

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure[®]

TEST INFORMATION BOOKLET

55 Adult Basic Education

MA-SG-FLD055-02

Massachusetts Department of Education

Table of Contents

How to Prepare for the Tests.....	1
Overview of the Subject Matter Tests.....	2
Development of the Subject Matter Tests.....	3
Structure of the Content of the Tests.....	3
Description of the Adult Basic Education Test.....	6
Using the Test Objectives.....	6
Developing a Study Outline.....	7
Identifying Resources.....	8
Approaching the Test Items.....	11
Multiple-Choice Item Formats.....	11
Multiple-Choice Item Format One: The Single Test Item.....	11
Multiple-Choice Item Format Two: Test Items with Stimulus Material.....	13
Open-Response Item Formats.....	14
Scoring Open-Response Items.....	15
Sample Test Administration Documents.....	17
Sample Test Directions.....	17
Sample Directions for the Open-Response Item Assignments.....	18
Sample Answer Document.....	19
The Day of the Test Administration.....	25
Preparing for the Test Administration.....	25
Test-Taking Tips.....	25
After the Test Administration.....	27
Score Reporting.....	27
Interpreting Your Score Report.....	27
Adult Basic Education (55).....	29
Test Overview Chart.....	31
Test Objectives.....	32
Sample Test Items.....	38
Answer Key and Sample Response.....	45

Test Information Booklet Order Form

Adult Basic Education
(Field 55)

Test Overview Chart

Test Objectives

Sample Test Items

Answer Key and Sample Response

***Test Overview Chart:
Adult Basic Education (55)***

Subareas	Approximate Number of Multiple-Choice Items	Number of Open-Response Items
I. English Language Arts	14–16	
II. English for Speakers of Other Languages	24–26	
III. Mathematics	24–26	
IV. History and Social Science	9–11	
V. Science	9–11	
VI. Application of Knowledge and Understanding		2

The Adult Basic Education test is designed to assess the candidate's knowledge of the subject matter required for a Massachusetts Adult Basic Education teaching license as defined in the *Licensure of Adult Basic Education Teachers and Preparation Approval*, 603 CMR 47.07, "Subject Matter Knowledge Requirements for Adult Basic Education Teachers." This subject matter knowledge is delineated in the Massachusetts Department of Education's *Regulations*.

The Adult Basic Education test assesses the candidate's proficiency and depth of understanding of the subject at the level required for a baccalaureate major, according to Massachusetts standards.

The multiple-choice items on the test cover the subareas as indicated in the chart above. The open-response items may relate to topics covered in any of the subareas and will typically require breadth of understanding of the adult basic education field and the ability to relate concepts from different aspects of the field. Responses to the open-response items are expected to be appropriate and accurate in the application of subject knowledge, to provide high-quality and relevant supporting evidence, and to demonstrate a soundness of argument and understanding of the adult basic education field.

Test Objectives:
Adult Basic Education (55)

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®)

**FIELD 55: ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
TEST OBJECTIVES**

Subarea

	Multiple-Choice	Range of Objectives	Approximate Test Weighting
I.	English Language Arts	01–04	15%
II.	English for Speakers of Other Languages	05–06	25%
III.	Mathematics	07–10	25%
IV.	History and Social Science	11–13	10%
V.	Science	14–15	<u>10%</u>
			85%
	Open-Response		
VI.	Application of Knowledge and Understanding	16	15%

SUBAREAS:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES
MATHEMATICS
HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
SCIENCE
APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS [15%]

0001 Understand the process of written composition.

For example: factors to consider when writing for various audiences and purposes; processes for generating and developing written texts (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting); effective sentence, paragraph, and essay development (e.g., development of thesis statement, organizational strategies, transitional devices); techniques for improving text organization; selection of appropriate details to support an argument or opinion; developing style and voice in writing; evaluating written work with respect to use of rhetoric, logic, voice, style, and content; and revising text to improve unity, focus, clarity, and economy of expression.

0002 Understand grammar, usage, conventions, structure, and history of edited American English.

For example: knowledge of grammatical expression and formal usage; parts of speech; sentence types (e.g., compound, declarative, exclamatory); use of verbs (e.g., subject-verb agreement, consistency of tense and person), pronouns (e.g., pronoun-antecedent agreement, use of possessive pronouns), and modifiers (e.g., adverbs, adjectives, prepositional phrases); applying knowledge of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization in edited American English; and the structure and history of the English language (e.g., etymology and orthography).

0003 Understand literature written in or translated into English.

For example: characteristics of major literary genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, personal essay, poetry, drama); elements of fiction (e.g., plot, character, setting, theme, point of view); literary devices (e.g., figurative language, imagery, irony, symbolism) and ways in which they contribute to meaning and style; important authors and works of literature; and characteristics and uses of writing assessments.

0004 Understand theories and practices relating to the development of reading skills and strategies for adult learners.

For example: the reading process including the role of phonemic awareness, word analysis, phonics, structural analysis, vocabulary skills and strategies, literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension of literary and expository texts, and reading comprehension strategies including metacognitive techniques (e.g., self-questioning, paraphrasing) to develop and monitor reading comprehension and meaning-making (e.g., relationship between the reader and text); appropriate reading materials at a range of reading levels; the relationship between reading and writing; the range of literacy skills found among adult learners; reading assessment procedures and instruments; and instructional strategies to promote reading skills among adult learners.

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES [25%]

0005 Understand theories of language acquisition and factors that affect second-language development.

For example: major theories of first- and second-language acquisition; stages and sequences in second-language acquisition; differences between basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive-academic language proficiency; cognitive processes (e.g., memorization, categorization, metacognition) involved in internalizing language rules in a second language; the role of the first language in second-language acquisition and learning (e.g., language transfer, interlanguage development, literacy development); how social, affective, and personal factors (e.g., age, motivation, inhibition, individual learning style, culture) affect second-language development; and language assessment procedures and instruments, including selection, administration, and interpretation.

0006 Understand basic linguistic and sociolinguistic concepts and their application to English language learners.

For example: apply knowledge of phonology (e.g., distinguishing among types of speech sounds); use of morphology (word structure) to analyze meaning; recognize syntactic features (e.g., a verb phrase) and discourse features (e.g., coherence); the roles of semantics and pragmatics in determining meaning in connected discourse; and knowledge of sociolinguistic concepts related to second-language acquisition (e.g., dialect diversity in English, variations in language register and style, intercultural differences in communication styles).

MATHEMATICS [25%]

0007 Understand number sense and operations.

For example: place value; number bases (e.g., base 2, base 10); order relations; prime and composite numbers; equivalent forms of numbers (e.g., integers, fractions, decimals, percents); ratios, proportion, radicals, exponents, and scientific notation; absolute value; meanings of operations and how they relate to one another (e.g., multiplication as repeated additions); fluency with computational algorithms; estimation; word problems and real-world applications involving number operations; understand use of appropriate technologies (e.g., calculators); and assessment of number sense and operations.

0008 Understand basic concepts of algebra.

For example: use of patterns in mathematical and contextual situations; use of algebraic symbols and expressions to model mathematical and real-world situations and solve word problems; properties of functions and relations (e.g., using words, tables, graphs, rules, and equations); solving equations and systems of equations; graphs, properties (e.g., the concept of change), applications of linear, quadratic, and exponential functions; and assessment of algebraic concepts.

0009 Understand geometry and measurement.

For example: measurable attributes of objects (e.g., shapes, angles, lines) and the units, systems, and processes of measurement; application of appropriate techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurements; area, surface area, and volume; perpendicularity, parallelism, congruence, and similarity; proving theorems (e.g., Pythagorean theorem) within the axiomatic structure of Euclidean geometry; analysis of the characteristics of geometric figures; application of geometric properties and relationships to solve real-world problems and describe the physical world; use of transformations and symmetry to analyze mathematical situations; specification of locations and descriptions of spatial relationships using coordinate geometry and other representational systems; and assessment of geometry and measurement concepts.

0010 Understand data analysis, statistics, and probability.

For example: methods used in collecting, organizing, representing, and analyzing data (e.g., charts, graphs, tables); descriptions of data using numbers, statistics, and trend terminology (e.g., measures of central tendency); reading and interpreting data representations (e.g., frequency distributions, percentiles); evaluation of arguments or statements by applying knowledge of data analysis, and recognition of bias factors and graph distortions; basic probability concepts; using probability models to understand real-world phenomena; applying data analysis, statistics, and probability to real-world situations; and assessment of concepts related to data analysis, statistics, and probability.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE [10%]

0011 Understand chronology, major developments, and individuals in Massachusetts, United States, and world history.

For example: characteristics and contributions of ancient civilizations; major transformations in human history (e.g., the Agricultural Revolution, the Scientific Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Information Revolution); major political, social, and economic developments and conflicts in U.S. and world history since 1500 (e.g., the Renaissance, the Reformation, European exploration and settlement of the western hemisphere; the Age of Enlightenment, colonization, the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, the emergence of the United States as a world power, the breakup of the Soviet Union); and individuals who shaped the history of Massachusetts (e.g., John Adams, Abby Kelley Foster), the United States (e.g., Thomas Jefferson, Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Rosa Parks), and the world (e.g., Pericles, Galileo, Simón Bolívar, Mohandas Gandhi, Mao Zedong, Margaret Thatcher, Nelson Mandela).

0012 Understand basic principles and institutions of American government and their relation to the founding documents of the United States.

For example: central concepts and purposes of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution; structure and functions of government at the local, state, and national levels; elements and operation of the U.S. electoral system; role of political parties and interest groups; ways citizens participate in and influence the political process; the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship; and contemporary issues in American democracy.

0013 Understand basic geographic principles and concepts, and major physical features of the world.

For example: shape, location, and relationships among major land masses and bodies of water; major political units and divisions; basic geographic terms and concepts (e.g., region, location, plateau); characteristics and uses of basic geographic resources (e.g., almanacs, atlases); the use and interpretation of maps and globes; and the influence of geography and its effect on various peoples.

SCIENCE [10%]

0014 Understand basic principles and concepts of the physical and life sciences.

For example: fundamental principles of the physical and life sciences (e.g., conservation of energy, adaptation); properties of matter; forms of energy (e.g., mechanical, chemical, sound, heat); motion of objects; characteristics of and processes related to the earth, the atmosphere, and space; the organization of living things, heredity, evolution, and ecology; the human body and its systems; and interrelationships between the life and physical sciences (e.g., the effects of changes in environmental conditions on plant and animal health, growth, and development).

0015 Understand principles and procedures of scientific inquiry.

For example: applying basic procedures for generating questions and forming hypotheses about the natural world; using methods of observing phenomena and collecting and organizing data; understanding measurement instruments and procedures; drawing conclusions and making generalizations based on the examination of experimental results; interpreting experimental data presented in graphs, charts, or tables; and evaluating scientific claims and arguments.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING [15%]

In addition to answering multiple-choice items, candidates will prepare written responses to questions addressing content from selected objectives, which are summarized in the objective and descriptive statement below.

- 0016 Analyze and evaluate the organization, focus, unity, and/or expression of ideas in a written text AND apply critical thinking skills (e.g., analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation) to a written passage that presents an argument related to an ABE content area.**

For example: the analysis of flaws related to the organization, focus, unity, or expression of ideas in a written work; the identification and correction of errors of usage or mechanics in written texts; and the application of critical thinking skills (e.g., analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation) to narrative, descriptive, and persuasive texts on a variety of topics.

Sample Test Items:
Adult Basic Education (55)

1. **Read the passage below from a draft of a news article; then answer the question that follows.**

¹The controversy that has swirled around one of the city's bookshops for the past few weeks came to a head on Monday at the long-awaited city council hearing. ²During the heated debate, council president Tonya Cardera formally proposed that the bookshop be fined \$10,000 for violating the city's recently enacted ordinance prohibiting displays "offensive to the community." ³Councilor Jeffrey Franklin refused to comment until the hearing resumed. ⁴Martin Halpern, the owner of the bookshop, vowed to appeal any council ruling against his store. ⁵For nearly a month, Bright Lights Bookshop and the city have been embroiled in a dispute over a window display featuring Blake Fisher's new novel on Vietnam that has prompted both critical acclaim and angry denunciations from veterans around the country. ⁶Here in Atherton, the display of Fisher's book in the Bright Lights window—flanked by American and Vietnamese flags—has on three separate occasions generated crowds of protesters requiring intervention by the police. ⁷The hearing will resume next Monday evening, at 7:30 p.m., in the council chambers at City Hall.

Which of the following changes in sentence order would make the passage flow more logically?

- A. Move Sentence 3 after Sentence 7.
- B. Move Sentences 5 and 6 before Sentence 2.
- C. Move Sentence 4 after Sentence 1.
- D. Move Sentences 2 and 3 after Sentence 6.

2. **Read the sentence below; then answer the question that follows.**

He walked lightly through the quiet, green forest, noting all the vivid colors along the way.

Which of the following words from the sentence shown above is an adverb?

- A. lightly
 - B. quiet
 - C. green
 - D. vivid
3. Which of the following teaching practices is an example of applying the *input hypothesis* in ESOL instruction?
- A. encouraging ESOL students to become familiar with and apply conscious strategies for language learning
 - B. using gestures, facial expressions, visual aids, realia, and kinesthetic activities to support ESOL students' comprehension
 - C. placing equal emphasis on developing ESOL students' fluency and accuracy in their language production
 - D. incorporating cooperative-learning and problem-solving activities as components of each ESOL instructional unit

4. Which of the following oral language assignments requires the highest degree of proficiency in cognitive-academic language skills?
- A. comparing everyday cultural practices (e.g., greetings, meals, clothing) between the home culture and mainstream U.S. culture
 - B. explaining the steps in a multistep procedure (e.g., changing a tire, preparing a family meal)
 - C. describing the symptoms of an illness that the student or one of his or her family members recently had
 - D. discussing the issues presented in a documentary on the environment that the class recently watched

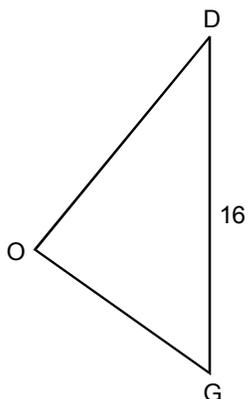
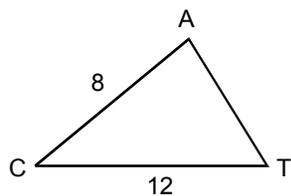
5. In general, which of the following phonological skills is considered most advanced for students learning English as a second language?
- A. using correct stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns
 - B. distinguishing between minimal pairs
 - C. linking consonants and vowels in adjoining words
 - D. distinguishing between voiced and unvoiced stops

6. Simplify the expression below.

$$\frac{\frac{5}{8} + \frac{3}{4}}{\frac{7}{8} - \frac{3}{5}}$$

- A. $\frac{1}{2}$
- B. $2\frac{1}{2}$
- C. 4
- D. 5

7. Use the triangles below to answer the question that follows.



If $\triangle CAT$ is similar to $\triangle DOG$, what is the measure of \overline{DO} ?

- A. $9\frac{1}{3}$
- B. $10\frac{2}{3}$
- C. 24
- D. 32
8. A student rolls two dice. One die has six sides, each face marked with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 dots, and the other die has eight sides, each marked with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 dots. How many outcomes are in the sample space for this experiment?
- A. 14
- B. 28
- C. 48
- D. 64

9. Which of the following geographical factors most influenced the emergence of factories and the growth of the factory system in early nineteenth-century Massachusetts?
- A. ample supplies of mineral resources needed to produce metal products
 - B. streams and rivers that provided factories with water power
 - C. timber resources needed to construct factories
 - D. ample ports and canals to transport manufactured goods

10. Use the table below to answer the question that follows.

Group	Growth Stimulant Given to Corn Plants (milliliters)	Height of Corn Plant after 1 Week (centimeters)
1	0.25	7
2	0.50	7
3	0.75	8
4	1.00	20
5	1.25	13
6	1.50	14
7	1.75	14
8	2.00	13

The table above shows the results of one experiment in which a growth stimulant is given in different amounts to sprouted corn plants. The researcher is interested in determining the minimum amount of the growth stimulant needed to maximize plant growth. Given the results shown in the table, what should the researcher do next?

- A. Conclude that 1.00 milliliter represents the most effective concentration and end the study.
- B. Repeat the experiment using the same concentrations of growth stimulant on a different variety of corn.
- C. Conclude that the result derived from using 1.00 milliliter is incorrect and omit it from the report of the study.
- D. Repeat the experiment using identical procedures and concentrations.

11. **Read the editorial below about the New Deal; then complete the exercise that follows.**

Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal has had more than its share of critics over the years. On the right, conservatives have condemned Roosevelt for placing the United States on the road to socialism. These contentions are for the most part nonsense.

The New Deal has also received criticism from radical academics on the political left, who contend that it was largely a tool of corporate capitalism. This, too, is nonsense.

What then can we conclude about the New Deal? First of all, there were real constraints on how far the New Deal was both willing and able to go. These included the internal constraints imposed by generally accepted beliefs concerning the appropriate role of government and Roosevelt's traditionalist views of fiscal policy. Indeed, FDR's fear of large budget deficits blocked the adoption of the sort of programs needed to restore consumer and business demand to pre-Depression levels. It was not until the war years that massive increases in government spending finally put the United States back to work.

Roosevelt himself was an obstacle to real reform. Growing up amidst privilege, not touched personally by the devastation of the Great Depression, Roosevelt was responding politically to the temporary economic woes of the nation, not the structural deficiencies of capitalism or the plight of the unemployed.

There were also external constraints, such as the unstable nature of the New Deal coalition. New Deal policymakers could not keep everyone happy, and by the late 1930s large numbers of southern Democrats had joined Republicans to form a conservative coalition that possessed the legislative power to turn back any New Deal initiative that it did not like. Another constraint on New Deal policy was the nature of the state apparatus that Roosevelt and his team inherited. Throughout much of the period, government lacked the capacity to administer a thoroughgoing program of industrial planning. By the time government had finally developed this administrative capacity, whatever support there had been for a comprehensive program of industrial planning had largely disappeared.

Yet, for all its shortcomings, the New Deal marked a major break with the past. Never before in the nation's history had the federal government acted so aggressively to ameliorate the misery caused by a radical malfunctioning of the economic system. And while New Deal policies did not end the Great Depression, the regulatory agencies and social programs created by Roosevelt's administration provided a protective framework that has prevented a recurrence of that national disaster. In his first inaugural address, Roosevelt told Americans that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." In basic economic terms, at least, New Deal programs made the United States a much less fearful place in which to live.



Using your critical-reasoning skills to evaluate written material, prepare a response in which you:

- describe the writer's purpose and argument;
- discuss one assumption underlying the writer's argument; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of the writer's argument (e.g., organization, reasoning, use of evidence).

***Answer Key and Sample Response:
Adult Basic Education (55)***

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective
1.	B	Understand the process of written composition.
2.	A	Understand grammar, usage, conventions, structure, and history of edited American English.
3.	B	Understand theories of language acquisition and factors that affect second-language development.
4.	D	Understand theories of language acquisition and factors that affect second-language development.
5.	A	Understand basic linguistic and sociolinguistic concepts and their application to English language learners.
6.	D	Understand number sense and operations.
7.	B	Understand geometry and measurement.
8.	C	Understand data analysis, statistics, and probability.
9.	B	Understand basic geographic principles and concepts, and major physical features of the world.
10.	D	Understand principles and procedures of scientific inquiry.

The sample response below is an example of a strong response.

The author's main purpose in this essay is to evaluate major criticisms of the New Deal. It is the author's argument that New Deal policies and programs marked a major advance in U.S. government, even though various constraints prevented policymakers from undertaking the measures needed to end the Great Depression. A major assumption underlying the argument is that critics of the Roosevelt administration have not paid sufficient attention to these constraints.

The author's presentation of the argument displays both strengths and weaknesses. In terms of organization, the author does a poor job of introducing the essay's argument to readers. The author might also have provided readers with some background information by adding another paragraph after the introductory statement. This said, the remainder of the essay is reasonably well organized, with different forms of criticism and policy constraints subdivided in ways that are easy to follow.

For the most part, the author's reasoning proceeds logically. Given the generally positive assessment of the Roosevelt administration, the author's willingness to concede New Deal shortcomings adds to the general persuasiveness of the argument. The only major problem is the caricatured presentation of New Deal critics in the first two paragraphs. Not only are both of these portraits overdrawn, but the author fails to discuss how these critics developed their anti-New Deal arguments.

Turning to the author's use of evidence, virtually none is provided to support the assertions made in the first two paragraphs. This is similarly the case in paragraph four, where the offhand dismissal of Roosevelt's motives raises the possibility of potential bias. The author also makes several assertions in the final paragraph that would have been more credible had some supporting evidence been provided. By contrast, paragraphs three and five furnish a good example of what the author might have done throughout the essay.