



Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS)

Massachusetts Adult Education Assessment Policies

TABE Tests Administration Procedures

Fiscal Year 2026

(July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026)

Contents

General Overview	1
Administration of TABE 11/12-Literacy Level	1
Before TABE 11/12 Level L Administration	1
Required Test Materials.....	1
Alternate TABE 11/12 Level L Forms.....	2
During TABE Level L Administration	2
Following Test Administration Procedures	2
Administering TABE Level L.....	2
After TABE Level L Administration	3
Scoring TABE Level L Assessments.....	3
When to Re-Test with MAPT-CCR for Reading Level 2	3
Administration of TABE 13/14-Levels E, M, D, A	4
Before TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration	4
Required Test Materials.....	4
When to use the TABE 11/12, when to use the MAPT-CCR.....	4
Required Test Forms and When to Administer.....	4
When to Alternate TABE Test Levels and Forms.....	4
During TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration	5
Following Test Administration Procedures	5
Administering the TABE Complete Battery Subtests	5
Test Administration Procedures and Time Limits	6
Remote Test Administration.....	6
After TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration.....	6
Scoring TABE Subtest Assessments.....	6
Contact Information and Support	8

General Overview

The state's assessment policy requires the use of the TABE tests for the following learners enrolled in ABE classes:

- Beginning ABE Literacy Students: ABE students reading below GLE 2 must be tested using the TABE Test, Forms 11/12 Level L. Literacy Level Pre-Reading and Reading and/or the Level L Math may be administered.
- ABE students GLE 2-12 who want to improve their writing skills must be tested using the TABE Language Complete Battery Subtest, Forms 13/14, Levels E, M, D, and A. See specific pre- and post-testing requirements in chapter 1 of this manual.
- Students in Adult Basic Education Programs for Correctional Institutions that do not have access to computers must be tested using TABE Math and/or Reading or Language Subtests, Forms 13/14, Levels E, M, D, and A.
- Students in Workplace Education ABE programs that do not have access to computers must be tested using TABE Math, Reading or Language Subtest, Forms 13/14, Levels E, M, D, and A.

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), developed by Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), are norm-referenced tests designed to measure ABE students' achievement of basic skills. The TABE measures reading, language, mathematics, and spelling. There are five levels:

- TABE 11/12 Literacy (Please note that this level has not transitioned to forms 13/14) that is for GLE 0-2
- TABE 13/14 E (Easy), M (Medium), D (Difficult), or A (Advanced) that range from GLE 2 to GLE 12.9. The TABE Locator must be administered to ABE learners above GLE 2 to determine the appropriate level of the TABE test to administer for pre-tests.

The Locator is not needed for mid-year or post-testing.

The policies for using TABE Level L and TABE Levels E, M, D, and A have been separated in this document for ease of use.

Administration of TABE 11/12-Literacy Level

Before TABE 11/12 Level L Administration

Required Test Materials

The following materials are required to administer and score TABE Forms 11/12 Level L:

- TABE 11/12 Test Directions
- TABE 11/12 Level L Test Book
- TABE Level L Word List
- TABE 11/12 Examinee Record Book
- TABE 11/12 Scoring Guide

For students at this Literacy level, Reading and/or Math can be administered to report educational gain.

Alternate TABE 11/12 Level L Forms

Alternate test forms must be given to students so that no student receives the same test form twice in a row. It would be easy for learners to remember the form from one test administration to the next.

If a learner is pre-tested with Level L Form 11, the next test administered must be Level L Form 12. If a third test is administered in the fiscal year, administer Level L Form 11 again. Learners must not be tested more than three times in a fiscal year in the same content area.

During TABE Level L Administration

Following Test Administration Procedures

Certified test administrators may administer the TABE L to their own students.

Test administrators must administer and score the TABE Level L exactly according to the test developer's directions and must not deviate from the script or test directions in any way. If test administrators make their own decisions about how to administer the Level L, the test scores will not be consistent or standardized and will not accurately reflect the student's skills.

Before administering the TABE, test administrators must read Steps 1 through 7 in the TABE 11/12 Test Directions for Form 11 or 12 (pages 2-26).

The TABE L must only be administered in person and cannot be administered remotely under any circumstances.

Administering TABE Level L

Administration of the Word list and TABE Level L takes about 2 hours (about 15 minutes for the Word List, 35 minutes for part 1 of the Reading test, and 75 minutes for part 2 of the Reading test). Review the test directions before giving the test. Do not give additional time unless there is a formal documented learning disability that permits it.

Step 1

Administer the Word List, which will indicate whether to administer the TABE Level L or the MAPT-CCR Level 2 for Reading.

- If a student incorrectly reads or skips three words in a row, have the learner stop and then administer the TABE Level L Test Booklet.
- If a student incorrectly reads or skips five or more words on the entire list, administer the TABE Level L Test Booklet.
- If a student incorrectly reads or skips no more than four words on the entire list, administer the Locator Test.
- If an examinee struggles early on and becomes frustrated, stop the Word List.
- Examinees may repeat a word if the test administrator did not hear the reply clearly.
- If non-native English-speaking examinees can read the word and test administrators can understand the word, regardless of accent, it is marked correct. Test administrators must not "fill in" (e.g., that the test administrator "knew what the examinee meant") when the correct answer was not stated.

- If examinees need to sound out a word but do so accurately, the word is marked as correct.
- The Word list columns may be covered, and words pointed to. The Word List may not be cut up into separate columns.

Step 2

If indicated, administer the form 11 or 12 TABE Level L Test, Reading – Part 1 and Reading – Part 2 only (the Level L Math may be administered, but is not required). Review the test directions on pages 27-34 of the Test Directions for form 11 or 12. Part 1 of the Reading test contains 18 questions, and Part 2 contains 6 questions. The question assesses the following domains: Phonological Awareness, Phonics and Word Recognition, Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

Level L may be administered to a group orally while examinees select answers from their individual test booklets. A 10-minute break should be given between Part 1 and Part 2, but the two parts of the Reading test must be administered in the same test session (it would be unacceptable to administer Part 1 on one day and Part 2 on the next day).

After TABE Level L Administration

Scoring TABE Level L Assessments

Certified TABE L test administrators may score their own students' TABE L tests.

Step 1

Total the number of correct responses for the Reading test (Part 1 and Part 2) from the student's Answer Booklet. Any test item that has more than one answer marked, with no answer crossed out, may not be counted as a correct answer.

Step 2

Using the table on page 7 of the TABE 11 & 12 Scoring Guide, match the student's total number of correct answers on the appropriate form of the Reading test with the corresponding number in the Raw Score column in the Scoring Guide. The column marked Scale Score to its right indicates the scale score for that number correct, and the associated NRS level is also provided.

When to Re-Test with MAPT-CCR for Reading Level 2

ACLS recognizes that program local staff are in the best position to determine whether a student should take the TABE 11/12 Literacy level or the MAPT-CCR. Here are some useful guidelines.

When using the Level L in pre-testing, consider the pros and cons of either post-testing with the TABE Level L or having the learner use MAPT-CCR for Reading Level 2 and then pre- and post-testing with the MAPT for the year. All learners need to have a pre- and a post-test in the same test for the Fiscal Year—either two TABE Level L's or two MAPT-CCR's. Also take into consideration the time of year the learner is pre-testing, and make sure there is enough time to get in a post-test in whichever test is appropriate for the learner—TABE Level L or MAPT-CCR.

If test administrators have used Level L before, they may have noticed that there is a gap between the upper end of Level L and the MAPT-CCR for Reading Level 2. Some ABE learners who score high on TABE Level L may still have a difficult time taking the MAPT-CCR for Reading Level 2. The gap exists between the

two assessments because they were not created by the same test developers do not use the same test items, do not have the same internal organization, and have different time frames for completing.

Therefore, when possible for learners to do so, learners should take the MAPT-CCR.

- If students are not ready to take the MAPT-CCR Level 2 and would still have room to show learner gains on Level L, test administrators may opt to test learners with Level L, since there is room to show gain up to a scale score of 515 (GLE 4.9).
- Test administrators may also opt to retest (and have it count as the learner's pre-test) learners immediately with MAPT-CCR Level 2 if they believe learners would be able to use the MAPT-CCR effectively and show gain by post-testing. This method is preferred if learners are able to understand the directions and navigate the test comfortably and without a significantly longer amount of time than expected (e.g., most MAPT-CCR test takers spend about 60-70 minutes on either the Reading or the Math test).
- Another strategy is to plan to give both TABE Level L and the MAPT-CCR to learners (if test administrators think students can handle MAPT-CCR).

Administration of TABE 13/14-Levels E, M, D, A

Before TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration

Required Test Materials

- TABE 13/14 Test Directions
- TABE 13/14 Locator Test Book
- TABE 13/14 Locator Test Answer Booklet
- TABE 13/14 Test Books (levels E, M, D, & A)
- TABE 13/14 Answer Booklets (levels E, M, D, & A)
- TABE 13/14 Scoring Guide
- Scoreze Answer Sheets for local scoring OR Scannable Answer Sheets for scanning and sending to the publisher for scoring

When to use the TABE 11/12, when to use the MAPT-CCR

For students below GLE 2.0, programs must use TABE Forms 11/12, Level L test, which includes the Word List, Pre-Reading Skills, and Reading Skills tests. For learners who test at GLE 2.0 and above, programs must use the MAPT-CCR. Only programs in corrections and programs that do not have access to internet-connected computers can use TABE 13/14. Programs in CALCs whose students' main goal is to improve writing skills may use the Language subtest of TABE 13/14.

Required Test Forms and When to Administer

Use only TABE Forms 13 and 14. Do NOT use other TABE forms. Programs may not pre-test with old TABE forms and post-test with 13 or 14 in a given fiscal year. The TABE 13/14 may be administered before students reach 18 h of attendance or prior to students' enrollment.

When to Alternate TABE Test Levels and Forms

The TABE Locator must be administered for the first TABE test given to students. The Locator does not need to be given on subsequent tests for that student.

When testing students at mid-year (optional) and/or for the required end of year post-test, alternate test forms must be given so that no student receives the same test form twice in a row. It would be easy for learners to remember the test questions on the form from one test administration to the next.

- If a student is functioning at the same level, switch Forms (e.g., Level E, Form 13 to Level E Form 14)
- It is permissible to pre-test with Form 13, administer a mid-year (optional) test using Form 14, and post-test with Form 13 within a fiscal year.

TABE Test Levels and their Correlation to Grade Level Equivalent (GLE) Ranges

TABE Test Levels	Grade Level Ranges Mathematics	Grade Level Ranges Reading and Language
TABE 11/12 L (Literacy)	0 – 1	0 – 1
TABE 13/14 E (Easy)	2 – 3	2 – 3
TABE 13/14 M (Medium)	4 – 6	4 – 5
TABE 13/14 D (Difficult)	6 – 8	6 – 8
TABE 13/14 A (Advanced)	9 – 12	9 – 12

During TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration

Following Test Administration Procedures

Certified test administrators may administer the TABE 13/14 to their own students.

Test administrators must administer and score the TABE exactly according to the test developer's directions and must not deviate from the script or test directions in any way. If test administrators make their own decisions about how to administer the TABE, the test scores will not be consistent or standardized and will not accurately reflect the student's skills.

Before administering the TABE, test administrators must read the test directions for Forms 13 or 14.

Administering the TABE Complete Battery Subtests

Step 1

Before administering the Locator Test, test administrators must first read the test directions for Forms 13 or 14.

Step 2

Administer the Locator Test to determine which level of the test (E, M, D, or A) to give to a student, following the directions for Forms 13 or 14. The Locator has reading, math, and writing (labeled Language) test items, and gives separate scores for each area.

Using the right level of the TABE test is essential to obtain the most accurate measurement of learners' knowledge.

Once the TABE has been administered as a pre-test, there is no need to use the Locator for the optional mid-year or post-test when either level E, M, D, or A is administered.

Step 3

Score and interpret the Locator test scores according to the publisher's test directions for Forms 13/14.

Step 4

Administer the Language, Reading, or Math Subtests at the appropriate level. (Note: The Math and Reading subtests are divided into Part 1 and Part 2).

Test Administration Procedures and Time Limits

Test administrators must administer and score the TABE 13/14 test(s) exactly according to UMass CEA TABE training and test publisher's instructions. Test administrators must not deviate from the script or test directions as they are presented in the training or the publisher's instructions in any way. Strictly adhere to the test time limits. You can find the TABE 13/14 allowable test times here: [TABE 13-14 Test Max Test Times.pdf](#).

Remote Test Administration

The TABE CLAS-E 13/14 test can be administered in person or remotely. Paper-based TABE 13/14 tests cannot be administered remotely, and the test modality can change under specific and rare circumstances. TABE 13/14 TABE online tests can be administered remotely or in person. See FY26 assessment policy 3 for more details on test modality change and remote testing guidelines.

After TABE 13/14 Levels E, M, D, A Administration

Scoring TABE Subtest Assessments

Certified test administrators may score their own students' TABE 13/14 tests.

Step 1

Determine the sum of the number of correct responses, or total points awarded, using the appropriate answer key. For the reading and mathematics subtests, the sum will include the number of correct responses for part 1 and part 2. This is the raw score for the subtest.

Step 2

Using the TABE 13/14 Scoring Guide, locate the appropriate scoring table for the test level and subtest to convert the raw score to the TABE 13/14 scale score.

Step 3

Locate the learner's raw score in the raw score column in the appropriate table. Then, locate the corresponding scale score using the scale score column for the appropriate test Form (13/14).

Note: TABE 13/14 question types and field test questions

Most of the questions on the TABE 13/14 are traditional multiple-choice questions. There also are some new question types on the TABE 13/14 that require special attention. Some questions require more than one answer (e.g., "Which four sentences best support the conclusion?") and there are also two-part questions (Part A and Part B) that must be scored together because they are closely related.

The number of points that should be awarded for those questions is explained in the “SCORING GUIDELINES” section of the answer key for each subtest.

The TABE 13/14 subtests (levels E, M, D, & A) also include between five and seven field test questions each. Those questions were added by the test publisher (Data Recognition Corporation) to aid in the development of future test forms.

Field test questions DO NOT count towards learners’ total score on any subtest. They should be administered but not scored. The field test questions are seamlessly embedded in the subtests and look like regular questions to test takers. In addition, they are in different spots across subtests. To ensure consistency in administration procedures—and because test administration times were set based on the understanding that all questions will be administered—all programs must administer complete subtests, without skipping any questions.

TABE 13/14 Scale Score Correlations to GLE and EFL

ABE Reading, Total Math and Language (Writing) Scale Score Correlations to Grade Level Equivalent (GLE) and National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Levels

SCALE SCORES	GLE LEVEL	NRS LEVEL
TABE 13/14 Reading Subtest		
300-441	0 – 1	Adult Basic Education Level 1 (Beginning Literacy)
442-500	2-3	Adult Basic Education Level 2 (Beginning Basic)
501-535	4-5	Adult Basic Education Level 3 (Low Intermediate)
536-575	6-8	Adult Basic Education Level 4 (High Intermediate)
576-616	9-10	Adult Basic Education Level 5 (Low Adult Secondary)
617-800	11-12	Adult Basic Education Level 6 (High Adult Secondary)
TABE 13/14 Math Subtest		
300-448	0 – 1	Adult Basic Education Level 1 (Beginning Literacy)
449-495	2-3	Adult Basic Education Level 2 (Beginning Basic)
496-536	4-5	Adult Basic Education Level 3 (Low Intermediate)
537-595	6-8	Adult Basic Education Level 4 (Middle Intermediate)
596-656	9-10	Adult Basic Education Level 5 (High Intermediate)
657-800	11-12	Adult Basic Education Level 6 (Adult Secondary)
TABE 13/14 Language (Writing) Subtest		
300-457	0 – 1	Adult Basic Education Level 1 (Beginning Literacy)
458-510	2-3	Adult Basic Education Level 2 (Beginning Basic)
511--546	4-5	Adult Basic Education Level 3 (Low Intermediate)
547-583	6-8	Adult Basic Education Level 4 (High Intermediate)
584-630	9-10	Adult Basic Education Level 5 (Low Adult Secondary)
631-800	11-12	Adult Basic Education Level 6 (High Adult Secondary)

Programs must not use any program- or teacher-developed TABE answer sheets because depending on the answer sheet, learners may gain an unfair advantage—or experience a disadvantage—from the program-developed answer sheet.

Contact Information and Support

- TABE Tests trainings questions: Kat Tremblay, April Zenisky: aclstesthelp@educ.umass.edu
- TABE Tests policies questions: Dana Varzan-Parker: dana.varzan-parker@mass.gov
- TABE Tests self-paced trainings-see links at the beginning of each month in the [SABES Calendar](#)
- [TABE Tests Good to Know Assessment Guides](#)
- [TABE Tests order forms](#)