



National Reporting System
for Adult Education

A Project of the U.S. Department of Education

Test Benchmarks for NRS Educational Functioning Levels

Updated August 2019

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ABE Literacy (ABE Level 1-all subjects)	TABE¹ (11–12) scale scores (grade level 0–1): Reading: 300–441 Mathematics: 300–448 Language: 300–457
Beginning Basic Education (ABE Level 2—all subjects)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 2–3): Reading: 442–500 Mathematics: 449–495 Language: 458–510

¹ TABE = Tests of Adult Basic Education

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels
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Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Low Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 3—all subjects)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 4–5): Reading: 501–535 Mathematics: 496–536 Language: 511–546
High Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 4-ELA) Middle Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 4--Mathematics)²	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 6–8): Reading: 536–575 Mathematics: 537–595 Language: 547–583
Low Adult Secondary Education (ABE Level 5-ELA) High Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 5-Mathematics)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 9–10): Reading: 576–616 Language: 584–630 Mathematics: 596–656
High Adult Secondary Education (ABE Level 6-ELA) Adult Secondary Education (ABE Mathematics Level 6)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 11–12): Reading: 617–800 Language: 631–800 Mathematics: 657–800

² For mathematics, there is an additional intermediate level, Middle Intermediate (level 4), in addition to High Intermediate (level 5), and only one secondary level (level 6), due to the complexity of the mathematics descriptors. When reporting on NRS tables, use the level number.

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels
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English as a Second Language (ESL)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ESL Literacy (ESL Level 1—all subjects)	BEST³ Plus 2.0: 88–361 BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1)
Low Beginning ESL (ESL Level 2—all subjects)	BEST Plus 2.0: 362–427 BEST Literacy: 21–52 (SPL 2)
High Beginning ESL (ESL Level 3—all subjects)	BEST Plus 2.0: 428–452 BEST Literacy: 53–63 (SPL 3)
Low Intermediate ESL (ESL Level 4—all subjects)	BEST Plus 2.0: 453–484 BEST Literacy: 64–67 (SPL 4)
High Intermediate ESL (ESL Level 5—all subjects)	BEST Plus 2.0: 485–524 BEST Literacy: 68–75 (SPL 5)
Advanced ESL (ESL Level 6—all subjects)	BEST Plus: 525–564 (exit 565 and higher) BEST Literacy⁴: 76–78 (SPL 6)

³ BEST = Basic English Skills Test

⁴ Students can be placed into advanced ESL using Best Literacy but the test does not assess skills beyond this level so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Retesting of students who enter this level with another assessment is recommended.