CALIFORNIA BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS TEST™ (CBEST®) TEST SPECIFICATIONS
READING

Skill Factor 1: Critical Analysis and Evaluation
Skill Factor 2: Comprehension and Research

CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Compare/contrast ideas or information presented in different sections of a reading selection[1] or from different sources.

Identify the reasons, examples, details, or facts in a reading selection that support the author's main idea.

Make predictions about the outcome of an event based on information from a reading selection.

Recognize the attitude, opinion, or viewpoint expressed by the author toward his or her subject.

Determine whether facts or ideas are relevant to an argument in a reading selection.

Recognize statements that strengthen or weaken arguments in a reading selection.

Recognize the various persuasive techniques used by an author in a reading selection.

Distinguish between facts and opinions in a reading selection.

Identify logical assumptions upon which the author bases the argument of a reading selection.

Challenge the statements and opinions presented in a reading selection.

Identify inconsistencies or differences in points of view within one reading selection or between two or more selections.

Recognize the audience that a reading selection addresses.

Recognize language that creates an inappropriate or inconsistent tone, given the intended audience and purpose.

[1]Throughout these specifications, "reading selection" is defined as an excerpt from a book, chapter, paragraph, article, or report.

CBEST
TEST SPECIFICATIONS
READING

COMPREHENSION AND RESEARCH SKILLS

A. Comprehension and Context

Identify the relationships between general and specific ideas in a reading selection.

Determine the sequence of events or steps in a process from a reading selection.

Arrange the ideas in a reading selection into an outline or another form of graphic organization.

Recognize the main idea or purpose of a reading selection.

Identify accurate paraphrases or summaries of ideas in a reading selection.

Identify facts and details presented in a reading selection.

Draw conclusions or generalizations from material presented in a reading selection.

Make inferences and recognize implications based on information from a reading selection.

Recognize implied relationships between people, ideas, or events in a reading selection.

Use context clues, syntax, and structural analysis (e.g., affixes, prefixes, roots) to determine the meaning of unknown words.

Determine the meanings of figurative or colloquial language in a reading selection.

Recognize and identify different interpretations that can be made of the same word, sentence, paragraph, or reading selection.

Recognize how the meaning of a word, sentence, or paragraph is affected by the context in which it appears.

Understand the function of key transition indicators in a reading selection
(e.g., "however," "by contrast," "in conclusion").

B. Research and Reference Skills

Use the table of contents, section headings, index, and similar sections of a book to locate information.

Locate the place in a reading selection (e.g., book, chapter, paragraph, article, or report) where a specific kind of information can be found.

Understand how a reading selection is organized.

Identify logical conclusions, generalizations, or implied relationships that are supported by information in a table or graph.

CALIFORNIA BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS TEST™ (CBEST®) TEST SPECIFICATIONS MATHEMATICS

Skill Factor 1: Estimation, Measurement, & Statistical Principles
Skill Factor 2: Computation & Problem Solving
Skill Factor 3: Numerical & Graphic Relationships

ESTIMATION, MEASUREMENT, & STATISTICAL PRINCIPLES

A. Estimation and Measurement

Understand and use standard units of length, temperature, weight, and capacity in the U.S. measurement system.

Measure length and perimeter.

Understand and use estimates of time to plan and achieve work-related objectives.

Estimate the results of problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division prior to computation.

B. Statistical Principles

Perform arithmetic operations with basic statistical data related to test scores (e.g., averages, ratios, proportions, and percentile scores).

Understand basic principles of probability and predict likely outcomes based on data provided (e.g., estimate the likelihood that an event will occur).

Interpret the meaning of standardized test scores (e.g., stanine scores, percentiles) to determine how individuals performed relative to other students.

CBEST
TEST SPECIFICATIONS
MATHEMATICS

COMPUTATION & PROBLEM SOLVING

Add, subtract, multiply, and divide with whole numbers.

Add and subtract with positive and negative numbers.

Add, subtract, multiply, and divide with fractions, decimals, and percentages.

Determine and perform necessary arithmetic operations to solve a practical mathematics problem (e.g., determine the total invoice cost for ordered supplies by multiplying quantity by unit price, summing all items).

Solve simple algebraic problems (e.g., equations with one unknown).

Determine whether enough information is given to solve a problem; identify the facts given in a problem.

Recognize alternative mathematical methods of solving a problem.

NUMERICAL & GRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS

Recognize relationships in numerical data (e.g., compute a percentage change from one year to the next).

Recognize the position of numbers in relation to each other (e.g., 1/3 is between 1/4 and 1/2; -7<-4).

Use the relations less than, greater than, or equal to, and their associated symbols to express a numerical relationship.

Identify numbers, formulas, and mathematical expressions that are mathematically equivalent (e.g., 2/4 = 1/2, 1/4 = 25%).

Understand and use rounding rules when solving problems.

Understand and apply the meaning of logical connectives (e.g., and, or, if-then) and quantifiers (e.g., some, all, none).

Identify or specify a missing entry from a table of data (e.g., subtotal).

Use numerical information contained in tables, spreadsheets, and various kinds of graphs (e.g., bar, line, circle) to solve mathematics problems.

CALIFORNIA BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS TEST™ (CBEST®)
TEST SPECIFICATIONS
WRITING

The Writing Test consists of two essay questions. One of the essay questions asks examinees to write about a remembered experience. The other question is designed to elicit expository prose that will permit writers to demonstrate their analytic skills.

ABILITIES SPECIFICATIONS

The questions in the Writing Test will elicit a writing sample that will show the examinee's ability to:

1. write with clarity (i.e., the reader can comprehend immediately what is meant),

2. keep the writing focused (i.e., the reader is kept on the track),

3. develop the ideas in the writing through support or illustration,

4. use the conventions of standard written English, and

5. maintain a line of thought essentially free of non sequiturs, internal contradictions, unwarranted conclusions, and confusion of fact and opinion.

TOPIC SPECIFICATIONS

Topics should be of the following two types:

TYPE I (one question per examination):

Topics should elicit a sample of expressive writing about a remembered experience (expressive aim).

TYPE II (one question per examination):

Topics should elicit a sample of expository writing that will permit the examinees to demonstrate their analytic skills (referential aim).

Topics should NOT:

ask examinees to write personal letters or notes, though letters to the editor are acceptable, or

ask examinees to write out of imaginary or speculative experiences.