses and the appropriate subject-area tests of the graduation exam before receiving an Alabama high school diploma. (Note: An occupational diploma is available for special education students.)

Q: What options are available to students who do not pass all or part of the graduation exam?

A: Each student who participates in the graduation exam program is provided with the following:

- An individual student report that shows specifically each test objective on which the student failed to show mastery.
- Remedial help before the next administration of the exam for each test objective on which mastery is not achieved.
- Assistance through the *High Hopes* program for those having difficulty passing the exam.

In fact, every school must offer remedial activities to prepare students to re-take any failed subject-area tests. These activities can be in the form of actual classes, within already scheduled classes, or tutoring programs. In addition, local schools may consider offering classes or organizing study groups to help students review before the test is given.

Q: What happens if a student exits school without passing the graduation exam?

A: Any student who exits school without passing all subject-area tests on the graduation exam may continue to take the exam at any or every administration. In addition, any student may return to high school for remediation until the age of 21.

Q: If students can't pass the exam, is there another graduation option?

A: Yes. For the small percentage of students who meet the requirements, the Alabama Alternate Adult High School Diploma is available. Students must pass required course credits and take and pass the Test of General Educational Development (GED Test) to get this diploma. Students and parents should consult school guidance counselors for more information.

Q: Can you tell if a student is in danger of failing all or part of the graduation exam?

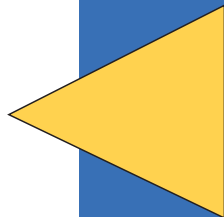
A: There is no ironclad way to determine this ahead of time. However, since the new graduation exam is based on required courses of study, students who make below-average grades in class also may have trouble with the graduation exam.

If you are unsure whether your child will be ready, arrange a conference with his/her teachers to discuss ways to prepare.

Q: What is the pre-graduation examination?

A: The pre-graduation examination actually is the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition. Students will take the pre-graduation examination during the spring of their tenth grade year.

The pre-graduation examination is intended as a “checkpoint” for students, parents, and teachers so that students’ strengths and weaknesses on the content of the examination may be identified.



Q: If a student passes the pre-graduation exam, will he/she be given credit toward graduation?

A: Yes. Each student who passes any subject-area test of the pre-graduation exam will receive credit toward graduation for that subject-area test.

Q: How are students informed about the graduation exam?

A: All students must receive the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam Requirements* brochure from their local school upon entering the ninth grade. It provides facts pertaining to the graduation exam.

Immediately upon enrollment in the public school, transfer students — from non-public schools or from another state — in the ninth grade (or above) must receive the same brochure that the students in his/her grade received.

Parents and students must sign and return the signature portion of the brochure to the school. This indicates having received notification of the requirement to pass the graduation exam. When the signed statement is returned, local school officials will also sign and date it. These signed statements are filed and maintained in students' cumulative records.

Q: What are schools and teachers doing to better prepare for the new graduation exam?

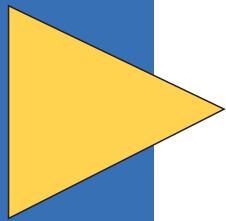
A: Since the graduation exam is directly tied to the 4x4 curriculum, it is crucial for teachers to cover the material in these required core courses of study. Your local school board and superintendent must work to ensure all teachers incorporate these objectives into their lessons.

Also, the state Department of Education has prepared a series of materials called *Pathways for Learning* to help teachers understand what objectives will be tested. The material includes creative activities teachers can use to teach the required objectives.

In addition, teachers should:

- Have the course of study for their subject area as well as local curriculum guides and information about objectives required for the graduation exam readily available when planning instruction and assessment.
- Consider — and plan for — students' different learning styles when developing lesson plans.
- Teach students how to take notes, organize material, study, and take tests.
- Provide hands-on activities for students.
- Stress vocabulary and reading comprehension skills in every subject.
- Help students understand the “real life” significance of each subject.
- Develop practice tests written in the same format as the graduation exam.
- Include questions written in the same format as the graduation exam on tests given during the year.
- Work with peers to develop effective ways to help students who are behind catch up.

Finally, both schools and teachers should carefully review results from the pre-graduation examination that students take in the tenth grade. These results will be useful for assessing the strength of a local school's curriculum and pinpointing areas that need improvement.

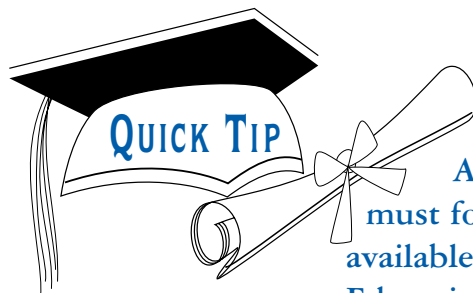


DID YOU KNOW?

The *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition, is based on the fundamental concepts of Alabama's 4x4 curriculum, which has been required for every public high school student in the state since 1996 (class of 2000).

With the Class of 2004, all five sections of the new exam will be in place and count toward graduation requirements.

SUBJECT AREA	MEASURES	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN EACH SECTION	RE-REQUIRED CLASS
Reading	Student's ability to read and comprehend articles, poems, editorials, manuals, and other similar materials.	84	2001
Language	Grammar skills, punctuation, word choice, sentence structure, and organizational skills for writing.	100	2001
Mathematics	Mostly basic Algebra I skills and some pre-geometry skills.	100	2002
Science	Mostly Biology skills and some physical science skills.	100	2002
Social Studies	Student's knowledge of U.S. History through World War II.	100	2004



All courses of study that students must follow in public school are available on the state Department of Education's Web site at www.alsde.edu.

SUBJECT AREAS TESTED

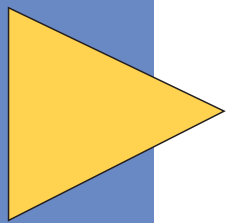


In 1996, the state Board of Education asked the state Department of Education to develop a new high school graduation exam. The charge was to align the exam with new course requirements for high school graduation. The graduation requirements in Alabama now include a minimum of 24 total credits (local boards of education may require additional electives) with 16 credits in the core subjects of mathematics, science, social studies, and English. These core courses are the 4x4 curriculum.

Without a comprehensive exam, there would be no way to accurately measure students' mastery of the core subjects on a statewide basis. An exam also helps ensure all Alabama schools cover the fundamental materials of the 4x4 curriculum and evaluate all students equally.

To earn an Alabama high school diploma, the state Board of Education requires all public high school students to pass the minimum number of required courses (at least 24 credits) and pass each specified subject-area test of the graduation exam.

Below are the subject areas tested on the Alabama High School Graduation Exam, Third Edition. If you want even more detail, check out the "Standards and Objectives" section of this booklet.



READING (Began with Class of 2001)

This test helps determine if the student can read and comprehend textual, functional, and recreational material. Standards tested include the following:

- Demonstrate literal understanding.
- Interpret passages.
- Apply critical analysis strategies.
- Utilize strategies that enhance comprehension.

LANGUAGE (Began with Class of 2001)

This test helps measure the student's knowledge of language mechanics and expression. Standards tested include the following:

- Recognize correct grammar and usage.
- Demonstrate appropriate word choice.
- Recognize correct sentence structure.
- Use correct capitalization and punctuation.
- Use appropriate organizational skills for writing and revising.

MATHEMATICS (Began with Class of 2002)

This test helps measure the student's knowledge of Algebra I and geometry. Standards tested include the following:

- Perform basic operations on algebraic expressions.
- Solve equations and inequalities.
- Apply concepts related to functions.
- Apply formulas.
- Apply graphing techniques.
- Represent problem situations.
- Solve problems involving a variety of algebraic and geometric concepts.

SCIENCE (Began with Class of 2002)

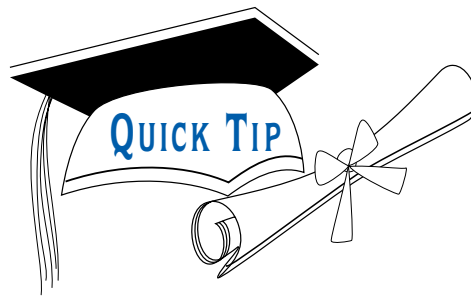
This test helps to measure the student's knowledge of biology and physical science. Standards tested include the following:

- Nature of science (scientific process).
- Matter (states, transfer, change, types).
- Diversity of life (classification, structure, function).
- Heredity (mutations, DNA, traits).
- Cells (structure, function, reproduction).
- Interdependence (populations, ecosystems).
- Energy (transformations, waves).
- Force and motion (laws).

SOCIAL STUDIES (Begins with Class of 2004)

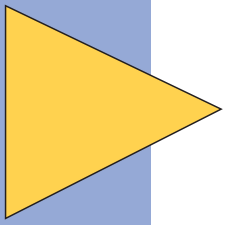
This test helps measure the student's knowledge of United States history. Standards tested include the following:

- Global influence of the pre-colonial and colonial eras of the Western Hemisphere.
- Formation and development of the United States.
- Eras of revolution, expansion, and reform prior to the United States Civil War.
- United States Civil War Era.
- Developments of the late 19th and 20th centuries.
- Causes and effects of World War I.
- Great Depression and World War II.



CONTENT OF THE ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAM

SUBJECT AREA	LEVEL
Reading (Began with Class of 2001)	11th grade reading comprehension
Language (Began with Class of 2001)	11th grade language mechanics and expression skills
Science (Began with Class of 2002)	70% Biology/ 30% Physical Science (prior to Biology)
Mathematics (Began with Class of 2002)	75% Algebra I/ 25% pre-Geometry (prior to Algebra I)
Social Studies (Begins with Class of 2004)	10th and 11th grade U.S. History

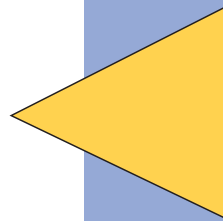


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SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS



Questions for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam, Third Edition, are taken from the fundamental concepts of the state's 4x4 curriculum. These required courses of study in mathematics, science, social studies and English must be taught in every public high school in Alabama.

More than 400 Alabama teachers worked for approximately four-and-a-half years to develop the graduation exam. The following sample questions are similar in format and content to those found on the graduation exam. Equally important, they reflect the level of knowledge our students should achieve in high school.

READING

Read the following article and answer Numbers 1 through 5. You may look back at the article as often as you like.

The Globe Theater

THE GLOBE THEATER, a playhouse originally constructed in 1599 across the Thames River from London, England, has been rebuilt a second time. The reconstructed theater was opened officially in 1997.

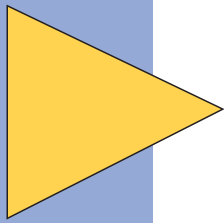
The Globe, perhaps the most famous theater in history, was the scene of William Shakespeare's major plays, and two of his works about English kings bracketed its early years. The first, *Henry V*, christened the new theater; the second, *Henry VIII*, was playing in 1613 when a cannon, discharged at the entry of the king, set the thatched roof afire and completely destroyed the building. It was rebuilt in a year, but again tragically razed in 1644.

It was in the opening chorus of *Henry V* that Shakespeare referred to the theater as "this wooden O." His pride was justified, since he had been made a part owner of the building.

The original Globe was constructed by a syndicate headed by the Burbage brothers, Cuthbert and Richard. To build it, they tore down their previous playhouse, "The Theater," and transported the timber to the new site on carts. Luckily, it was an extremely cold winter, so the workmen were able to haul the material across the Thames, rather than using the crowded London Bridge.

The stage itself was ideally suited to the intimate, swiftly moving style of Elizabethan drama. The jutting forestage was used for general action. Behind it, there was a curtained-off area that could become a bedroom, as in *Othello*, or a cave, as in *The Tempest*. Above that was a gallery that was ideal for balcony scenes, and over that a smaller gallery for musicians. Above all was a false ceiling, known as "the Heavens." Permanent doors gave access on either side of the main stage; trap doors allowed for sudden appearances and disappearances.

The general audience, known as "groundlings," stood in the unroofed "yard" of the theater to watch the plays. A rough and rowdy bunch, they loved ghosts, sword fights, and



amusing wordplay. Around them, in the galleries, the wealthier customers sat. The courtiers and gallants, for a higher price, were allowed to sit on the stage itself.

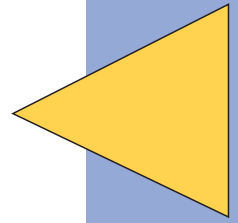
Rebuilding the famous playhouse was the dream of American actor Sam Wanamaker. In London, just after World War II, he tried to find the site of the theater and could locate nothing more than a metal plaque on a decrepit brewery. He spent the next 40 years finding the money and organizing the reconstruction of an exact replica of the old Globe, just a few yards from its original location. Now, tourists visiting London can put themselves in the shoes of those Elizabethan playgoers who cheered and jeered from the yard and galleries of the “wooden O.”

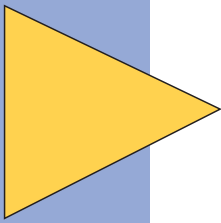
Circle the correct letter.

1. Workmen were able to haul materials across the Thames River because
 - A. it was frozen over.
 - B. London Bridge had been built.
 - C. they had specialized equipment.
 - D. it was less crowded than London Bridge.
2. What was the main idea of this article?
 - A. The Globe Theater has a long history.
 - B. The Globe Theater is now a tourist attraction.
 - C. The Globe Theater has recently been rebuilt.
 - D. The Globe Theater is currently owned by a syndicate.
3. What is apparent from the seating arrangements at the Globe?
 - A. There was one ticket price for all.
 - B. The audience appreciated fine music.
 - C. Trap doors allowed for dramatic entrances.
 - D. There were distinctions among social classes.
4. What caused the Globe Theater to burn down?
 - A. a cannon shot
 - B. a rowdy patron
 - C. the king's entry
 - D. the wooden stage
5. Which set of statements BEST summarizes the article?
 - A. The Globe is the most famous theater in history because Shakespeare's plays were performed there. It burned down and then was rebuilt a year later.
 - B. The Globe's design made it the ideal theater for Shakespeare's plays. For this reason, it was reconstructed after many years and despite difficult problems.
 - C. The Globe was originally constructed by the Burbage brothers on the site of an earlier playhouse. After years as the site of Shakespeare's plays, it was razed and then rebuilt.
 - D. The Globe, where Shakespeare's plays were first performed, is possibly the most famous theater in history. A rebuilt version of it was opened in London after a period of reconstruction.

LANGUAGE

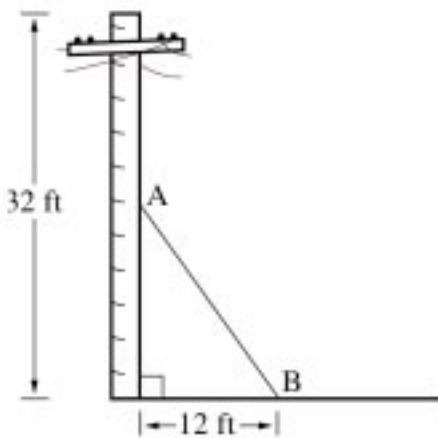
1. Choose the answer in which the use of nouns or pronouns is correct or incorrect. Choose the sentence that contains an error.
 - A. Can anyone name all the gulfs on the map?
 - B. Bushes along the roadside were turning green.
 - C. The waves crashed onto the beach with a roar.
 - D. There were many kinds of potatoes in the supermarket.
2. Choose the answer in which subject and verb agreement is correct or incorrect. Choose the sentence that is written correctly.
 - A. Each one of the teachers were given an award.
 - B. Either my brothers or my sister is driving me to the airport.
 - C. Few of the students really understands the calculus problem.
 - D. The decision of the lower courts were reversed by the appeals court.
3. For item 3, you will recognize complete and incomplete sentence structure. Choose the answer that is a sentence fragment.
 - A. Ancient palaces line the Grand Canal, the major thoroughfare of the city of Venice.
 - B. Lined with ancient palaces, the Grand Canal is the major thoroughfare of the city of Venice.
 - C. The city of Venice's main thoroughfare, the Grand Canal, which is lined with ancient palaces.
 - D. The major thoroughfare of the city of Venice, the Grand Canal, is lined with ancient palaces.
4. For item 4, you will demonstrate knowledge of correct punctuation. Choose the sentence that is punctuated correctly.
 - A. Igloos are used as homes on the ice; also hunting shelters.
 - B. The Statue of Liberty was designed by Frederic Bartholdi; a French sculptor.
 - C. The pulmonary artery, the superior vena cava, and the aorta: are three of the large blood vessels of the heart.
 - D. We collected many items for the hurricane victims: bottled water, blankets, canned food, batteries, and medical supplies.
5. For item 5, you will demonstrate an understanding of logical progression and completeness. Read the paragraph. Choose the sentence that does NOT belong in the paragraph.
 - (1) As humans consume more and more oil, new sources must be found.
 - (2) Oil hunters sink their wells when they see signs of oil, but the wells often turn up dry.
 - (3) Companies must continue drilling even though each well costs thousands of dollars. (4) Coal is another source of fuel.
 - A. Sentence 1
 - B. Sentence 2
 - C. Sentence 3
 - D. Sentence 4





MATHEMATICS

- Factor: $x^2 - x - 2$
 - $(x + 1)(x - 2)$
 - $(x - 1)(x - 2)$
 - $(x + 1)(x + 2)$
 - $(x - 1)(x + 2)$
- Solve: $-2x - 7 = -x + 13$
 - 20
 - 6
 - 2
 - 20
- Ryan makes \$3.00 per hour more than Scott. If 3 times Ryan's rate plus 4 times Scott's rate is \$65.00, what is Ryan's hourly wage?
 - \$7.57
 - \$8.00
 - \$9.71
 - \$11.00
- The diagram below shows a 32-foot telephone pole. An electrician wants to connect a support wire from point A, halfway up the pole, to point B.



What is the length of the wire?

- 12 feet
- 16 feet
- 20 feet
- 24 feet

SCIENCE

1. Study the list below:

1. Cell
2. Tissue
3. Organ
4. System

What is the correct order for these body structures from least inclusive to most inclusive?

- A. 1, 3, 4, 2
- B. 3, 2, 1, 4
- C. 1, 2, 3, 4
- D. 4, 3, 2, 1

2. Study the pictures below.



These pictures show how a balloon that is submerged in water changes as the water is heated. Which property of the air inside the balloon decreases as the water is heated?

- A. mass
- B. volume
- C. density
- D. temperature

3. Study the Punnett square below.

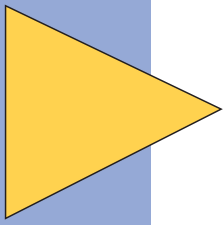
	Male	
	WW	Ww
Female	Ww	ww

W = dominant

w = recessive

Two hamsters with white fur produced an offspring with brown fur. If “W” represents the gene for white fur and “w” represents the gene for brown fur, which of these combinations of parents will yield offspring with brown fur (ww)?

- A. WW and ww
- B. WW and Ww
- C. Ww and Ww
- D. WW and WW



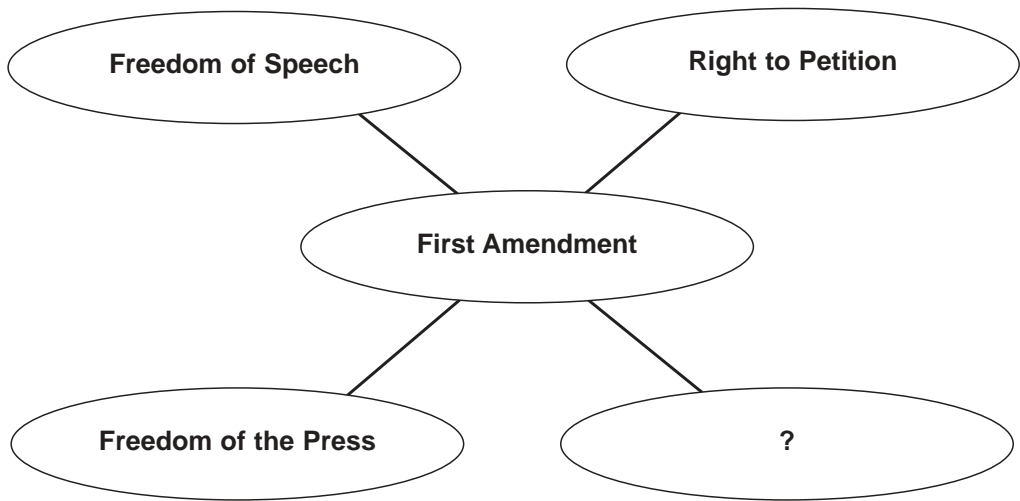
4. An African snail brought to Hawaii became a plant-eating pest. To control the African snails, 19 snail-eating species were imported to Hawaii from all over the world. One of the imports, the cannibal snail, has nearly destroyed the native Hawaiian tree snail population.

What is the MOST important conclusion suggested by the passage above?

- A. Snails eat plants.
- B. Snails eat each other.
- C. Imported species usually cannot survive.
- D. Imported species may upset biological balances.

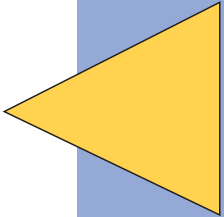
SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Study the diagram below.



Which completes this diagram?

- A. The right to trial by jury.
- B. The right to confront witnesses.
- C. The right to assemble peaceably.
- D. The right to be secure against unreasonable searches.

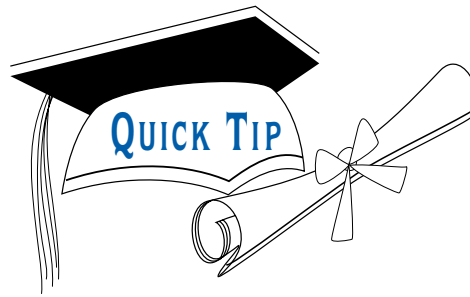
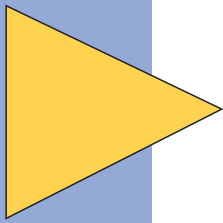


2. Use the map below and your own knowledge to answer the following question.



Which statement about the Mexican War is supported by the information shown on the map?

- A. It was primarily fought at sea.
 - B. It concerned disputed territory on the east coast.
 - C. It involved Mexico, the United States, and Canada.
 - D. It allowed the United States to expand its boundaries.
3. Which country was an ally of the United States in World War I?
- A. Spain
 - B. France
 - C. Sweden
 - D. Turkey
4. As a leader in America's fight for independence from Great Britain, I helped organize many protests, including the Boston Tea Party. I wrote many speeches supporting colonial rights and later signed the Declaration of Independence. Who am I?
- A. Samuel Adams
 - B. Thomas Jefferson
 - C. Benjamin Franklin
 - D. George Washington



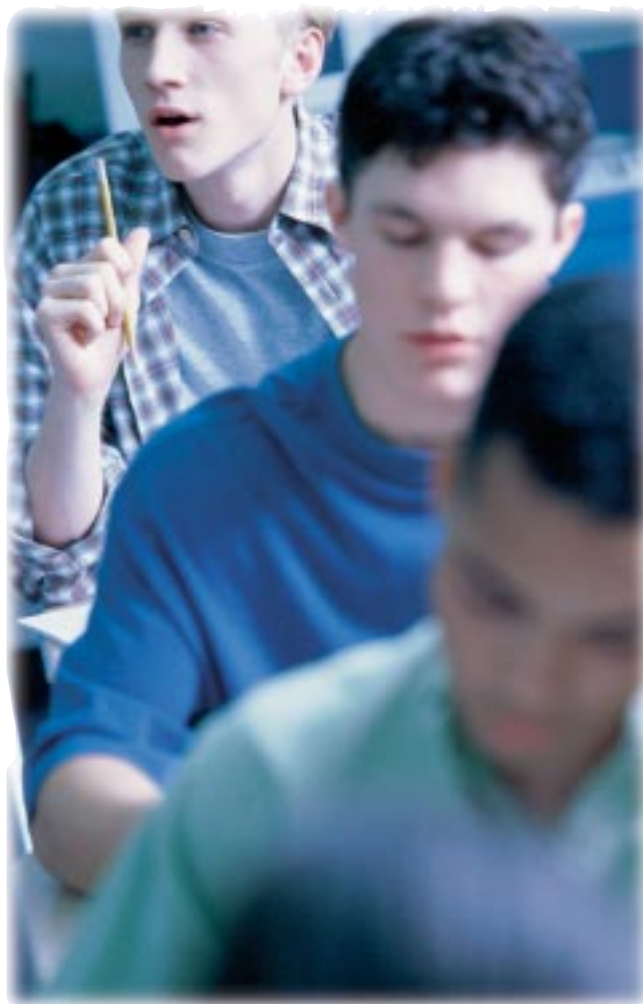
STUDENT ATTEMPTS ON THE ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAM

WHEN	WHO	RESULTS
Spring 10th Grade year	All 10th Graders	If one or more subtest(s) are successfully passed, the exam is finished for those subtests.
Spring 11th Grade Year	11th Graders Not Passing as 10th Graders	Take only the subtest(s) not passed as 10th graders. When passed, the exam is finished for those subtests.
Summer between 11th and 12th Grades (optional)	12th Graders and Repeating 11th Graders Not Previously Passing	Take only the subtest(s) not previously passed. When passed, the exam is finished for those subtests.
Fall, Mid-Year and Spring 12th Grade	12th Graders and Repeating 11th Graders Not Previously Passing	Take only the subtest(s) not previously passed.

ANSWER KEY

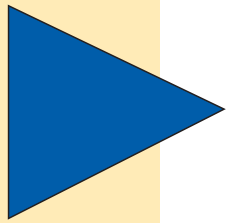
Reading	1. A	1. B	1. A	1. C	1. C
Comprehension	2. A	2. B	2. A	2. C	2. D
	3. D	3. C	3. D	3. C	3. B
	4. A	4. D	4. C	4. D	4. A
	5. D	5. D			
		Language	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies

STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES



Although Alabama's new graduation exam is generally written on an eleventh-grade level, some of the skills that will be tested actually will be taught in the seventh and eighth grades. That's why it is important for all students to begin thinking about the exam — and concentrating on the skills being tested. Parents can help by making sure students understand that the material they are learning now will be tested on the exam.

Educators representing each state school board district, as well as both city and county school systems, served on committees that determined the standards and objectives for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam, Third Edition. Following are the standards and objectives for each of the five subject areas tested, including reading comprehension, language, mathematics, science, and social studies.



READING

(Began with Class of 2001)

Standard

The student will demonstrate literal understanding of passages taken from textual, functional, and recreational reading material.

Objectives

- Identify supporting details.
- Determine sequence of events.
- Follow directions.

Standard

The student will interpret passages taken from textual, functional, and recreational reading material.

Objectives

- Identify main idea.
- Draw conclusions.
- Determine cause and effect.
- Detect propaganda; distinguish fact from fiction.
- Recognize statements that adequately summarize a passage.

Standard

The student will apply critical analysis strategies and judge texts critically to comprehend passages from textual, functional, and recreational reading material.

Objectives

- Recognize fallacies of logic and judge strength of argument.
- Analyze literary elements.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language and analogy.

Standard

The student will utilize strategies that enhance comprehension of textual, functional, and recreational reading material.

Objectives

- Determine word meaning through the use of context clues.
- Demonstrate the ability to preview and predict.
- Discern organizational patterns.
- Demonstrate the ability to locate information in reference material.

LANGUAGE

(Began with Class of 2001)

Standard

The student will recognize correct grammar and usage.

Objectives

- Identify correct noun forms.
- Identify correct verb forms.
- Recognize subject-verb agreement.
- Recognize pronoun-antecedent agreement in number and gender.
- Identify incorrect shifts in verb tense.
- Identify correct pronoun case.
- Identify effective use of voice.
- Determine correct placement of modifiers.
- Identify correct usage of commonly confused words.

Standard

The student will demonstrate appropriate word choice.

Objectives

- Use words that create clarity, precision, and vivid description.
- Use formal and informal language appropriately.

Standard

The student will recognize correct sentence structure.

Objectives

- Correct run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and comma splices.
- Correct sentences that lack internal parallelism.

Standard

The student will use correct capitalization and punctuation.

Objectives

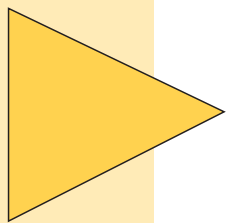
- Demonstrate correct use of capitalization.
- Demonstrate correct use of commas.
- Demonstrate correct use of a semicolon and a colon.
- Demonstrate correct use of quotation marks and underlining.
- Demonstrate correct use of the apostrophe.

Standard

The student will use appropriate organization skills for writing/revising.

Objective

- Determine logical progression and completeness of paragraphs.



MATHEMATICS

(Began with Class of 2002)

Standard

The student will be able to perform basic operations on algebraic expressions.

Objectives

- Apply order of operations.
- Add and subtract polynomials.
- Multiply polynomials.
- Factor polynomials.

Standard

The student will be able to solve equations and inequalities.

Objectives

- Solve multi-step equations of first degree.
- Solve quadratic equations that are factorable.
- Solve systems of two linear equations.
- Solve multi-step inequalities of first degree.

Standard

The student will be able to apply concepts related to functions.

Objectives

- Identify functions.
- Find the range of functions when given the domain.

Standard

The student will be able to apply formulas.

Objectives

- Find the perimeter, circumference, area, or volume of geometric figures.
- Find the distance, midpoint, or slope of line segments when given two points.

Standard

The student will be able to apply graphing techniques.

Objectives

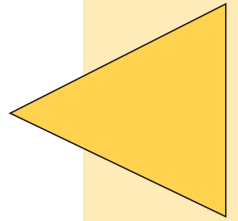
- Graph or identify graphs of linear equations.
- Identify graphs of common relations.
- Graph lines given certain conditions.
- Determine solution sets of inequalities.

Standard

The student will be able to represent problem situations.

Objectives

- Translate verbal or symbolic information into algebraic expressions or identify equations or inequalities that represent graphs or problem situations.



Standard

The student will be able to solve problems involving a variety of algebraic and geometric concepts.

Objectives

- Apply properties of angles and relationships between angles.
- Apply Pythagorean Theorem.
- Apply properties of similar polygons.
- Apply properties of plane and solid geometric figures.
- Determine measures of central tendency.
- Determine probabilities.
- Solve problems involving direct variation.
- Solve problems involving algebraic concepts.

SCIENCE

(Began with Class of 2002)

Standard

The student will understand concepts dealing with the nature of science.

Objective

- Analyze the methods of science used to identify and solve problems.

Standard

The student will understand concepts dealing with matter.

Objectives

- Trace the transfer of matter and energy through biological systems.
- Relate particle motion to the states of matter.
- Apply information from the periodic table and make predictions using the organization of the periodic table.
- Identify how factors affect rates of physical and chemical changes.

Standard

The student will understand concepts of the diversity of life.

Objectives

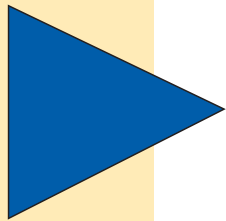
- Distinguish among the taxonomic groups any major characteristics.
- Differentiate structures, functions, and characteristics of plants.
- Differentiate structures, functions, and characteristics of animals.

Standard

The student will understand concepts of heredity.

Objectives

- Recognize heritable characteristics of organisms.
- Explain how the DNA molecule transfers genetic information from parent to offspring.



Standard

The student will understand the concepts of cells.

Objectives

- Distinguish relationships among cell structures, functions, and organization in living organisms.
- Differentiate between mitosis and meiosis.

Standard

The student will understand the concepts of interdependence.

Objective

- Demonstrate an understanding of factors that affect the dynamic equilibrium of populations and ecosystems.

Standard

The student will understand the concepts of energy.

Objectives

- Relate the Law of Conservation of Energy to energy transformations.
- Relate waves to the transfer of energy.

Standard

The student will understand the concepts of force and motion.

Objectives

- Relate Newton's three laws of motion to real-world applications.
- Relate force to pressure in fluids.

SOCIAL STUDIES

(Begins with Class of 2004)

Standard

The student will understand the global influence of the pre-colonial and colonial eras of the Western Hemisphere.

Objective

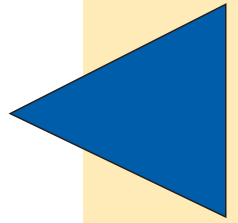
- Identify and evaluate America's exploration, development, and divergence. Emphasis on the United States.

Standard

The student will understand the formation and development of the United States

Objective

- Recognize and comprehend the impact of the influences of intellectual and religious thought on the political systems of the United States.



Standard (continued)

The student will understand the formation and development of the United States.

Objective

- Identify and comprehend the provisions of essential documents of the United States government.

Standard

The student will understand the eras of revolution, expansion, and reform prior to the United States Civil War.

Objectives

- Identify and evaluate the impact of the American Revolution.
- Identify and evaluate the Era of Expansion. Use map on territorial expansion.
- Identify and evaluate the impact of American social and political reform and the emergence of a distinct American culture.

Standard

The student will understand concepts related to the United States Civil War Era.

Objective

- Identify and evaluate events, causes, and effects of the Civil War Era.

Standard

The student will understand the concepts and developments of the late 19th to the early 20th centuries.

Objectives

- Identify and evaluate the events that led to the settlement of the West.
- Evaluate the concepts, developments, and consequences of industrialization and urbanization.

Standard

The student will evaluate the causes of World War I.

Objectives

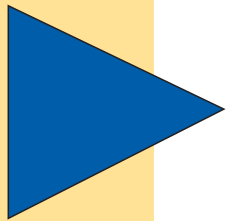
- Evaluate the causes of World War I.
- Analyze the effects of World War I.

Standard

The student will understand the Great Depression and World War II.

Objectives

- Analyze the advent and impact of the Great Depression and the New Deal on American life.
- Analyze America's involvement in World War II.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

HOW
TO
GET
INVOLVED

To help students succeed in school and to help prepare them for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam, every Alabama resident should look at our state's total educational program — from kindergarten through high school. It takes dedicated involvement throughout the educational process to ensure success.

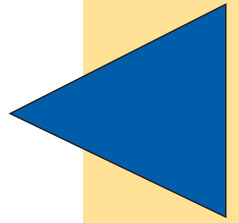
Schools will work to give all students a strong academic foundation in the early grades and continue to challenge them to learn all they can in every grade. Yet, schools and teachers can't do it alone. Every community member can play a key role in preparing students to meet the challenging new standards.

Elementary Parents

- Read to your child at least 15 minutes each night.
- Talk to your child about the importance of school and learning.
- Make sure your child has a regular place and time to do homework.
- Make sure your child attends school unless genuinely unable to do so.
- Stay informed about your child's progress in school by meeting regularly with teachers. If your child gets behind on educational activities, work with teachers on a plan to help your child catch up.
- Pay particular attention to your child's individual reading skills. Studies show that children who haven't mastered reading by third grade have a higher risk for bigger academic problems later.

Middle School/Junior High Parents

- Talk to your child about the graduation exam. Help your child understand that skills that are learned now will be tested in high school.
- Discuss your child's ideas about a future career. If your child's school allows him/her to choose elective courses, work with your child to choose courses that will better prepare him/her for the graduation requirements and career choices.
- Stress the importance of attending school every day.
- Monitor your child's progress by talking with his/her teachers regularly.
- Make sure your child has a regular place, with few distractions, for doing homework.
- Expect your child to succeed in school.



High School Parents

- Help your teen understand — and stay focused on — the graduation requirements.
- Help your teen choose courses that will help prepare him/her for the graduation requirements and individual college or career goals.
- If your teen is struggling academically, talk to his/her teachers and counselors immediately about how to help your teen. Involve your teen in the planning of how to get back on track. Every school has a remediation plan ready for access by your teen, if needed.
- Make sure your teen gets homework completed each night.
- If your teen works after school, have him/her arrange to be off during the week of testing.
- Find out when the graduation exam will be given and make sure you see your teen's scores when the results are released.

Businesses

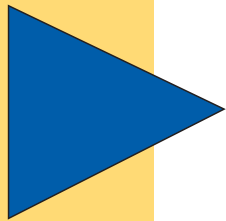
- Include schools in corporate giving programs.
- Allow employees to schedule parent-teacher conferences during work time.
- Give employees time to volunteer in their child's school or a nearby school.
- Support the statewide Parenting Month each October.
- Sponsor incentive prizes for students who are achieving or for those who are improving.
- Consider requiring job applicants to have a high school diploma.

Community Residents

- Volunteer to read to students or to listen while beginning readers practice reading.
- Volunteer to tutor a student once or twice a week.
- Encourage your employer to get involved with a local school or school system.
- Check with a nearby school for ways that you can show your support during exam week.

Civic Groups

- Adopt a school as the focus of a service project.
- Encourage members to volunteer in schools by recognizing those who do.
- Write letters to your local newspaper, radio, or television station in support of public education and higher accountability in our schools.



TRY THESE SUMMER TIPS

Research shows almost all students lose academic ground over the summer. Although students don't have to study all summer long, there are many interesting things to do that help keep skills sharp during the summer and throughout the year.

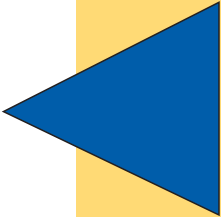
The following activities are aimed for younger children, but can be helpful whether students are in elementary, middle, or high school.

Staying Math-Sharp

- If you travel, allow your children to help you read the map. Also discuss how the mileage scale works and have your children determine the number of miles from one city to the next.
- If you paint or wallpaper a room, have your children calculate the area to be covered and how much paint or paper will be needed. Likewise, if you are using newspaper or a drop cloth to protect the floor, have children calculate the amount of paper or size of the cloth that will be needed.
- Have children measure the length of the sides of the yard or driveway. Have them calculate the area and perimeter. The test may ask students to determine the area and perimeter of squares, rectangles, or triangles and the area and circumference of circles.
- Have children keep a log of their spending money similar to a checkbook register and calculate the interest it would earn if it were invested.
- Have your children record the ages of all the children in the neighborhood (or people in your extended family). Have them then calculate the average and range of the ages.
- For older students, consider purchasing a math workbook to keep pre-algebra, algebra, and pre-geometry skills sharp. These usually are inexpensive and can be purchased at some department stores and at school supply stores.

Staying Science-Sharp

- Take your children to visit nearby zoos, planetariums, and museums such as Alabama's Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, the McWane Center in Birmingham, the Exploreum in Mobile, the Children's Hands-on Museum in Tuscaloosa, or the WaterCourse in Clanton.
- Enroll your children in summer programs offered at nearby colleges and junior colleges.
- Encourage children to explore the neighborhood plants and animals. Insect, leaf, and flower collections are fun and educational. Local wildlife and plant identification books are available in bookstores.
- Have children set up bird feeders and keep a record of types of birds that visit.
- Have children plant a garden and/or start a compost pile. Keep records on germination time (time for seeds to sprout), growth, and watering requirements for the different plants.
- Check television listings and select programs from PBS, Discovery, and Animal Planet. Watch program with your child and discuss.
- Record rainfall during a month with your child. Daily temperature, cloud cover, and barometric pressure could also be recorded. Track weather patterns and severe storms on the weather channel with your child and discuss hurricanes and tornados.
- Have your child observe moon phases and keep a record on a posted calendar. Star patterns could also be observed and recorded.

- 
- Consider purchasing a science activity book from a local bookstore. These are usually full of fun, inexpensive, and educational activities to stimulate science learning and teach scientific steps. Ask your child's instructor to recommend some of these for summer activities.

Staying Grammar-Sharp

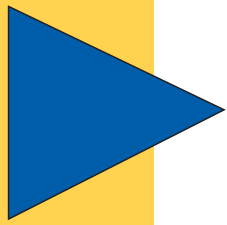
- Make certain your child reads. Nothing improves reading and writing skills like constant exposure to well-written material. The test will cover grammar skills such as subject-verb agreement, capitalization, punctuation, and correct usage of quotation marks. When in doubt, students will often choose what sounds or looks right on a test. The more exposure they've had to correctly used grammar, the more likely they are to choose correctly.
- Pick up grammar workbooks at a local school supply store or bookstore and have your child complete a few pages a week. Simple reminder exercises help keep these skills sharp.

Staying Reading-Sharp

- Again, make certain your child reads. Help pick out a book or two on his/her reading level that must be read during the summer. You can get a list of appropriate books from their teachers, or look for books that have the Caldecott or Newberry Award seals on them. To cut down on objections, allow your child to choose the book.
- When reading or watching television, point out and discuss the difference between facts and opinion. Any time elections are near, parents have the perfect opportunity to do this. The graduation exam tests students' ability to distinguish between the two.
- Have your child read a newspaper article and summarize it for you. The exam will ask students to read articles and summarize from them.
- Read anything and ask, "What happened, what caused it to happen, to whom did it happen, and where did it happen?"
- Look for opportunities to have your child read instructions for assembling or using products that have several steps. The test will measure students' ability to read and follow multi-step directions.
- Watch television news programs with your child and discuss the arguments people make to support their position on issues. Ask your child if the arguments are logical and what the strengths and weaknesses of the argument are. The test will ask students to do this as well as to recognize faulty logic.

Staying Social Studies-Sharp

- Encourage your child to read the newspaper regularly. Discuss political issues and the way decisions are made in our government. The social studies section of the exam will focus on United States history.
- Check television listings and select one program per week from the History Channel. Watch it with your child and discuss afterwards.
- Visit historical attractions such as Constitution Village in Huntsville; American Village in Montevallo; Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery; Moundville Archaeological Park in Moundville; Fort Mitchell National Cemetery in Phenix City.
- Read and discuss newspaper articles and historical novels/biographies.
- View movies rich in historical content.
- Organize study groups/tutoring sessions.
- Prepare scrapbooks of trips to historical attractions previously taken.



DID YOU KNOW?

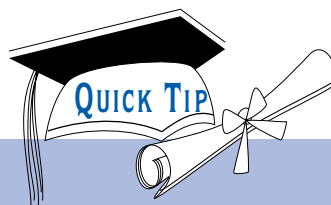
National

- Alabama's 2002-2003 Teacher of the Year, Dr. Elizabeth "Betsy" Rogers was named 2003 National Teacher of the Year.
- In 2000, there were 72.2 million children under age 18 in the United States. The number is expected to increase to 77.6 million by 2020. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census)
- Twenty-eight states have or will have high school exit exams based on standards. More states with "minimum competency" exit exams are "upgrading" these tests to reflect 10th-grade standards or higher. (Source: American Federation of Teachers, 1999 report *Making Standards Matter*)
- Nearly three out of four teachers favor raising standards to improve student achievement. (Source: 1999 Peter D. Hart Research Associates national survey of 1,075 K-12 teachers)
- Seventy-seven percent of Americans say academic standards in our schools are too low. Of Americans with school-age children, 82 percent say academic standards are too low. (Source: a 1998 Council for Basic Education poll)
- Ninety-four percent of Americans say higher academic standards are important for students to succeed in college or on the job. (Source: a 1998 Council for Basic Education poll)
- Roughly three of every four U.S. taxpayers say they are willing to pay up to \$200 more a year to support specific measures to improve public schools. More than half say they are willing to pay an additional \$500 in taxes for improvements. (Source: 1999 Poll by Kaiser Family Foundation, National Public Radio, and the Kennedy School of Government)

Job-Related

- Workers who have a record of high academic achievement, as measured by achievement test scores, are unemployed less and earn more than workers with lower scores. (Source: National Center for Education's *Education and the Economy: An Indicators Report*)
- College graduates generally earn nearly twice as much as high school graduates and approximately 2.5 times more than high school dropouts. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau's *Educational Attainment in the United States*, 1998)
- In the 21st century, the best-paying jobs will demand high skill levels, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, math, reasoning and computing. (Source: *Workforce 2020: Work and Workers in the 21st Century* by Richard Judy and Carol D'Amico of the Hudson Institute)

- Forty percent or more of the adult labor force perform at the two lowest levels on each of the literacy scales, suggesting that many workers lack the skills needed to interpret, integrate, and compare or contrast information using written materials common to the home or workplace. (Source: National Center for Education’s *Education and the Economy: An Indicators Report*)
- To date, almost 90 percent of Alabama’s career/technical programs are now certified to business and industry standards.
- Curriculum-based, external exit exams raise student achievement and boost earnings of graduates who take them. High school graduates who take minimum competency tests earn three to five percent more than their counterparts in school districts that do not use such tests. (Source: 1999 Cornell University study)



EDUCATION AND PAY

Average 1998¹ earnings, based on educational level, for people 18 or older.

Professional degree	\$95,148
Doctoral degree	\$77,445
Master’s degree	\$51,183
Bachelor’s degree	\$40,478
Associate degree	\$29,872
Some college, no degree	\$24,804
High school diploma	\$22,895
No high school diploma	\$16,124

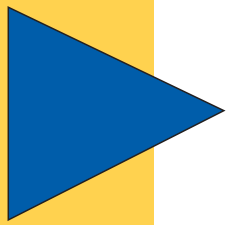


¹-Most recent data available

Source: Census Bureau; Current Population Reports, Math 1998

Alabama

- There are approximately 730,000 schoolchildren in Grades K-12. (Source: state Department of Education)
- Since the 4x4 curriculum was introduced to high school classrooms in 1996, average student achievement has shown increases every year. (Source: state Department of Education)
- The content for the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition, is taken directly from the fundamental concepts of the 4x4 curriculum, which are required to be taught in each public high school in the state. (Source: state Department of Education)
- Math questions for the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition, come from information taught in three courses: seventh-grade math, eighth-grade math and Algebra I. (Source: state Department of Education)
- In 2000, the Alabama Legislature began appropriating funds statewide for the Governor’s “High Hopes for Alabama High School Seniors” program. This program provides tutorial, mentoring, and after-school assistance to students who demonstrate weaknesses on the pre-graduation exam or fail any subject-area test on the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition. (Source: state Department of Education)



- Thirty-one committees, composed of more than 400 Alabama educators (including teachers, central office staff, and representatives of AEA and postsecondary education), worked 4.5 years to help develop the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition. (Source: state Department of Education)
- The 31 committees that helped develop the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition, include:
 - *Test Advisory Committee* (One) — determined broad areas to be assessed.
 - *Standards and Objectives Committees* (Five) — determined standards and objectives from the Alabama Courses of Study to be assessed.
 - *Item Specifications Committees* (Five) — determined eligible content to be assessed.
 - *Content Review Committees* (Five) — reviewed, revised and approved all tests items for content.
 - *Bias Review Committees* (Ten) — reviewed, revised and approved all tests items for bias.
 - *Standard Setting Committees* (Five) — made recommendation of passing scores. (Source: state Department of Education)
- Charge to committee members during development of the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition: Determine the fundamental concepts from the required core courses that students graduating with an Alabama high school diploma should know. (Source: state Department of Education)
- Accuracy and fairness were primary concerns during development of the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition. The 31 developmental committees contained representatives in the following eight areas:
 - For content.
 - For gender.
 - For ethnicity.
 - For students with disabilities.
 - For limited-English proficient students.
 - From large and small local school systems.
 - From urban and rural local school systems.
 - From different state board districts of Alabama. (Source: state Department of Education)
- Number of questions on each subject-area test of the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*, Third Edition:
 - Reading — 84 items
 - Language — 100 items
 - Mathematics — 100 items
 - Science — 100 items
 - Social Studies — 100 items (Source: state Department of Education)

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[Students of Special Populations](#)

The state Department of Education has adopted guidelines for the testing of students with disabilities and limited-English proficiency. For specific questions, contact your school counselor or local education agency.