



## Education Major Requirements Illinois Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP)

**Overview:** Prior to being fully admitted to an upper division Teacher Education program, a teaching candidate must prove his or her competency in the basic skills of reading, language arts, math, and writing. This is most commonly done by passing the Illinois Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP)--formerly the test of Basic Skills. Beginning July 1, 2013 the TAP (or equivalent) will be a requirement for entry into any educator preparation program. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) also allows a composite score of 22 on the ACT Plus Writing or a composite score of 1030 (critical reading + mathematics) on the SAT to be used in lieu of the TAP.

The TAP is designed to evaluate a Teacher Education candidate's skills in the areas of reading comprehension, language arts, mathematics and writing to ensure she/he has the tools for success as an educator. The basic structure of the test has not changed much over the years. However, the number of items on each subtest and the passing scores on each subtest have recently been changed to the levels indicated below:

### **Final Pass Scores for TAP**

<b>Reading:</b>	77% (37 of 48)
<b>Language Arts:</b>	77% (37 of 48)
<b>Math:</b>	73% (29 of 40)
<b>Writing:</b>	Scale Score of 8

To pass the TAP, a candidate must pass all four subtests. Also, each candidate can take the test only five times. Each attempt, **even for a single subtest**, counts as one attempt toward the test limit of five attempts. Scores on the TAP are currently valid for up to 10 years. The ten year validity period is determined by the date the test was passed and the date the fees are processed for the requested certificate or endorsement. If the BST or TAP was previously passed as a requirement for the issuance of an Illinois certificate, the TAP will not be required for any subsequent certificate or endorsement. Some conditions apply. For additional information, go to <http://www.il.nesinc.com>.

**If a candidate requests to substitute the ACT or SAT score for the TAP, the State Board of Education has set a composite score of 22 or above on the ACT plus writing or a SAT composite score of 1030(critical reading + mathematics) to meet the requirement for passing a test of basic skills. To be eligible, the examinee must take the correct form of the ACT or SAT (including the Writing test) within the time limit, and follow all procedures set by the ISBE and the senior transfer institution.**

**Please be advised that some private colleges will require the TAP and will not allow the ACT or SAT to be used in its place.**

### **TAP Preparation:**

- “Preparing for the Test of Academic Proficiency” (ISBE) can be accessed at <http://www.il.nesinc.com/> This resource includes a test framework, general information, a [Study Guide](#), and instructions on accessing an on-line TAP Expanded Study Guide (\$19.95) and an on-line TAP Practice Test (\$29.95), a Score Report explanation, and a computer based Testing Tutorial. Note that some materials formerly available in hard copy at no cost are now available only on-line for a fee. Also note that the TAP is available exclusively as a computer-based test.
- Many Teacher Education institutions have developed and/or purchased TAP test-prep materials for use with their students. You are encouraged to contact the Education Departments of regional colleges and universities to determine the availability and accessibility of such materials.

Ideally, the TAP should be taken as early as possible in a student's career, but no later than after a student has completed 45 college credit hours. This allows time for remediation, should the candidate not pass the test the first time he/she takes it.

**The following is a synopsis of the TAP 3 sub-tests and 18 standards:**

**ATTACHMENT1: TAP SUB-TESTS, STANDARDS, DESCRIPTIONS\***

**SUBAREA 1—READING COMPREHENSION**

*The skills addressed in this subarea require demonstration of literal, inferential, and critical reading skills in a variety of written materials—including college-level texts and original source documents—in the areas of physical and life sciences, humanities and fine arts, and the social and behavioral sciences.*

**Standard 1 Determine the meaning of words and phrases in context.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words or words with multiple meanings.
- Recognize the correct use of commonly misused pairs (e.g., affect/effect) in a passage.
- Determine the meaning of figurative or colloquial language in a passage.
- Identify appropriate synonyms or antonyms for words in a passage.

**Standard 2 Understand the main idea and supporting details in written material.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Identify the stated main idea of a paragraph or passage.
- Establish the sequence of events or steps presented in a passage.
- Recognize information that supports, illustrates, or elaborates the main idea of a paragraph or a passage.
- Identify the meaning of a figurative expression in a passage.

**Standard 3 Apply skills of inference and interpretation to a variety of written materials.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Recognize a writer's implied purpose for writing (e.g., to persuade, to describe).
- Identify the statement that best expresses the implied main idea of a paragraph or passage.
- Recognize implied cause-and-effect relationships in a passage.
- Interpret the content, word choice, and phrasing of a passage to determine a writer's opinions, point of view, or position on an issue.

**Standard 4 Analyze relationships among ideas in written material.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Recognize similarities and differences among ideas in a passage.
- Analyze relationships between ideas in opposition (e.g., pro and con).
- Select solutions to problems based on information presented in written material.
- Draw conclusions from information stated or implied in a passage.

**Standard 5 Use critical reasoning skills to evaluate written material.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Recognize stated or implied assumptions on which the validity of an argument depends.
- Determine the relevance of specific facts, examples, or graphic data to a writer's argument.
- Recognize fallacies in the logic of a writer's argument.
- Recognize qualifying language and distinguish between fact and opinion in written material.
- Assess the credibility, objectivity, or bias of the author of a passage or the author's sources.

**Standard 6 Apply skills for outlining and summarizing written materials and interpreting information presented in graphs or tables.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Organize the main ideas in a passage into an outline or another form of graphic or tabular organization.
- Identify an accurate summary of a passage.
- Interpret information presented in charts, graphs, or tables.

**SUBAREA II—LANGUAGE ARTS**

*The skills addressed in this subarea require demonstration of the ability to write effectively at the college level, with control over the conventions of edited English in the United States and competence in drafting, organizing, and revising written work, as well as the ability to exercise critical thinking and reflection in written communications.*

**A. GRAMMAR AND USAGE**

**Standard 7 Demonstrate command of standard usage in edited English in the United States.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Understand the standard use of verbs (e.g., subject-verb agreement, verb tense, consistency of tense).
- Identify and apply the standard use of pronouns (e.g., pronoun-antecedent agreement, standard pronoun case, use of possessive pronouns, standard use of relative and demonstrative pronouns).
- Recognize and apply the standard use of modifiers (e.g., adverbs, adjectives, prepositional phrases).

**Standard 8 Understand and apply knowledge of mechanical conventions in edited English in the United States.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Recognize instances in which incorrect or extraneous punctuation has been used or necessary punctuation has been omitted.
- Identify standard initial capitalization and standard capitalization with proper words and titles.
- Recognize the standard spelling of words.

**B. WRITING**

**Standard 9 Understand the role of purpose and audience in written communication.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Assess the appropriateness of written material for a specific purpose or audience (e.g., a business letter, a communication to parents).
- Determine the likely effect on an audience of a writer's choice of a particular word or words (e.g., to evoke sympathy, to raise questions about an opposing point of view).
- Identify persuasive techniques used by a writer in a passage.
- Demonstrate the ability to adapt forms, organizational strategies, and styles for different audiences and purposes.

**Standard 10 Understand unity, focus, development, and organization in writing.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Identify organizational methods used by the author of a passage.
- Distinguish between effective and ineffective thesis statements.
- Recognize unnecessary shifts in point of view (e.g., shifts from first to third person) or distracting details that impair development of the main idea in a passage.
- Select appropriate and effective supporting material.
- Recognize examples of focused, concise, and well-developed writing.

**Standard 11 Understand and apply editing and revision strategies.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Apply editing and revision strategies affecting diction, syntax, transitions, organization, clarity, coherence, and point of view.
- Make revisions that improve the unity and focus of a passage or that improve cohesion and the effective sequence of ideas.
- Improve the clarity and effectiveness of a passage through changes in word choice.
- Eliminate or replace unnecessary or imprecise words and phrases.
- Insert appropriate transitional words or phrases (e.g., however, as a result) in a passage to convey the structure of the text and to help readers understand the sequence of a writer's ideas.

**Standard 12 Recognize sentences and paragraphs that effectively communicate intended messages.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Demonstrate an understanding of unity within paragraphs and apply methods for enhancing paragraph organization and unity.
- Recognize effective topic sentences and distinguish between effective and ineffective development of ideas within a paragraph.
- Identify sentence fragments and run-on sentences.
- Recognize wordiness, redundancy, and ineffective repetition in sentences and paragraphs.
- Recognize inefficiency in sentence and paragraph construction.

**C. WRITING ASSIGNMENT****Standard 13 Prepare an organized, developed composition in edited English as used in the United States in response to instructions regarding content, purpose, and audience.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Compose a unified, focused, and sustained piece of writing on a given topic using language and style appropriate to a specified audience, purpose, and occasion.
- Take a position on a contemporary social or political issue and defend that position with reasoned arguments and supporting examples.
- Use effective sentence structure and apply the standards of edited English in the United States.
- Demonstrate the ability to spell, capitalize, and punctuate according to the standards of edited English in the United States.

**SUBAREA III—MATHEMATICS**

*The skills addressed in this subarea require demonstration of quantitative literacy at the college level through the application of mathematical methods and reasoning to the solution of real-world problems.*

**Standard 14 Solve problems involving integers, fractions, decimals, and units of measurement.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Solve problems involving integers, fractions, and decimals, including percentages.
- Solve problems involving ratios and proportions.
- Solve problems involving units of measurement, including U.S. customary and metric measurements, and conversions, including scientific notation (e.g.,  $6.05 \times 10^8$ ).
- Use estimation skills to solve problems.

**Standard 15 Apply mathematical reasoning skills to analyze patterns and solve problems.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Draw conclusions using inductive reasoning.
- Draw conclusions using deductive reasoning.
- Identify errors in mathematical explanations.

**Standard 16 Solve problems involving algebra and geometry.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Graph numbers or number relationships.
- Find the value of the unknown in a given one-variable equation.
- Express one variable in terms of a second variable in two-variable equations.
- Solve problems involving lines and angles.
- Solve problems involving two- and three-dimensional geometric figures (e.g., perimeter and area problems, volume and surface area problems).

**Standard 17 Understand concepts and procedures related to data analysis and statistics.**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Interpret information from tables, line graphs, bar graphs, histograms, pictographs, and pie charts.
- Recognize appropriate representations of various data in graphic form (discrete and continuous).
- Demonstrate an understanding of fundamental statistical concepts (e.g., mean, correlation, standard deviation).
- Interpret graphic and non-graphic representations of frequency distributions, percentiles, central tendency, variability, and correlation.  
Demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts of probability using a variety of representations (e.g., word problems, Venn diagrams, tree diagrams)

**Standard 18 Solve applied problems using a combination of mathematical skills (including word problems involving one and two variables).**

*The following are examples of content that may be covered under this standard.*

- Apply combinations of mathematical skills to solve a series of related problems.
- Identify an equation to solve word problems involving one and two variables.
- Apply number concepts and geometric principles to solve practical problems.
- Apply statistical principles to analyze patterns and trends in data.