

# ABOUT WASHINGTON TEACHER TESTS 2011-12

## WEST-B and WEST-E

By NCLB and state law, holders of Washington teaching certificates must show basic skills and subject-area knowledge. Candidates may (and many must) take the **Washington Educator Skills Test-Basic (WEST-B)** and the **Washington Educator Skills Test-Endorsements (WEST-E)**.

WEST-B and WEST-E share these attributes: each is given on the same day seven times a year; the test session is **five hours** long, with no *scheduled* breaks in the test session; a test that consists of more than one subtest may be taken one subtest per test session; each test or subtest is passed as a whole, not by its domains; test preparation materials are on the WEST Web site at

[http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA\\_testprep\\_opener.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA_testprep_opener.asp). Some WESTs will be computer-based.

Certificate programs may expect official passing scores by the regular application **deadline**: for Fall admission, test before **March**; for Spring admission, by or before **October**.

**WEST-B** tests basic skills in three subtests: **reading** (main idea vs. details, drawing conclusions, critical reasoning, purpose, intent, point of view, vocabulary, and study skills) and basic **math** (numbers and operations, computation & problem solving, measurement, geometry, probability & statistical principles, algebra, and numerical & graphic relationships), each with 60 multiple choice questions, and **writing** (purpose, audience, development of ideas, revision, conventions, structure), with 50 multiple choice questions plus two formal essays, typically one on a set topic and the other a more open-ended personal narrative; structure, spelling, and punctuation *do* count. In the Writing subtest, the multiple choice questions count for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the total.

Total testing time is **five hours**; you get the subtests you sign up for. There is no computer-based option.

Candidates who hold teacher licenses from other states may substitute passing results from CBEST or Praxis I/PPST. See [http://www.pesb.wa.gov/Assessment/WEST-B/WEST-B\\_Exemptions.asp](http://www.pesb.wa.gov/Assessment/WEST-B/WEST-B_Exemptions.asp).

**WEST-E** exams test subject-area knowledge. Most WEST-Es (but not all) consist of one test of approximately 110 multiple choice questions. Details of test structure, content, and scoring are on the Web site; click What's On the Tests? Guides, scroll and click on your area, and don't ignore the Frameworks document. The total time for each test session is **five hours**.

- **WEST-E single subject** exams consist of one test. The Designated World Languages-Latin test, taken with Designated World Languages, has a constructed response component; the rest are multiple choice only. Candidates for Bilingual Education and Designed World Language certificates may also need to take **ACTFL** oral and written language proficiency exams (see box at right). Four of these exams are offered **only by computer** as of November 2011: English/Language Arts, Health-Fitness, Mathematics, and Social Studies.

- **WEST-E Middle Level Humanities** consists of a multiple-choice subtest in English Language Arts and Reading and another in Social Studies.

- **WEST-E Elementary Education** also consists of two subtests: Subtest 1 tests math, science, and health/fitness, while Subtest 2 tests English language arts, social studies, and the arts. Both subtests are offered **only by computer** starting in November 2011.

**The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview and Writing Proficiency Test** (<http://www.languagetesting.com>), are required in addition to WEST-E Designated World Languages for certification in Bilingual Education or in world languages other than Latin. The Oral Proficiency Interview, face to face or by phone, takes 30 minutes and costs \$134. (OPI on computer is only \$55, but is available only for Spanish.) The Writing Proficiency Test is a standardized 90-minute writing exam with four prompts and costs \$65. In all cases there's a proctor fee as well. To pass for Bilingual Education takes an Advanced Mid level; for world languages, it's Advanced Low.

**Fees** for WEST assessments follow.

\$25 per subtest for each of the WEST-B subtests

\$60 per subtest for each of the two subtests in WEST-E Elementary Education or Middle Level Humanities

\$60 per test for WEST-E Designated World Languages

\$120 per test for all other WEST-E exams, including WEST-E Designated World Languages-Latin

\$10 registration fee per WEST test date

\$35 registration fee for each computerized test (EI Ed 1, EI Ed 2, English, Health, Math, Social Studies)

**Register** for WEST-B and WEST-E at <http://www.west.nesinc.com>. It is possible to take some WEST-B subtests in the same test session as some WEST-E tests or subtests; for rules and restrictions (and for rules for calculator use) see the Test Selection page, [http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA8\\_testselection.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA8_testselection.asp). For **alternative testing**—learning or other disability (including pregnancy) or Sunday testing—apply by the regular registration deadline; instructions and forms are online, and you'll need a doctor's or clergyperson's verification of your need and your requested alternative.

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Test sites for all **paper-based** dates are at Bellingham, Ellensburg, Seattle/Bellevue/Everett, Spokane, Tacoma, and Vancouver; some dates add test sites at Pullman, Walla Walla, and Yakima. See the Test Sites link at [http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA9\\_testsites.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA9_testsites.asp) for a chart of dates and test sites.

**Computer-based tests** will be given by appointment each month in a five- to six-day testing window at Pearson Professional Centers; locations are in Bellevue, Renton, Spokane, and Yakima, plus Portland OR and Vancouver BC. Register via the WEST Web site, <http://www.west.nesinc.com>.

Before signing up to **retake** WEST-B or WEST-E, **wait for your scores**: the late-registration fee is **waived** automatically when you reregister promptly (and fearing you failed does not mean you failed).

**Results** in the form of preliminary scores for WEST-B and WEST-E appear online. Official reports follow by mail as a sheet with a score plus performance indicators by domain. Computer-based results will probably appear online. Please don't destroy non-passing results in a fit of despair: the diagnostics can be helpful.

The scoring scale for all WEST tests and subtests, including WEST-B, runs from 100 to 300; a score of **240** or higher is a passing score. If you take but don't pass WEST-B Writing, you'll receive a scaled score for the multiple-choice section and another for the writing section, both on the 100-to-300 scale. For WEST-E, performance indicators are provided that run from + (weak) to +++++ (strong).

The WEST program sports one feature that distinguishes it from most other teacher tests. **Expanded diagnostics** are available for an additional fee: \$140 for any combination of WEST-E or WEST-B tests that includes constructed responses or essays, or \$65 for all other WEST-B or WEST-E tests or subtests. Details are at [http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA8\\_testfees.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA8_testfees.asp).

**Preparation** resources are available at [http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA\\_testprep\\_opener.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA_testprep_opener.asp) (or go to the main WEST Web site and choose "What's On the Tests?") WEST-B offers six downloadable docs: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics plus Test Objectives, a test-taking guide, and the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements on which WEST-B is based. WEST-E, under the pull-down menu for preparation materials, offers two documents per test: the test summary and framework, which sets out what the test covers and how, and a rather large set of sample test questions with answers that aren't explained as such but that are keyed to elements of the test framework.

Commercially packaged **preparation guides** that are specific to WEST exams are still relatively scarce (the PESB Web site prudently warns test takers to check a book that purports to be for WEST to ensure that it does in fact cite the correct test number). Look at the test framework before you go shopping for books, and seek ones that fit your needs and keep your interest. High-school or undergrad textbooks and AP preparation materials can work well; so can the Internet. (Try combing the frameworks and sample questions for terms you don't know well, then Googling "\_\_\_ applet".)

The best way to prepare for the WEST-B writing task is simply to write—and to get your essays evaluated by someone who is gentle but truthful and skilled. See <http://www.testmaven.com> for some ideas.

### WEST Test Dates and Deadlines through July 2012

Any date with an asterisk is the Testmaven's best guess pending the release of official test dates and deadlines.

Other symbols (L, %, @) are explained below.

Confirm all dates and sites and find updates at <http://www.west.nesinc.com>.

<i>Paper-based WEST test date</i>	<i>Registration deadline</i>	<i>Add/ change/ withdraw deadline (\$15 fee)</i>	<i>Late registration deadline (\$30 late fee)<sup>§</sup></i>	<i>Emergency regis- tration deadline (\$70 late fee)<sup>§</sup></i>	<i>Scores online/ score reports mailed</i>	
					<i>WEST-E</i>	<i>WEST-B and WEST-E Latin</i>
Sept. 17, 2011	Aug. 12, 2011	The late- registration deadline for the <b>earlier</b> of the test dates being changed	Aug. 26, 2011	Sept. 8, 2011	Oct. 3, 2011	Oct. 11, 2011
Nov. 19, 2011 <sup>L</sup>	Oct. 14, 2011		Oct. 28, 2011	Nov. 10, 2011	Dec. 5, 2011	Dec. 12, 2011
Jan. 7, 2012	Dec. 2, 2011		Dec. 16, 2011	Dec. 29, 2012	Jan. 23, 2012	Jan. 30, 2012
Feb. 25, 2012 <sup>L%</sup>	Jan. 20, 2011		Feb. 3, 2012	Feb. 16, 2012	Mar. 12, 2012	Mar. 19, 2012
Apr. 14, 2012 <sup>L</sup>	Mar. 9, 2012		Mar. 23, 2012	Apr. 5, 2012	Apr. 30, 2012	May 7, 2012
June 2, 2012 <sup>@</sup>	Apr. 27, 2012		May 11, 2012	May 24, 2012	June 18, 2012	June 23, 2012
July 21, 2012 <sup>L</sup>	June 15, 2012		June 29, 2012	July 12, 2012	Aug. 6, 2012	Aug. 15, 2012

<sup>L</sup>Designated World Languages-Latin is offered only on these dates.

<sup>%</sup>In the 2010-2011 testing year, the February test date is the only one for which all test sites are open. **To be sure you can test in a given location on a specific test date, check the Test Sites page,** [http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA9\\_testsites.asp](http://www.west.nesinc.com/WA9_testsites.asp).

<sup>@</sup>On this date, paper-based tests are given at out-of-state testing centers in Phoenix, AZ; Los Angeles and San Francisco, CA; New York, NY; and La Grande, OR. Register on the WEST Web site, though it might be smart to register earlier than the deadline.

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[www.testmaven.com](http://www.testmaven.com)

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