

Overview of CAPT

What is CAPT?

The *Connecticut Academic Performance Test* (CAPT) is administered each May to all tenth grade Connecticut students.

The CAPT has been designed to assess critical skills which are needed for success in the work place and advanced studies. The CAPT measures students' abilities to apply what they have learned in school to situations they will face in everyday life.

The CAPT is not like traditional standardized tests you may have taken when you were a student. Instead of being tested to see where each student ranks compared to others who took the test, the CAPT measures how your son or daughter performs against established standards in a variety of essential and specific skills. The tests require students to respond to questions in writing in order to show or explain their work.

What is tested on CAPT?

There are four sections to the CAPT: *Reading Across the Disciplines*, *Mathematics*, *Science*, and *Writing Across the Disciplines*.

The ***Reading Across the Disciplines*** section of CAPT has two tests which assess students' reading abilities: *Response to Literature* and *Reading for Information*. The *Response to Literature* test asks students to read a short story and respond in writing to a series of essay questions requiring them to describe, interpret, connect to, and evaluate the story. The *Reading for Information* test requires students to read several nonfiction articles taken from magazines, newspapers, and journals and answer a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions about the meaning of the article and the way the author wrote the article.

The ***Mathematics*** section of CAPT focuses on your son's or daughter's ability to apply important mathematical concepts to solve problems that are relevant in his or her everyday life, to explain his or her reasoning, and to justify solutions. Different types of questions requiring written responses are used to assess students' abilities to solve problems, communicate, compute, and estimate in four major content areas (number quantity; measurement and geometry; statistics, probability and discrete mathematics; and algebra and functions). Because the test focuses on reasoning and analysis, students are permitted to use calculators.

The **Science** section assesses students' understandings of important scientific concepts in the areas of life, physical, and earth/space science, as well as their abilities to apply those concepts to realistic problems. This is done through a combination of multiple-choice questions and those requiring written responses. In addition, there is a major focus on experimentation skills and the ability to use scientific reasoning to solve problems.

To prepare for the written test, students participate in a hands-on laboratory activity that requires them to design and carry out their own experiment to solve a problem.

The **Writing Across the Disciplines** section of CAPT contains two tests which assess students' writing abilities: *Interdisciplinary Writing* and *Editing and Revising*. The *Interdisciplinary Writing* test requires students to use knowledge and skills gained through social studies, science, mathematics, language arts, the arts and other disciplines. Each test focuses on an important contemporary issue. Students are given a set of source materials (e.g. newspaper and magazine articles, editorials, charts and graphs) representing different perspectives on the issue. Students are asked to read the materials and use the information to write a persuasive piece, such as a letter to a congressperson or a letter to the editor of their local newspaper, which supports their own position on the issue. Students are required to take two interdisciplinary writing tests about separate issues. Additionally, the *Editing and Revising* test assesses student's understanding of writing conventions by asking them to edit passages to correct common errors in organization, word choice, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and spelling.

How are CAPT results reported?

CAPT results provide important information about how well each student is doing in relation to the skills measured by the test. While there is no passing score on the CAPT, goal standards for each section of the test have been established for Grade 10 students. Students who meet or exceed the goal standard in each content area will receive a Certificate of Mastery in those areas. If your son or daughter does not meet the goal standard in one or more areas, he or she will have the option of retaking the test in those areas in Grades 11 and 12 to gain the certification.

The CAPT is not a graduation test, and schools may not use CAPT results as the sole criterion for promotion or graduation.

For more detailed information about the *Connecticut Academic Performance Test* Program, contact the Connecticut State Department of Education:

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