



HiSET® Information Brief–2015

The purpose of the ETS High School Equivalency Test (*HiSET*®) is to certify a candidate's attainment of academic knowledge and skills equivalent to those of a high school graduate. *HiSET*® scores will identify those candidates who have performed at a level consistent with high school equivalency. Information from the HiSET program also will help identify areas in which candidates are career- and college-ready, as well as areas in which additional preparation may be needed.

Candidates will be tested in five core areas: Language Arts – Reading, Language Arts – Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Descriptions of each of these five tests are contained in this document. Included with the descriptions are sample items that illustrate the types of items that will appear on the test. The ***HiSET*® Practice Tests** allow the candidates to view sample content and item types and provide them with general information about their level of preparation for taking the operational form.

Through ongoing validity research, the HiSET program has been connected to college readiness indicators. Candidate performance relative to these indicators is part of the reporting system for the assessment.

The following “Test at a Glance” sections provide an outline of the Content and Process Categories for each subject area.

The emphasis of each category is expressed as the percent of questions per category. This percent is the average number of questions across all 2015 forms on the HiSET exam.

Language Arts – Reading

Test at a Glance	
Test Name	Language Arts – Reading
Time	65 minutes
Number of Questions	40
Format	Multiple-choice questions
<p>A pie chart illustrating the distribution of content categories. The chart is divided into two segments: a larger green segment labeled 'I' representing 60%, and a smaller light green segment labeled 'II' representing 40%.</p>	Content Categories
	Application of concepts, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation involving:
	I. Literary Texts
	II. Informational Texts
Process Categories	
A. Comprehension	
B. Inference and Interpretation	
C. Analysis	
D. Synthesis and Generalization	

About This Test

The Language Arts – Reading test provides evidence of a candidate’s ability to understand, comprehend, interpret, and analyze a variety of reading material. The item pool from which the HiSET test forms will be assembled is 60 percent literary content and 40 percent informational content, as defined by CCSS. We note that this is a closer representation of CCSS than the current high school equivalency test. In the ETS HiSET program, candidates will be required to read a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. The selections are presented in multiple genres on subject matter that varies in purpose and style. The selections may take the form of memoirs, essays, biographical sketches, editorials, or poetry. The texts generally range in length from approximately 400 to 600 words.

Reading Process Categories

In addition to the variety of reading texts, candidates also will answer questions that may involve one or more of the processes described below.

Comprehension

- *Understand restatements of information*
- *Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text*
- *Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone*

Inference and Interpretation

- *Make inferences from the text*
- *Draw conclusions or deduce meanings not explicitly present in the text*
- *Infer the traits, feelings, and motives of characters or individuals*
- *Apply information*
- *Interpret nonliteral language*

Analysis

- *Analyze multiple interpretations of a text*
- *Determine the main idea, topic, or theme of a text*
- *Identify the author's or speaker's purpose or viewpoint*
- *Distinguish among opinions, facts, assumptions, observations, and conclusions*
- *Recognize aspects of an author's style, structure, mood, or tone*
- *Recognize literary or argumentative techniques*

Synthesis and Generalization

- *Draw conclusions and make generalizations*
- *Make predictions*
- *Compare and contrast*
- *Synthesize information across multiple sources*

Language Arts – Writing

Test at a Glance									
Test Name	Language Arts – Writing								
Time	Part 1 – 75 minutes Part 2 – 45 minutes								
Number of Questions	51								
Format	Multiple-choice questions Essay question								
<table border="1"><caption>Content Categories – Part 1</caption><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>I. Organization of Ideas</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>II. Language Facility</td><td>41%</td></tr><tr><td>III. Writing Conventions</td><td>34%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Category	Percentage	I. Organization of Ideas	25%	II. Language Facility	41%	III. Writing Conventions	34%	Content Categories – Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">I. Organization of Ideas (25%)II. Language Facility (41%)III. Writing Conventions (34%)
	Category	Percentage							
	I. Organization of Ideas	25%							
	II. Language Facility	41%							
III. Writing Conventions	34%								
	Content Categories – Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Development of IdeasB. Organization of IdeasC. Language FacilityD. Writing Conventions								

About This Test

The Language Arts – Writing test provides information about a candidate’s skill in recognizing and producing effective standard American written English. Part 1 of the test measures a candidate’s ability to edit and revise written text. Part 2 of the test measures a candidate’s ability to generate and organize ideas in writing.

Part 1 requires candidates to make revision choices concerning organization, diction and clarity, sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. The test questions are embedded in complete texts in the form of letters, essays, newspaper articles, personal accounts, and reports.

The texts are presented as drafts in which parts have been underlined to indicate a possible need for revision. Questions present alternatives that may correct or improve the underlined portions. Aspects of written language that are tested may include appropriate style, logical transitions, discourse structure and organization, conciseness and clarity, or usage and mechanics.

Part 2 of the test measures proficiency in the generation and organization of ideas through a direct assessment of writing. Candidates are evaluated on development, organization, language facility, and writing conventions.

Content Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the topics covered in the basic content categories of Part 1. Because the assessments were designed to measure the ability to analyze and evaluate writing, answering any question may involve aspects of more than one category.

Organization of Ideas

- *Select logical or effective opening, transitional, and closing sentences*
- *Evaluate relevance of content*
- *Analyze and evaluate paragraph structure*
- *Recognize logical transitions and related words and phrases*

Language Facility

- *Recognize appropriate subordination and coordination, parallelism, and modifier placement*
- *Maintain consistent verb tense*
- *Recognize effective sentence combining*

Writing Conventions

- *Recognize verb, pronoun, and modifier forms*
- *Maintain grammatical agreement*
- *Recognize idiomatic usage*
- *Recognize correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling*

Part 2 of the Language Arts – Writing test requires that candidates create written responses that are evaluated for development of ideas, organization of ideas, language facility, and conventions.

Development of Ideas

- *Focus on central idea, supporting ideas*
- *Explanation of supporting ideas*

Organization of Ideas

- *Introduction and conclusion*
- *Sequencing of ideas*
- *Paragraphing*
- *Transitions*

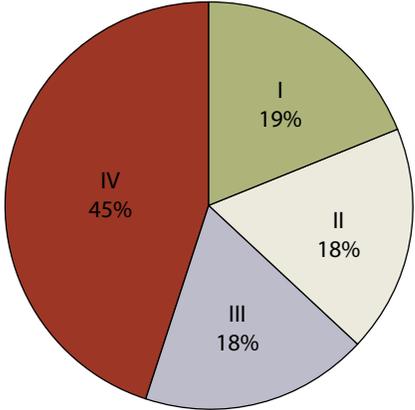
Language Facility

- *Word choice*
- *Sentence structure*
- *Expression and voice*

Writing Conventions

- *Grammar*
- *Usage*
- *Mechanics*

Mathematics

Test at a Glance	
Test Name	Mathematics
Time	90 minutes
Number of Questions	50
Format	Multiple-choice questions
	Content Categories
	I. Numbers and Operations on Numbers (19%) II. Measurement/Geometry (18%) III. Data Analysis/Probability/Statistics (18%) IV. Algebraic Concepts (45%)
	Process Categories
	A. Understand Mathematical Concepts and Procedures B. Analyze and Interpret Information C. Synthesize Data and Solve Problems

About This Test

The Mathematics test assesses mathematical knowledge and competencies. The test measures a candidate's ability to solve quantitative problems using fundamental concepts and reasoning skills. The questions present practical problems that require numerical operations, measurement, estimation, data interpretation, and logical thinking. Problems are based on realistic situations and may test abstract concepts such as algebraic patterns, precision in measurement, and probability. The use of calculators is an option for candidates.

Content Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the topics covered in the basic content categories. Because the assessments were designed to measure the ability to integrate knowledge of mathematics, answering any question may involve content from more than one category.

Numbers and Operations on Numbers may include the following topics: properties of operations, vectors, and matrices; real and complex numbers; absolute values; and computation and estimation with real numbers, exponents, radicals, ratios, proportions, and percents.

Measurement and Geometry may include the following topics: measurable attributes of objects and the appropriate techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurement and achieve specified degrees of precision. Key ideas in geometry include: properties of geometric figures; theorems of lines and triangles; and the perimeter, surface area, volume, lengths, and angles for geometric shapes.

Data Analysis, Probability, and Statistics may include the basic concepts of probability, linear relationships, and measures of central tendency and variability to solve problems. Concepts and processes may include understanding relations among events, data collection, counting principles, and the aspects of distributions.

Algebraic Concepts may include the concepts of analyzing mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols. Candidates should understand patterns, relations, and functions. Topics may include linear functions and inequalities as well as nonlinear functional relations. Candidates may be required to analyze and interpret algebraically, numerically, and graphically; represent, generalize, and solve problem situations; simplify algebraic expressions; analyze and interpret functions of one variable by investigating rates of change and intercepts; and understand the meaning of equivalent forms of expressions, equations, inequalities, and relations.

Mathematics Process Categories

In addition to knowing and understanding the mathematics content explicitly described in the Content Descriptions section, candidates also will answer questions that may involve one or more of the processes described below. Any of the processes may be applied to any of the content areas of the mathematics test.

Understand Mathematical Concepts and Procedures

- *Select appropriate procedures*
- *Identify examples and counterexamples of concepts*

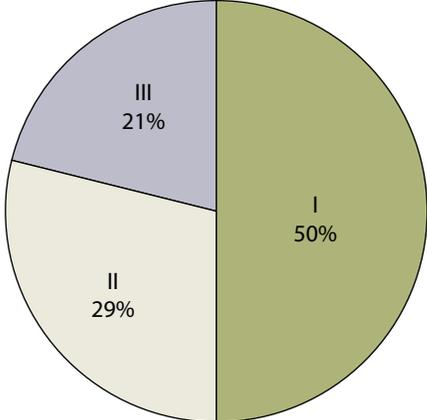
Analyze and Interpret Information

- *Make inferences or predictions based on data or information*
- *Interpret data from a variety of sources*

Synthesize Data and Solve Problems

- *Reason quantitatively*
- *Evaluate the reasonableness of solutions*

Science

Test at a Glance	
Test Name	Science
Time	80 minutes
Number of Questions	50
Format	Multiple-choice questions
	Content Categories
	I. Life Science (50%) II. Physical Science (29%) III. Earth Science (21%)
	Process Categories
	A. Interpret and Apply B. Analyze C. Evaluate and Generalize

About This Test

The Science test provides evidence of a candidate's ability to use science content knowledge, apply principles of scientific inquiry, and interpret and evaluate scientific information. Most of the questions in the test are associated with stimulus materials that provide descriptions of scientific investigations and their results. Scientific information is based on reports that might be found in scientific journals. Graphs, tables, and charts are used to present information and results.

The science situations use material from a variety of content areas such as: physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, health, and astronomy. The questions may ask candidates to identify the research question of interest, select the best design for a specific research question, and recognize conclusions that can be drawn from results. Candidates also may be asked to evaluate the adequacy of procedures and distinguish among hypotheses, assumptions, and observations.

Content Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the topics covered in the basic content categories. Because the assessments were designed to measure the ability to analyze and evaluate scientific information, answering any question may involve content from more than one category.

Life Science topics may include fundamental biological concepts, including organisms, their environments, and their life cycles; the interdependence of organisms; and the relationships between structure and function in living systems.

Physical Science topics may include observable properties such as size, weight, shape, color, and temperature; concepts relating to the position and motion of objects; and the principles of light, heat, electricity, and magnetism.

Earth Science topics may include properties of earth materials, geologic structures and time, and Earth's movements in the solar system.

Science Process Categories

In addition to knowing and understanding the science content explicitly described in the Content Descriptions section, candidates also will answer questions on this assessment that may involve one or more of the processes described below. Any of the processes may be applied to any of the content topics.

Interpret and Apply

- *Interpret observed data or information*
- *Apply scientific principles*

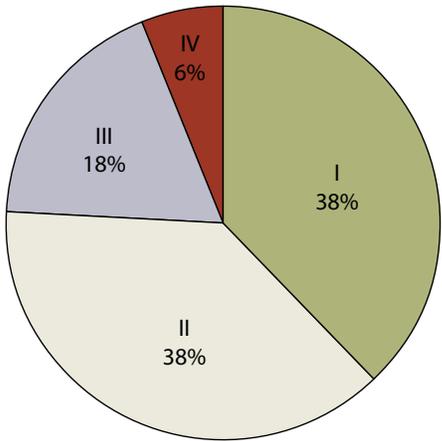
Analyze

- *Discern an appropriate research question suggested by the information presented*
- *Identify reasons for a procedure and analyze limitations*
- *Select the best procedure*

Evaluate and Generalize

- *Distinguish among hypotheses, assumptions, data, and conclusions*
- *Judge the basis of information for a given conclusion*
- *Determine relevance for answering a question*
- *Judge the reliability of sources*

Social Studies

Test at a Glance	
Test Name	Social Studies
Time	70 minutes
Number of Questions	50
Format	Multiple-choice questions
	Content Categories
	I. History (38%) II. Civics/Government (38%) III. Economics (18%) IV. Geography (6%)
	Process Categories
	A. Interpret and Apply B. Analyze C. Evaluate and Generalize

About This Test

The Social Studies test provides evidence of a candidate's ability to analyze and evaluate various kinds of social studies information. The test uses materials from a variety of content areas, including history, political science, psychology, sociology, anthropology, geography, and economics. Primary documents, posters, cartoons, timelines, maps, graphs, tables, charts, and reading passages may be used to present information. The questions may ask candidates to distinguish statements of fact from opinion; recognize the limitations of procedures and methods; and make judgments about the reliability of sources, the validity of inferences and conclusions, and the adequacy of information for drawing conclusions.

Content Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the topics covered in the basic content categories. Because the assessments were designed to measure the ability to analyze and evaluate various kinds of social studies information, answering any question may involve content from more than one category.

History may include historical sources and perspectives; the interconnections among the past, present, and future; and specific eras in U.S. and world history, including the people who have shaped them and the political, economic, and cultural characteristics of those eras.

Civics/Government may include the civic ideals and practices of citizenship in a democratic society; the role of the informed citizen and the meaning of citizenship; the concepts of power and authority; the purposes and characteristics of various governance systems, with particular emphasis on the U.S. government; and the relationship between individual rights and responsibilities, and the concepts of a just society.

Economics may include the principles of supply and demand; the difference between needs and wants; the impact of technology on economics; the interdependent nature of economies; and how the economy can be affected by governments, and how that effect varies over time.

Geography may include concepts and terminology of physical and human geography; geographic concepts to analyze spatial phenomena and discuss economic, political, and social factors; and interpretation of maps and other visual and technological tools, and the analysis of case studies.

Social Studies Process Categories

In addition to knowing and understanding the social studies content described in the Content Descriptions section, candidates also will answer questions that may involve one or more of the processes described below. Any of the processes may be applied to any of the content topics.

Interpret and Apply

- *Make inferences or predictions based on data or other information*
- *Infer unstated relationships*
- *Extend conclusions to related phenomena*

Analyze

- *Distinguish among facts, opinions, and values*
- *Recognize the author's purpose, assumptions, and arguments*

Evaluate and Generalize

- *Determine the adequacy of information for reaching conclusions*
- *Judge the validity of conclusions*
- *Compare and contrast the reliability of sources*