



Test Benchmarks for NRS Educational Functioning Levels

Updated July 2025

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ABE Literacy (ABE Level 1—all subjects)	<p>CASAS¹ Reading GOALS scale scores: Reading: 203 and below</p> <p>CASAS Reading GOALS 2 scale scores: Reading: 203 and below</p> <p>CASAS Math GOALS 2 scale scores: Mathematics: 192 and below</p> <p>TABE² (11–12) scale scores: Reading: 300–441 Mathematics: 300–448 Language: 300–457</p> <p>TABE (13–14) scale scores: Reading: 310–441 (TABE E) Mathematics: 310–448 (TABE E) Language: 310–457 (TABE E)</p> <p>WorkKeys Applied Math scale scores: Mathematics: 71–73³</p>

¹ CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems.

² TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education.

³ Below ABE Level 1 Mathematics: 65–70.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning Basic Education (ABE Level 2—all subjects)	<p>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores: Reading: 204–216</p> <p>CASAS Reading GOALS 2 scale scores: Reading: 204–216</p> <p>CASAS Math GOALS 2 scale scores: Mathematics: 193–203</p> <p>MAPT⁴ scale scores: All tests: 200–299</p> <p>TABE (11–12) scale scores: Reading: 442–500 Mathematics: 449–495 Language: 458–510</p> <p>TABE (13–14) scale scores: Reading: 442–500 Mathematics: 449–495 Language: 458–510</p> <p>WorkKeys Applied Math scale scores: Mathematics: 74–78</p> <p>WorkKeys Workplace Documents scale scores: Reading: 73–74</p>

⁴ MAPT = Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Low Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 3—all subjects)	<p>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores: Reading: 217–227</p> <p>CASAS Reading GOALS 2 scale scores: Reading: 217–227</p> <p>CASAS Math GOALS 2 scale scores: Mathematics: 204–213</p> <p>MAPT scale scores: All tests: 300–399</p> <p>TABE (11–12) scale scores: Reading: 501–535 Mathematics: 496–536 Language: 511–546</p> <p>TABE (13–14) scale scores: Reading: 501–535 Mathematics: 496–536 Language: 511–546</p> <p>WorkKeys Applied Math scale scores: Mathematics: 79–82</p> <p>WorkKeys Workplace Documents scale scores: Reading: 75–77</p>

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
High Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 4—English Language Arts; ELA)	CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores: Reading: 228–238 CASAS Reading GOALS 2 scale scores: Reading: 228–238 CASAS Math GOALS 2 scale scores: Mathematics: 214–224 MAPT scale scores: All tests: 400–499 TABE (11–12) scale scores: Reading: 536–575 Mathematics: 537–595 Language: 547–583 TABE (13–14) scale scores: Reading: 536–575 Mathematics: 537–595 Language: 547–583 WorkKeys Applied Math scale scores: Mathematics: 83–85 WorkKeys Workplace Documents scale scores: Reading: 78–80
Middle Intermediate Basic Education (ABE Level 4—Mathematics)⁵	

⁵ 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), because of the complexity of the mathematics descriptors. When reporting on NRS tables, use the level number.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ESL Literacy (ESL Level 1—all subjects)	<p>BEST⁶ Literacy 2.0 scale scores: Reading: 100–177 Writing: 100–187 Composite: 100–182</p> <p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 600–677 Print-based test: 600–677</p> <p>CASAS Reading Student Test of English Progress and Success (STEPS) scale scores: Reading: 183 and below</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 181 and below</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 200–354 Writing: 210–384 Listening: 200–348 Speaking: 170–338</p>

⁶ BEST = Basic English Skills Test.

⁷ Corresponds to Student Performance Level (SPL) 0–1.

⁸ TABE CLAS–E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System—English.

⁹ Refer to the TABE CLAS–E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening, and speaking tests. Table shows only total scores.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p>Low Beginning ESL (ESL Level 2—all subjects)</p>	<p>BEST Literacy 2.0 scale scores: Reading: 178–203 Writing: 188–214 Composite: 183–209</p> <p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 678–702 Print-based test: 678–702</p> <p>CASAS Reading STEPS scale scores: Reading: 184–196</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 182–191</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 355–388 Writing: 385–414 Listening: 349–389 Speaking: 339–402</p>

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p>High Beginning ESL (ESL Level 3—all subjects)</p>	<p>BEST Literacy 2.0 scale scores: Reading: 204–233 Writing: 215–254 Composite: 210–244</p> <p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 703–726 Print-based test: 703–726</p> <p>CASAS Reading STEPS scale scores: Reading: 197–206</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 192–201</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 389–427 Writing: 415–437 Listening: 390–427 Speaking: 403–436</p>

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Low Intermediate ESL (ESL Level 4—all subjects)	<p>BEST Literacy 2.0 scale scores: Reading: 234–261 Writing: 255–300 Composite: 245–300</p> <p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 727–752 Print-based test: 727–752¹⁰</p> <p>CASAS Reading STEPS scale scores: Reading: 207–216</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 202–211</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 428–448 Writing: 438–461 Listening: 428–457 Speaking: 437–475</p>

¹⁰ Above ESL Level 4: 753 and higher on print-based test.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
High Intermediate ESL (ESL Level 5—all subjects)	<p>BEST Literacy 2.0 scale scores:¹¹ Reading: 262–300</p> <p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 753–785</p> <p>CASAS Reading STEPS scale scores: Reading: 217–227</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 212–221</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 449–487 Writing: 462–500 Listening: 458–488 Speaking: 476–542</p>

¹¹ Students can be placed into High Intermediate ESL using Best Literacy 2.0, but the test does not assess skills beyond this level, so students cannot exit High Intermediate ESL with this test. Retesting of students who enter this level with another assessment is recommended.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Advanced ESL (ESL Level 6—all subjects)	<p>BEST Plus 3.0 scale scores: Computer-based test: 786–849¹³</p> <p>CASAS Reading STEPS scale scores: Reading: 228–238¹⁴</p> <p>CASAS Listening STEPS scale scores: Listening: 222–231¹⁵</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D: Reading: 488–580 Writing: 501–670 Listening: 489–620 Speaking: 543–670</p> <p>TABE CLAS–E scale scores, forms C and D, exit from Level 6: Reading: 527 Writing: 536 Listening: 533 Speaking: 568</p>

¹² 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.

¹³ Above ESL Level 6: 850 and higher on computer-based test.

¹⁴ Above ESL Level 6: 239 and higher.

¹⁵ Above ESL Level 6: 232 and higher.