



# Illinois Certification Testing System

## SCORE REPORT EXPLANATION

### 096 Basic Skills Test

#### Overview

Your score report provides information regarding the Basic Skills test you took at the recent administration of the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS). The report includes information regarding your Pass/Did Not Pass status for that test, your performance on the test as a whole, and your performance on each of the four subareas of the test. Your scores are reported to you, to the Illinois State Board of Education, and to the institution(s) you indicated during the registration process.

The test contains 125 multiple-choice test questions and 1 constructed-response writing assignment.

#### Your Test Score

Your score for the Basic Skills test is reported on a scale from 100 to 300. To pass the Basic Skills test you must obtain a total test scaled score of 240 **and** you must score at or above the minimum allowable score for each subarea. The total test score is based on your performance on the entire test, including the number of multiple-choice test questions you answered correctly and the score that you received on your constructed-response writing assignment. The multiple-choice section represents 85 percent of your total test score and the essay represents 15 percent of your total test score. The minimum allowable scores for each subarea are:

Reading Comprehension	50% of the questions answered correctly
Language Arts	50% of the questions answered correctly
Mathematics	35% of the questions answered correctly
Writing	Score of 5 out of 12

To pass the test you must obtain a total test score of 240 or higher **and** you must score at or above each of these minimum test subarea levels. If any of your test subarea scores do not meet the minimum allowable score for the subarea, you will not pass the test—regardless of how high your total test score may be. If you did not meet the minimum allowable score for a subarea, an asterisk (\*) will appear on your score report for that subarea. Conversely, if you meet the minimum allowable score for each subarea but do not achieve a total test score of 240 or higher, you will not pass the test. This scenario is possible due to the fact that the total test score required to pass the Basic Skills test (240) is greater than the sum of the minimum allowable scores for each subarea.

#### Subarea Scores

Subarea scores are also reported on a scale from 100 to 300 and are intended to provide you with feedback on your performance in the major subareas of the test. Subarea scores contain different numbers of questions and are represented differently in the computation of the total test score; therefore, the average of the subarea scores generally will not equal the total test scaled score. Your total test score is **not** an average of your subarea scores.

*The Illinois State Board of Education periodically reviews passing scores. The required total test score and minimum allowable scores may be changed as a result of Board action. Examinees will be advised via their score reports of any change to the requirement.*

#### Multiple-Choice Scores

Your performance on the multiple-choice test section is based on the number of test questions answered correctly; you do not "lose" any points for wrong answers. Each multiple-choice test question counts the same toward the total score.

## Basic Skills Writing Score

The written response for the Basic Skills test is scored by at least two qualified educators. Scorers are unaware of the identities of the individuals whose responses they score and are unaware of the score(s) assigned by others to the same response. Scorers receive extensive orientation in standardized scoring procedures and take a qualifying assessment to ensure that they are ready to score. Scorers judge the overall effectiveness of each response while focusing on a set of characteristics that have been defined by Illinois educators as important. Scorers are oriented to provide an overall judgment, not to indicate specific errors. Scorers base their judgments on the quality of the writing rather than on penmanship, length, or neatness.

Responses are scored based on the extent to which they effectively communicate a whole message to the specified audience for the stated purpose. Examinees are assessed on their ability to express, organize, and support opinions and ideas, not on the position they take. The composition should conform to the conventions of edited English as used in the United States, should be written legibly, and should be the examinee's own original work. More specifically, each response is scored according to the following performance characteristics:

- **Focus:** the clarity with which the response presents and maintains the main idea
- **Support/Elaboration:** the extent to which the main idea is supported and explained by details and reasons
- **Organization:** the explicitness of the text structure or plan and the clarity of the logical flow of ideas
- **Grammar and Conventions:** the extent to which the response shows control of the use of standard written English and the extent to which errors interfere with communication of the main idea

A score is assigned to each response based on a six-point scale that describes various levels of performance, with 1 representing a totally undeveloped paper and 6 representing a paper that is very well developed. Each paper is read and scored by two readers; the sum of the two readers' scores is the total score assigned to the essay. Any pair of scores that differs by more than one point is regarded as discrepant and is scored by a third reader. For example, a total score of 9 can result only from readers' scores of 4 plus 5, not from scores of 3 plus 6, since the scores in the latter pair differ by more than one point.

The raw score for each written response is converted to a scale from 100 to 300, with 240 or above representing acceptable performance on the assignment. If your response is off topic, illegible, written primarily in a language other than English, or of insufficient quantity to score, you will receive a score of "U" for unscorable. A designation of "B" is assigned if the written response booklet is blank.

***See the Illinois Certification Testing System Basic Skills test study guide for an explanation of the performance characteristics and for further information on how the response is scored. Study guides are available on the ICTS Web site at [www.icts.nesinc.com](http://www.icts.nesinc.com).***

## Passing Scores

The passing scores for the ICTS were established by the Illinois State Board of Education based on recommendations from panels of Illinois educators.

## How to Request a Rescore of Your Test

All answer documents for the multiple-choice test section are scored by computer and, as such, are virtually error free. However, if you think an error has been made on your test score(s), you may request a rescore of your multiple-choice answer document and your written response. The fee for rescoring the Basic Skills test is \$50. Payment must be made by personal check, cashier's check, or money order only. A request for rescoring the Basic Skills test must be made in writing. The written request and appropriate payment made out to Evaluation Systems must be mailed and postmarked within three months of the score report date.

If you have questions regarding **PROGRAM POLICIES** or **WHICH TEST(S)** you must take, contact your college advisor, certification officer, or a regional office of education or visit the Illinois State Board of Education Web site at [www.isbe.net/teachers.htm](http://www.isbe.net/teachers.htm).