

Test Bank

Minnesota Adult Basic Education (ABE) providers are mandated to use CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) Reading or Math or TABE (Tests for Adult Basic Education) Reading or Math.

Several facts about these **large-scale, standardized educational assessments** need to be clarified:

- The purposes of CASAS and TABE are primarily two-fold: (1) to determine appropriate ABE or ESL program or class placement and (2) to document and report ABE or ESL student progress and/or level completion according to federal National Reporting Standards (NRS).
- However, CASAS and TABE Reading are measures of life-skill understanding and silent reading comprehension, respectively, and are not intended to assess the other crucial components of the reading process identified in the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (2000): alphabets, fluency, and vocabulary.
- Besides CASAS and TABE, informal assessments can be used by ABE teachers or tutors to make instructional decisions and document other forms of student progress. However, ABE teachers or tutors may not be well-informed about informal assessments or have access to them.

Therefore, this issue of *Net-News* introduces the **Test Bank**: a variety of informal reading, spelling, and writing assessments available for Minnesota ABE providers to borrow or receive as a copy (if permitted). ∞



What is informal assessment?

Informal assessments are tests or procedures without rigid or complex administration, scoring, or interpretation rules. They are typically less expensive, easy to administer and score, and don't require special training prior to purchase or use. **The primary purpose of informal assessment is to direct instruction.**

Examples of informal assessment include the following:

Task analysis tests break down a broad skill into essential components or subtasks. An example is a list of words presented in a phonetic sequence to determine sound/letter knowledge or word analysis.

Inventories sample a student's ability to perform selected skills within a sequence. An example is an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) that determines a word recognition level and independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels.

Surveys are used to gather more subjective information such as student understanding, attitude, activity, or use of skills. They can be in the form of checklists or questionnaires.

Portfolios include a variety of student work samples to display change or progress over time. ∞

Inside this issue:	
Test Bank	1
What is informal assessment?	1
How were informal assessments selected for the Test Bank?	2
Why should I consider using informal assessment in my classroom?	2
What informal assessments are available to borrow from the Test Bank?	3
What informal assessments are available as reproducible copies from the Test Bank?	3
What is the procedure for requesting informal assessments from the Test Bank?	4
Where can I learn more about assessment for ABE?	4



How were informal assessments selected for the Test Bank?

The informal assessments (task analysis tests, inventories, and surveys) were selected according to the following criteria:

1. They measure different literacy skills than CASAS or TABE Reading or are less formal and standardized.
2. Their purpose is clearly defined so there will be a match between the specific reading or writing skill being assessed and taught.
3. They are easy to administer, score, and interpret according to minimal test directions.
4. They are designed for adults, or if not, still appropriate for use with adults when modified.

Why should I consider using informal assessment in my ABE classroom?

As mentioned previously, CASAS and TABE Reading are not designed to measure progress in the earlier components of the reading process.

Therefore, if your native or non-native English-speaking students are still acquiring alphabets (phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sound/letter correspondence, word reading/spelling skills), working on fluency (rate and accuracy), or developing vocabulary knowledge, their progress may not be measured by CASAS or TABE Reading.

Additionally, CASAS or TABE Reading do not tell you what you need to know about teaching alphabets, fluency, or vocabulary development. Information gained from additional informal assessment can be used for short-term goal setting, material placement, lesson-planning, and tracking of progress in reading or writing skills such as spelling, grammar/usage, mechanics, or expression.

In the author's experience tutoring adults with dyslexia or reading difficulties, pre-testing of reading or writing sub-skills convinces students you know what you are doing and are making careful instructional decisions. They better understand the purposes of word study or fluency training when they participate in determining their "reading profile."

Ongoing progress checks such as quick word reading or spelling tests and one-minute timings increase motivation and persistence. Post-testing with the same informal assessment used prior to instruction can provide evidence of success that may not be documented by more formal, standardized assessment. ∞

According to *Principles for Adult Basic Education (ABE) Research-Based Reading Instruction* (Kruidenier, 2002, p. 31), there are two rationales for using more than one reading assessment:

1. "Determining what an individual learner or classroom of learners already knows and what they need to learn is thought to make instruction more efficient and effective."
2. A more comprehensive assessment of learner strengths and weaknesses ensures "a balanced approach to instruction in which no one aspect of the reading process is over- or underemphasized."

What informal assessments are available to *borrow* from the Test Bank?

These materials are available for trial use for 4 weeks, and then they must be returned to LDA. Due to copyright laws, they may not be photocopied, but LDA will send you all the materials you need to test your students on a short-term basis.

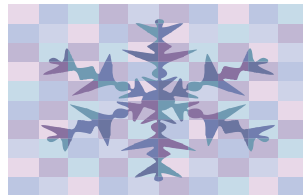
Slosson Oral Reading Test-Revised (SORT-R)

Determines oral word recognition or a word reading grade-level. It contains 200 words arranged in ascending order of grade level difficulty presented in lists of 20 words. The last list is described as grades 9-12. It includes a manual with a special section for administration and scoring in Adult Literacy Programs, a student booklet with two print options, and individual test forms for recording results.

Bader Reading and Language Inventory

Constructed for use by adult literacy teachers, **including ELL teachers**, contains a variety of short tests to measure language comprehension, phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sight word knowledge, use of phonics, multisyllabic words, vocabulary, spelling, flu-

ency, writing, math, and study skills. It includes a spiral-bound teacher manual and book of student passages and graded word lists. It also has an ADULT-LEVEL INTAKE AND SUMMARY FORM for instructional planning.



Roe-Burns Informal Reading Inventory

Determines a word recognition level; independent, instructional, and frustration levels for silent or oral reading comprehension; a listening comprehension level; and comprehension strengths and weaknesses. It includes a spiral-bound manual of background informa-

tion, instructions for use, placement word lists, graded passages with comprehension questions (Forms A, B, C, and D), and miscue analysis worksheets.

Quick Phonics Survey (QPS)

Measures student's understanding of sound/symbol relationships, transfers, and associations. It includes a direction sheet, sound/symbol card, and student response forms for measuring alphabet knowledge, consonant sounds, rhyming, initial and ending sounds, blends, short i/e discrimination, and syllable counting.

Quick Spelling Inventory (QSI)

Identifies a student's grade level in spelling (grades 2-6). It includes a direction sheet, progressive word list of 45 words, scoring guidelines, and student record forms. ∞

What informal assessments are available as *reproducible copies* from the Test Bank?

The publisher of these materials allows you to make unlimited copies for classroom use. You do not need to return these materials.

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory

Determines sound/letter knowledge for phonics instruction. It includes test directions, student Level I and Level II word lists for reading or spelling administration, and teacher record sheets. **Story by Story**, a contextual phonics model and curriculum for adults learning to read, is aligned with this assessment and can also be requested from LDA.

Word Reading Test

From the *Quick Adult Reading Inventory*, this test determines a word recognition or grade equivalent/word reading level for adults (grades 1-10). It includes test directions, two forms (A and B) for pre- and post-testing, ten student word lists for each form, and teacher record pages with scoring guidelines.

Dr. Fry's Informal Reading Assessments—Grades K-8

Determine what should be taught and suggest what might be causing difficulties in learning to read. They are useful for "volunteer tutors, adult literacy teachers, and teachers of students learning English." The following tests with one-page directions are available:

- Oral Reading Test
- Phonics Survey Test
- Phonics Patterns Test
- Onset and Rime Tests
- Phoneme Segmentation Test
- Instant Word Survey Test
- Instant Word Comprehensive Test
- Letter Names Test
- Picture Nouns Test
- Silent Reading Comprehension
- Spelling Test
- Homophones Test A and B
- Word Meaning Test
- Writing Checklist and Rubric

Portfolio Assessment Handbook includes short, one-page checklists called:

- Learner Documentation of Literacy Events
- GED Writing Skills
- Writing Skills
- A Writer's Checklist



What is the procedure for requesting informal assessments from the Test Bank?



- ◆ Fill out the attached order form and send it one of the following ways:
 - 1) Copy & paste information into a word document to send electronically to: lk@ldaminnesota.org; subject: Test Bank
 - 2) Mail to: LDA of Minnesota
5354 Parkdale Drive, Suite 200
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
 - 3) Fax to: (952) 922-8102
- ◆ LDA will mail you the requested assessments within three business days. Those that need to be returned after a 4-week loan period will be accompanied by a due date and return envelope.
- ◆ In Spring 2008, participants will be asked to complete a short survey about the Test Bank in order to improve and expand this supplemental service.
- ◆ Questions? Please contact Marn Frank, Adult Connections Coordinator at mf@ldaminnesota.org, or call (952) 922-8374 x3715.

Where can I learn more about assessment for Adult Basic Education?

Visit the online course "*Reading Assessment for Adult Basic Education*" at online.themlc.org. The course enrollment code is "ara." Course content includes:

- ⇒ Key assessment terms
- ⇒ Purposes of CASAS and TABE
- ⇒ A visit to the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS)
- ⇒ Access to informal reading assessments
- ⇒ Authentic case studies from ABE

Earn five (5!) Continuing Education Units by completing course units and submitting your electronic brief case study to Marn Frank at LDA.

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA

5354 Parkdale Drive
Suite 200
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Ph: 952.922.8374
Fax: 952.922.8102
E: info@ldaminnesota.org

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Adult Basic Education

Please visit us at
ldaminnesota.org

Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota (LDA), Inc. is the state's leading educational non-profit agency helping children, youth, and adults with or at risk for learning disabilities, attention deficits, or other learning difficulties. For more than 40 years, LDA has served people of all ages with learning difficulties so they may lead more productive and fulfilled lives.

Services include diagnostic assessments, consultations, family literacy activities, intensive in-school instruction, transition to post-secondary programming for ages 14-21, parent and professional training, public education, and high-quality educational products. LDA has special expertise in Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and provides workshops, support groups, and free phone consultations for parents of children with ADHD, adults with ADHD, and professionals.

LDA is a supplemental service provider for ABE offering:

- Free assessments for learning disabilities and/or ADHD for ABE students referred by their instructors
- Trainings and consultations for ABE instructors
- Development of resources for ABE instruction

For more information about LDA Assessment Services, contact Wendy Sweeney ws@ldaminnesota.org or call (952)922-8374x3716 .

For information about ABE training and resources, contact Marn Frank mf@ldaminnesota.org or call (952) 922-8374 x3715.

Test Bank Request Form

Available to borrow – Choose one

- Slosson Oral Reading Test-Revised
- Bader Reading and Language Inventory
- Roe-Burns Informal Reading Inventory
- Quick Phonics Survey (QPS)
- Quick Spelling Inventory (QSI)

Available as reproducible copies – Choose any number

- Sylvia Green's Informal Word Analysis Inventory
- Word Reading Test

Dr. Fry's Informal Reading Assessments

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Reading Test | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Names Test |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phonics Survey Test | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture Nouns Test |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phonics Patterns Test | <input type="checkbox"/> Silent Reading Comprehension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Onset and Rime Tests | <input type="checkbox"/> Spelling Test |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phoneme Segmentation Test | <input type="checkbox"/> Homophones Test A and B |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instant Word Survey Test | <input type="checkbox"/> Word Meaning Test |

Portfolio Assessment Handbook

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GED Writing Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> A Writer's Checklist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Documentation of Literacy Events |

Also available FREE of charge to ABE teachers

- Story by Story, a contextual phonics model and curriculum (aligned with Sylvia Greene assessment)

Email form to Larisa Kartyn: lk@ldminnesota.org OR Mail to: Learning Disabilities Association at address below

Questions? Contact Marn Frank mf@ldminnesota.org or call (952) 922-8374 x3715

**LEARNING DISABILITIES
ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA**

5354 Parkdale Drive
Suite 200
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Ph: 952.922.8374
Fax: 952.922.8102
E: info@ldminnesota.org

Order total: _____

Name (Please Print) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____