

Administering the California Achievement Tests

With the Catforms II Answer Sheets

Note: Each teacher or assistant administering these tests should have a copy of these directions.

Before the tests:

The California Achievement Tests (CAT) measure the following basic skills areas: reading and vocabulary, mathematics, language, and spelling. All other academic achievement rests on the successful mastery of these skills. These tests will help you to evaluate your students' proficiency in these areas and the effectiveness of your teaching efforts.

The CAT is divided into five levels. Levels 1 and 2 typically cover grades 1-3, and require a consumable test booklet for each student and an Examiner's Manual for each teacher administering the test. *Levels 1 and 2 booklets are unavailable from Catforms Testing Service.* Levels 3-5 have reusable test booklets and separate answer sheets; Examiner's Manuals or this paper are needed to administer the test.

Tests should be scheduled over two or more days, preferably mornings in the middle of the week. Students should be advised to get a good night's sleep and to eat a nutritious breakfast prior to testing. Delay testing for students who are tired, sick, or obviously unable to work at their best performance level. Students are not to be given any coaching or special academic preparation prior to or during the tests, in an effort to raise test scores.

Students who are absent for part of the test should be given a chance to test the missing sections. A missing section must be recorded as a zero score, and hurts the scores for the subject (Reading, Math, Language) and the overall test score.

Test administrators should do everything reasonably possible to provide a comfortable, well-lit environment free of distractions. This also includes a diligent, but relaxed approach to testing. The goal of achievement tests is to measure students' learning as accurately as possible, and a high-pressure environment will be counterproductive.

Each student tested in Levels 3, 4, and 5 needs to have a test booklet and a corresponding answer sheet. Each one will also need a sharpened #2 pencil or a mechanical pencil with B lead (or softer) and a good eraser. Scrap paper for mathematics problems is permitted, but calculators are not. The test booklets should not be marked in at all, since they will be reused.

The sections of the test are strictly timed; please keep the time schedule handy when administering the test. You will need a stopwatch, or at least a watch with a second hand. If using a regular watch, make a written note of the start and stop times for each section.

At the beginning of the tests, read these directions to the students right after you pass out the test booklets and answer sheets:

1. Please open your test booklet to the inside front cover. I will read the section marked, "To the student" out loud. *[Read the section starting, "This booklet contains...". If there is a paragraph at the end of the section referring to the SCOREZE answer sheets, tell the students to disregard it. The SCOREZE directions DO NOT apply to the Catforms answer sheets]*

2. There is only one answer sheet per student for all three sections of the test: Reading, Math, and Language. **Be sure** to keep your answer sheet clean and free of all unnecessary marks. This is especially important since the sheets are scored by computer.

3. Fill out all the student information at the top of the answer sheet, using a dark pencil. Print your name and other information in capital letters. Please use your formal first name, not a nickname or shortening. For example, if your name is Thomas, write "Thomas", not "Tom" or "Tommy". Fill in the ovals for Sex, Grade, and CAT Form completely. **Do not** mark them with an X or check mark. When you are done, turn the paper over and fill in your name in the space provided there. If you make a mistake, erase it carefully and write the correct information.

4. Fill in the oval for each answer with a dark pencil. Fill the oval in completely, but **DO NOT** go outside the lines. The oval must be filled in dark enough so that you can hardly see the number or letter when you are done. If you need to, ask your teacher for a darker pencil, but do not use a pen. The computer is not nearly as good as you and your teachers are, when it comes to figuring out which oval you marked!

5. If you make a mistake, erase it completely. Make sure you do not erase part of neighboring answers. Do not mark out incorrect answers with an X!

During the tests:

1. Read the “purpose” and “directions” at the beginning of each test section aloud. Read Sample Item A as written and have the students do Sample Item B. Make sure each student understands the correct procedure for evaluating the question and accurately marking the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.
2. Explain that students should work as quickly as possible. If they encounter a difficult problem, they should make a small mark on the answer sheet by that problem and come back to it later. Students are allowed to guess if they are unsure. Those finishing early should go back and check over their answers. Students may have a quiet project to occupy themselves if they are finished with a section and are waiting on the others. In all cases, noise and distractions must be kept to a minimum.
3. When you are sure all the students are ready to proceed, inform them of the amount of time they have to complete the section, and tell them to begin. No help should be given beyond this point, except to make sure directions are understood and to supervise the mechanics of marking the answers correctly at the right place on the answer sheet.
4. Tell the students when they have about four minutes remaining. Do not allow any work after the time expires.

After the tests:

1. Check over the completed answer sheets. Arrange them by grade, then alphabetically by last name. Make sure the marked ovals are dark and neat. Clean up any sloppy markings, but do not change any answers.
2. If you tested Levels 1 & 2, hand score the test booklets and fill out the Raw Scores Form. KEEP the Level 1 & 2 test booklets.
3. If you received an invoice showing a balance due, please include payment. We must receive payment before we can score your tests.
4. You may have received an extra answer sheet or two that you did not order. These are spares in case a student ruins one. After testing is done, please return any that remain unused.
5. See the Test Shipping Checklist for final shipping instructions. If you are using test booklets provided by Catforms Testing Service, be sure to return them in the same condition that you received them within the 60-day deadline.

Working Time Schedule for the CAT

Test Section	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Reading Vocabulary	10 minutes	10 minutes	10 minutes
Reading Comprehension	35 minutes	40 minutes	40 minutes
Mathematics Computation	33 minutes	28 minutes	33 minutes
Mathematics Concepts	7 minutes	10 minutes	11 minutes
Mathematics Problems	11 minutes	13 minutes	12 minutes
Mathematics Fractions	13 minutes	N/A	N/A
Language Capitalization	8 minutes	7 minutes	9 minutes
Language Punctuation I	9 minutes	N/A	N/A
Language Punctuation II	7 minutes	14 minutes	16 minutes
Language Usage & Structure	11 minutes	14 minutes	14 minutes
Language Spelling	8 minutes	8 minutes	8 minutes

Note: Spread testing over two or more days. Allow a short break at least every hour, between test sections.