

GETTING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA



- > Paths that get you there
- > Free resources you can use
- > Help available at [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org)



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You Can Do It!

Congratulations! You are planning to get your High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. By earning your HSE diploma you will join thousands of other adults who have increased their income, earned promotions, enrolled in trade or occupational training programs, or successfully completed college. Like you, they decided to invest in themselves.

The good news is that there are a few ways to get your equivalency diploma:

- ▶ The TASC Test (Test Assessing Secondary Completion)
- ▶ The Regents—HSE Exam Pathway
- ▶ The National External Diploma Program (NEDP)
- ▶ The 24 College Credit Program

The first section of this guide provides essential information about each path. The second section focuses on the path that is most often chosen—the TASC. Even if you choose another path, read this section anyway. It can be helpful in preparing for other tests you will need to take.

Whichever path you choose, a first step is taking the **Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)**. The TABE results give you an idea of your strengths and weaknesses in the subjects needed for a HSE diploma. Once you have this information, you will know where to focus your studies. To move forward quickly, all four paths to a HSE diploma require at least a 9th grade level in reading and math skills. The TABE is usually given when you enroll in a TASC class. You can find out about TASC classes in Westchester County and about ways to take the TABE on your own by reading this guide. A selected list of Westchester County-based organizations that can assist you toward your goal is listed at the end of this guide. For the most current information, we will point you to the Westchester Library System's online learning site—FirstFind.org.



If you think this guide does a good job of explaining what you need to do, please tell others about the guide and the resources available from the Westchester Library System. The full guide can be downloaded from FirstFind.org.

If you want to share your success—or have any questions—you can connect with our High School Equivalency Helpline. Leave a message or send an email using the contact information below.

High School Equivalency Helpline
hse@wlsmail.org or 914-231-3264

Firstfind.org has information and resources to help Westchester residents work towards their goals.

- > **Get your High School Equivalency diploma**
- > **Learn English**
- > **Look for a job**
- > **Update your computer skills**
- > **Find out if you qualify for benefits**

Just point the mouse to the topic you want (see above) and click. Remember—you can always **contact your local library** to ask about other programs that can help with these topics.

Throughout this guide, we refer to information available on our plain-language learning portal, FirstFind.org. Follow the breadcrumbs (sequence of pages that you select on the website) to get to the right information.

FOR EXAMPLE: Firstfind.org > **Get Your HS Diploma** > **Learn the Paths.**

(SEE ILLUSTRATION ON PAGE 5)

Follow the "breadcrumbs" ...

Go to
Get Your HS Diploma

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Tools that can change your life

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Get Your HS Diploma | Learn English | Computer Tips | Look for a Job | Go to College | Help Your Children | Government Benefits

Firstfind.org » Get Your HS Diploma

Get Your HS Diploma

Seeking a high school equivalency diploma? Use these links to find out how and build your skills.

- How to Get Your Questions Answered In-Person
- Learn the Paths to a High School Equivalency Diploma and How to Prepare
- Learning Express Library - Online courses and practice tests.
NOTE: You must register for an account to use Learning Express.
- Skills Review - Skills you must master to pass each of the exams.
 - Skills Review: Reading
 - Skills Review: Writing
 - Skills Review: Math
 - Skills Review: Science
 - Skills Review: Social Studies
 - Skills Review: Charts and Graphs
- Recursos en Español
- Ready for the Test?

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Get Your HS Diploma >
Learn the Paths

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Firstfind.org » Get Your HS Diploma » Learn the Paths

Learn the Paths

In New York State there are three pathways to a high school equivalency diploma. (Click the links to find out more.)

- Pass the TASC test (formerly called the GED, now the TASC - Test of Adult Skills Completion). Note: New in 2016 - You can use passing scores from Regents Exams that you took in high school to eliminate some parts of the test.
- Test into a program called the NEDP (National External Diploma Program) and complete a set of 10 projects that demonstrate your knowledge and skill.
- Complete 24 credits of high school-level course work while working towards your Associates Degree.

To move quickly along either of these paths, you would ideally start at a 9th grade level in reading and math; to assess your skills try the online exams located on this page - [Ready for the Test?](#) You'll also need some knowledge of how to use the Internet for research, and create a report using word processing or spreadsheet software. Go to your local library to find out about their free computer classes and/or use the online tutorials available on this site at [Computer Tips](#).

Do you have a diploma from another country? [See this information](#) on how to have that diploma evaluated and accepted as equivalent to a US diploma for employment or college admissions.

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Questions? Ask Firstfind

Go to
Get Your HS Diploma >
Learn the Paths >
TASC Test

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Firstfind.org » Get Your HS Diploma » Learn the Paths » TASC Test

TASC Test

The TASC test covers five subjects - reading, writing, science, social studies and math. The test is given a number of times each year at just a few locations in Westchester County. The exam takes roughly 9 hours to complete and is given over the course of 2-days. You can take the exam - for free - up to three times each year. Whatever part you pass, does not need to be taken again. If you passed any of your Regents Exams in high school, you can use those scores to substitute for parts of the TASC test; more information is available [here](#).

TASC classes are available throughout Westchester County. Most classes are free or low cost. Especially if you have been out of school for a while, a class can provide the needed structure to complete this goal. When you enroll in a TASC class, you will be given a test called the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to assess your skills and level for the class. Use the practice tests at - [Ready for the Test?](#) - to become familiar with the exam TABE or TASC exams. You can also use the many resources on FirstFind.org to study on your own - go to the Skills Review page for study tools organized by subject.

SUGGESTION: If you are confident in your skills, register to take the exam - locations fill up, especially at the end of the calendar year. Pick a date, register, and make that your goal.

It is possible to apply for special testing accommodations, such as extended time, private testing, or frequent breaks. These are available to those who have a specific physical, psychological or learning disability. The test can also be provided in Braille and

Search [] OK

Questions? Ask Firstfind

First Things First: Reading Your Way to a Diploma

To be successful on any of the paths to a high school equivalency diploma, you will need to practice your reading skills. The one thing that all the paths have in common is the need to be able to:

- ▶ read fast enough to finish tests on time;
- ▶ read high school-level material without stumbling over too many words;
- ▶ understand most of what you are reading;
- ▶ use what you've read to answer questions; and
- ▶ be able to read different kinds of materials, such as poems, lines from a play, math formulas, cartoons and graphs.

One of the best ways to read better...is to read more! Do this by always having something handy to read. Libraries can help you with this. If you don't have a library card, you can get one from your local library. If you live or work in Westchester County you can get a library card for free. With a library card you can borrow books, magazines, and movies from any public library in Westchester County. You can download and stream audiobooks, movies and music, and also access online resources for study. Reading a book, magazine or graphic novel on your cellphone counts! No matter what you read, read often to be a better reader. The information on the TASC Reading subject test (*See page 19*), can be helpful no matter what path to a diploma you choose. There you will find a review of the types of reading skills that will help you pass tests in any subject area.

If you are having a hard time reading this guide, there's a chance that you will need to work on your reading skills first. Contact us at FirstFind.org to get help finding a skills improvement program.

If you live or work in Westchester County you can get a library card for free.



If You Have a Diploma from Another Country...

If you have a high school diploma or certificate from a country other than the United States, know that colleges will accept high school diplomas or certificates from foreign countries if they are equivalent to U.S. high school diplomas. A college Admissions Office can determine if the diploma is acceptable or not.

Employers or training programs may not be familiar with foreign high school diplomas, so it is recommended that foreign diplomas be evaluated by an official evaluation service.

If you have a college transcript from a country outside of the United States, most U.S. colleges require that foreign college transcripts be evaluated by an evaluation service. Contact the Admissions Office of the college you are applying to for more information. If you are applying to Westchester Community College, ask to speak to the Transfer Credit Evaluator or the International Students Counselor.

An evaluation service will charge anywhere from \$85 to \$150 to do a general evaluation of a foreign diploma. (Translation costs may be extra.) A full list of evaluation services can be found on [FirstFind.org > Get Your HS Diploma > Learn the Paths.](#)



The Four Paths to a High School Equivalency Diploma

Path #1 – The TASC

The TASC is an 8½ hour timed exam, usually given over the course of two days. It is composed of five subject tests (also called “subtests”):



Reading



Mathematics



Science



Writing



Social Studies

A good thing to know is that you don't have to get every question right—you have to pass each section. Any subject test that you pass you do not have to take again!

You can take the exam up to **three times each year** at no cost. If you take the TASC more than once, you must wait a minimum of 60 days after your last test before you can sign up to take the test again. You will need to provide a copy of the notice of the subject tests that you passed and failed when you sign up for the next test date. (Each notice is called a “New York State High School Equivalency Transcript.”) Details on the content of the subject tests and passing scores are in the next section of this guide—“The TASC Subject Tests” (*See page 17*).

The TASC is free of charge to any New York State resident who is 19 years of age or older and who does not have a high school diploma or HSE diploma. You have to have lived in New York State for at least 30 days before the date of the exam. If you are between the ages of 16 and 18, you must meet additional eligibility requirements, such as being enrolled in an alternative school or accepted in the U.S. military.

If you took a high school equivalency exam during 2002 and 2013, it was called the “GED.” Up to four passing scores from the GED can be counted towards subject tests on your TASC exam. You'll need to provide copies of your test results (transcripts) when you apply for the exam.

The TASC is offered in English and Spanish. If you take the TASC in Spanish and you wish to have an English High School Equivalency diploma, you may also take a test of English Proficiency. If you pass the proficiency test as well as the TASC, you will get an English High School Equivalency diploma.

If you have been out of school for a while, it can be helpful to enroll in a **TASC preparation class**. The instructors can help people at different skill levels, are familiar with the exams, and can keep you focused on just what you need to know. Sometimes the routine of a class can keep you moving forward. There are many times and locations for free or low-cost TASC classes. Some locations offer TASC preparation classes in Spanish. A selection of providers is available at the back of this guide (*See page 33*); a more complete and regularly updated list of Westchester-based programs (in English and Spanish) is available at [FirstFind.org > Get Your HS Diploma > Learn the Paths > TASC Test](#).

You do not have to attend a TASC preparation program in order to take the exam. **You can study on your own** or you may already have the skills you need to pass the exam. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to take some practice exams to become familiar with the way the questions are worded and the time it takes to answer them. Printed TASC study books cost from \$13-\$30 and include some practice tests. They are also available to borrow (at no charge) from public libraries. You can also try online practice tests linked on [FirstFind.org > Get Your HS Diploma > Ready for the Test?](#)

It is possible to apply for **special testing accommodations**, such as extended time, private testing, or frequent breaks. These are available to those who have a specific physical, psychological or learning disability. The test can also be provided in Braille and large-print editions. You will need to arrange for these accommodations with the test site you choose. Information on available accommodations and an application is available at [www.tasctest.com](#). Go to “Test Takers” and select “Accommodations for Disabilities.”

To take the TASC you need to complete an application and mail it to the local test center where you wish to take the test. Currently, there are three places to take the TASC in Westchester County. Contact information is available at the end of this guide. Information on the test center schedules, applications and more is available at [FirstFind.org > Get Your HS Diploma > Learn the Paths > TASC Test](#).

Note that test dates can fill up quickly. You may need to look at test centers in surrounding counties to find a date that suits your schedule. If you have a preference, be sure the date you select offers the TASC in the format you want—computer-based or paper-based.

The New York State Education Department website has information on how to apply to take the TASC, identify testing locations, and track down your high school or TASC transcript. Go to: www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse.

If you began working to pass the TASC test while in jail or state prison....

...be sure to ask for a copy of any passing scores (transcripts) when you take the TASC. Keep them in your facility folder and/or ask your education or reentry coordinator for copies. If you don't complete the TASC, you can take the exam again after your return to the community. At that time, you'll need to show those passing scores. You'll also need to be sure you register under the same name and ID number (SSN or other government ID) you used for the passing scores. If you are returning to Westchester County, go to the *Westchester Connections Guide*—an information resource specifically for those navigating reentry. **Go to:** connections.westchesterlibraries.org.

Path #2 – The Regents—HSE Exam Pathway

While you were in high school, did you take and pass any of the five Regents Exams offered in New York State? If you did, you may use a **maximum of four** of these passing Regents Exam scores to substitute for the same subject test on the TASC. For many, this is good news because you can then focus your studies on just one or two areas. You are still taking the TASC exam, but fewer subject tests!

The following table shows which Regents Exams will be credited for the corresponding TASC subject tests:

Regents Exam	HSE Subject Area Credit
Any Mathematics Regents Exam	TASC Mathematics
Any English Language Arts Regents Exam	TASC Reading and Writing
Any Social Studies Regents Exam	TASC Social Studies
Any Science Regents Exam	TASC Science

If you wish to use Regents Exam passing scores in place of a TASC subject test, you must complete an application called “Attachment R”. You send this application to the high school where you took the Regents Exams. The high school provides the transcripts and passing scores to the NY State Education Department (NYSED). This process takes 6–8 weeks.

You will receive in the U.S. mail the transcripts proving your passing scores. When you have these transcripts in hand, only then do you register for the TASC exam. Even if you passed all of your Regents Exams, you still need to take one TASC subject test to obtain your HSE diploma; it is up to you which one to take.

The application and more information on the Regents-HSE Exam Pathway are available at the NYSED website www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse and on FirstFind.org > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [Learn the Paths](#) > [Regents-HSE Exam Pathway](#).

Path #3 – The National External Diploma Program

The National External Diploma Program (NEDP) is a path for motivated, self-directed learners. It requires independent, computer-based work, most of which can be completed at home or wherever you have access to an internet-connected computer, such as at your local library. NEDP is a good choice for those who may not be able to attend a traditional TASC class on a regular basis.

To be successful in the NEDP, you will need organizational skills and the discipline to learn on your own. The work you will do builds on both academic and practical skills you've gained through life and work experiences. Most NEDP students complete the program in one year. The amount of time you can devote to the program determines the length of time needed to finish.

NEDP independent work is project-based. To demonstrate your knowledge and skills, the projects you do will include tasks such as:

- ▶ reading and analyzing short stories and films;
- ▶ analyzing a household budget and identifying ways to save money;
- ▶ writing a consumer complaint letter; and
- ▶ researching a science issue in the news and showing how it affects our lives.

The work that you complete will be checked and reviewed by an NEDP “Assessor.” You will schedule regular appointments with the Assessor to review your progress. The appointments with the Assessor are flexible and can work around most schedules.

There are NEDP programs available locally in Yonkers, New Rochelle, and the Bronx. Some programs are free and some charge fees. To enroll in a program, you must take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to assess reading and math skills. You must obtain a minimum TABE score of 9th grade equivalency or higher in Math and Reading to be accepted into the NEDP pathway. Additional exams to assess your knowledge and skills for independent work will be given.



REQUIREMENT:

**Independent,
computer-
based work.**

You can find more information on the NEDP from the NY State Education Department at www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/fast-facts-about-national-external-diploma-program.

Information on NEDP programs available in Westchester County is available at FirstFind.org > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [Learn the Paths](#) > [NEDP](#).

Path #4 –The 24 College Credit Program

The 24 College Credit Program allows you to earn your high school equivalency diploma while at the same time earning college credits at a community college.

If admitted to the 24 College Credit Program, you will take placement tests and must complete 24 credits within the following subjects:

- ▶ 6 credits in English Language Arts
- ▶ 3 credits in Mathematics
- ▶ 3 credits in Natural Science
- ▶ 3 credits in Social Science
- ▶ 3 credits in Humanities
- ▶ 6 credits in Career and Technical Education or Foreign Languages

The fee in 2018 for these courses is \$183 per credit, plus fees.

When you complete the remaining 36 credits required for the Associates Degree, that diploma will be issued by the Community College.
(More credits may be required depending on your major.)

The college does not issue your high school diploma. Once you have passed all classes required by New York State Department of Education, your diploma will be issued by the New York State Department of Education.

COST:

\$183 per credit, plus fees (in 2018)

CREDITS NEEDED:

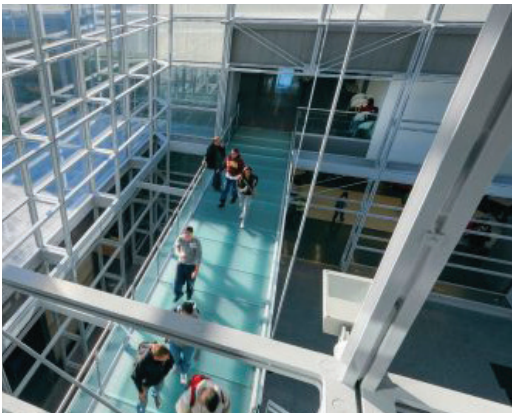
24

To be eligible for this program:

- ▶ You must be at least 17 years of age.
- ▶ Your high school class must have already graduated.
- ▶ You must currently be a resident of New York State, and have been for a least one month.
- ▶ You must take the appropriate “College Placement Tests” and meet the minimum scores for admission.
- ▶ You may be requested to have a personal interview with an academic advisor and submit supporting documentation to the college.

The 24 Credit Program is currently available at Westchester Community College. The placement tests for the 24 Credit Program (and for most Community Colleges) are called **ACCUPLACER Tests**. You can take these tests in advance (on **FirstFind.org**) to get a sense of how well you’d do.

For more information, go to [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org) > Get Your HS Diploma > Learn the Paths > 24 Credit Program.



TASC Subject Tests

This section of the guide provides details on the TASC subject tests. We review the specific types of questions and the common terms and ideas that are used in each subject test. Be familiar with these so the format and language doesn't surprise you and you are better prepared to do well!

The TASC test is composed of five subject tests.



Reading



Mathematics



Science



Writing



Social Studies

A passing score for each of the five subject tests is 500 out of 800. Altogether, you need a passing score of 2,500 to obtain your high school diploma. In addition, Part 2 of the Writing test (the essay) requires a passing score of 2 out of 8.

**PASSING SCORE FOR
EACH SUBJECT TEST:**

500 out of 800

TOTAL PASSING SCORE:

**2500 (plus at
least 2 out of 8
on the essay)**



The chart below gives details on the number of questions and the time given for each subject test. A rough percentage of content in each subject test is provided.

Subject	Questions	Time	Content
Reading	51 questions	85 minutes	Informational Text (70%; approx 8 passages) Literary Texts (30%)
Writing	Part 1: 50 questions	65 minutes	Grammar and Usage (40%) Punctuation/Spelling (25%) Text Types and Purposes (20%)
	Part 2: Essay	45 minutes	Knowledge of Language (15%)
Mathematics	58 Questions		Algebra (26%) Functions (26%) Geometry (23%) Numbers and Quantity (13%) Statistics/Probability (12%)
	Part 1: With calculator	55 minutes	
	Part 2: No calculator	50 minutes	
Social Studies	49 questions	75 minutes	US History (25%) Civics/ Government (25%) Economics (20%) World History (15%) Geography (15%)
Science	51 questions	75 minutes	Physical Science (36%) Life Sciences (36%) Earth/Space Sciences (28%)

* Based on 2017 exams.

Sample test questions for each subject test are available for download from the TASC website, www.tasctest.com. Go to “Test Takers” and “Preparing for the TASC Test.”



Reading

Number of questions: 51

Time: 85 minutes

The Reading test measures your ability to understand and analyze written passages. You are asked to read a passage and then answer several questions about it. You will have 75 minutes to answer 51 questions, which will be based on 7 or 8 passages of text.

The Reading test emphasizes **informational text**. It is important that you understand not only what the author has written about but also the **purpose** or reason why he or she wrote the passage. Informational passages have one or more of the following purposes: to narrate, to inform, to persuade, and/or to entertain.

When analyzing text, you may be asked to read passages that have **opposing arguments** about the same topic. You may also be asked to interpret text containing **graphic information**. Graphic information is an illustration, photograph or diagram that helps you to understand the information. On the Reading test, you may need to combine information from text and graphics to **draw a conclusion** and to **make observations** about how the graphic supports the information in the text.

You may be asked to decide whether something you've read is a **fact** or an **opinion**. A fact is a statement that can be proven to be true. An opinion is an idea that is believed but cannot be proven to be true.

You may be asked to make **inferences** about what you read. Writers don't always directly state their meanings. When they don't make direct statements, readers have to make inferences or "read between the lines." When you have to combine what the text says with what it might mean, you are making an inference. As you read, look for clues to the author's message. Put those clues together with what you know in real life. When you bring the clues and your knowledge together you can make an inference about what the author means to say.

You will be asked to **compare and contrast** two or more things or ideas about what you have read. To compare them is to look for similarities between them. To contrast them is to look for the differences between them. (You may also be asked to do this on the essay section of the exam you choose.)

You may be asked to **draw a conclusion** about what you've read. This means “putting together” what you've read in order for you to come up with a new idea or understanding about something, or deciding what information makes the best sense in a given situation.

You may be asked questions about **time and order**. In other words, what happened when and in what order did it happen? This is an important skill to have when you are reading passages in the Social Studies and Science tests.

You may be asked questions about **cause and effect**. In other words, if something is being described or explained to you in what you are reading, you may be expected to know if one action or event was caused or influenced by another action or event. Did one thing lead to another? This is especially something you can expect to see in the science test.



You may be asked how a writer used figurative language or a **“figure of speech”** to get a point across. In other words, did the writer say one thing but really mean something else? Sayings like, “My love is like a red, red rose,” “I smell a rat,” or “Between a rock and a hard place” are examples of figurative language. Other questions may ask you to identify the **main idea** in a reading passage, the writer’s **point of view**, the **tone** of voice the writer is using, or the **mood** the writer is trying to express.

You need to have many different reading skills to be successful on any pathway to a high school diploma. If you do not already have these skills, there are lots of good online resources to help you, as well as videos, audiobooks, and workbooks. You might also think about getting into an adult reading program, or getting a tutor to help you improve your reading skills. Resources to learn more about the terms mentioned in this section and to build your skills are available at [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org) > [Get Your HS Diploma](https://www.firstfind.org) > [Skills Review](https://www.firstfind.org).



Writing: Part 1

Time: 65 minutes

Number of Questions: 50 questions

In Part 1 of the Writing test, you will be expected to correct errors in the written materials that are provided. For example, you could be given a business letter or memo, a set of instructions on how to do something, or a document that just gives information about a topic. You will be shown sentences that need to be corrected and four choices for making the correction.

There are three different ways in which the questions about the sentences will be asked:

1) Sentence Correction – In this type of question, you will be given a sentence to read and then asked, “What correction should be made to this sentence?” From the answers given, you will choose the answer that makes the sentence correct. However, about half of the sentences you are given to correct will not really have an error in them. For these questions choose the answer that reads, “No correction is necessary.”

2) Sentence Revision – In this type of question, you will be given a sentence to read, and part of the sentence will be underlined. You will have to choose the answer that makes the underlined part of the sentence correct. Out of four possible answers, the first one will always be written the same way the underlined part of the sentence is written. In other words, choosing this answer means that there is no need to make a correction to the sentence.

3) Construction shift – In this type of question, you will be given a sentence and asked to “rewrite” the sentence. The test question will direct you to rewrite the sentence by beginning it in a different way, or by combining it with another sentence. However, you won’t have to do any actual writing. Instead you will choose one of the answers provided in the test.

The most common errors that test takers make are in the following four areas:

1) Mechanics

- ▶ **Capitalization** – Using capital letters where needed.
- ▶ **Punctuation** – Using commas correctly.
- ▶ **Spelling** – Using apostrophes (') and homonyms correctly. Homonyms are words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings, like right and write.

2) **Usage** – Mainly using verbs and pronouns correctly.

3) **Sentence Structure** – Putting the parts of a sentence together correctly, and using the above mechanics and usage correctly.

4) **Organization** – Making sure that sentences and paragraphs are in the best order.

For example, you may be asked to look at a business letter and decide if one or more of the sentences or paragraphs should be moved to different place in the letter in order to improve the way the letter reads.



TIP:

**Read one
news story
every day.**



Writing: Part 2 (The Essay)

Time: 45 minutes

Number of Questions: 1 Essay

In Part 2 of the Writing test, you will be expected to write an essay of about 200 words, which is 3 to 5 paragraphs or one full page of writing. You will be given a topic for your essay and asked to give an opinion, state a point of view, or explain something. There are no minimum word or paragraph requirements. What is needed is a well developed and supported argument or idea.

You must write either an informative essay or an argumentative essay, based on two short texts that you will read.

- ▶ The **informative essay** is a neutral, non-judgmental report that explains something to the reader **without** giving your opinion.
- ▶ The **argumentative** essay gives information, but also presents your opinion on the subject. This type of essay presents both supporting and opposing ideas on or about a topic.

To prepare, practice writing a 3 to 5 paragraph argumentative or informative essay based on texts you read. To succeed on the essay:

1. **Fully read the questions and the texts.** As you read the texts provided on the practice test, think about what details from the texts that you might use in your essay.
2. **Draft your essay.** After reading the texts, create an outline for your essay. Think about ideas, facts, details, other information and examples. Determine how you will introduce your topic or claim, the main focus for each paragraph, and how you will end or summarize your essay. Remember to provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument or information presented.

Be sure to:

- ▶ **stick to the topic** throughout your essay;
- ▶ **explain** why you think what you do about the topic and give good examples and details to back up what you think; and
- ▶ present your thoughts in an **organized and clear way**.

Want to practice now? Go to [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org) > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [Skills Review](#).



TIP:

To prepare practice writing a 3–5 paragraph essay on something you've read.



Mathematics

Number of Questions: 58

There are two parts to the Mathematics test:

Part One: (A TI 30xs calculator will be provided for this part of the test)

Time: 55 minutes

Part Two: (No calculators allowed)

Time: 50 minutes

Whether you take the paper or computer versions of the TASC, **you will have access to a scientific calculator for Part 1 of the Mathematics test.** The testing site will provide the calculator. If you need to learn how to use a scientific calculator, YouTube has some great videos on the TI 30x allowed in the exam. Additional resources are available at FirstFind.org > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [TASC Test](#).

The Mathematics test measures your ability to reason with numbers. Questions on this test will target skills such as:

- ▶ performing number operations to solve problems;
- ▶ solving word problems;
- ▶ understanding proportions and percentages;
- ▶ interpreting graphic representations of data;
- ▶ finding averages;
- ▶ understanding and performing operations with algebraic expressions;
- ▶ solving linear and quadratic equations; and
- ▶ solving problems using geometric formulas.

1	/	2		
	●	/	/	
•	•	•	•	•
0	0	0	0	0
●	1	1	1	1
2	2	●	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

		3	/	6
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•	•	•	•	•
0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	●	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	●
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

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•	•	•	●	•
0	0	●	0	0
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	●
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

Most questions on the Mathematics test will be multiple choice. Some of the questions will ask you to enter a numerical answer into a grid; numbers may be entered from either the right or the left.

On the Mathematics test, you will be expected to do more than just **calculate whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and percentages**. You will be asked to use these math skills to solve **word problems**. In other words, before you can do the calculations, you will have to understand what a word problem is asking in order to know the steps to solving the problems.

In addition to basic math skills, you will be expected to use some other math skills, such as **ratio** and **proportion**, and solve some **algebra** and **geometry** problems. A graphic or visual aid (such as a graph or chart) will be used in about 25 of the math problems.

The formulas that you will need to use to solve the geometry problems (and other problems in the math and science sections) will come with the test. However, the list of formulas will not show you how to use the formulas. You will need to know that before you take the test.

Some things you should know for the Mathematics test:

In **word problems**, many different words can be used to say the same thing. It is important to know what the different key words are for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. For example, any of these words – sum, plus, increase, more, combine and altogether – could be used in an addition word problem.

Several of the math questions will be what are called **set-up problems**. In these types of problems you are not asked to come up with an answer. Instead, you will be asked to show what steps you would take to solve the problem.

In some of the word problems, you may not be given enough information or numbers to solve the problem. The skill is to know that you cannot solve the problem and to choose the answer on the test that says, “not enough information is given.” There will be two or three of these types of questions on the test.

Last but not least, an important skill on a timed test is to be able to estimate, or make an educated guess, about what the answer is to a problem. Take a moment to think whether or not the answers you chose make sense.

Start working on solving the different types of math problems you will encounter. Go to [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org) > [Get Your HS Diploma > Skills Review](#).





Social Studies

Number of questions: 49

Time: 75 minutes

The Social Studies test is made up of reading passages and graphics (such as maps), cartoons and graphs. The reading passage or graphic is followed by several questions.

You will not be expected to recall social studies facts or information from memory, such as what year World War II began or the name of the 12th President of the United States. The information you need to answer the questions will come from the reading passages and graphics provided in the test.

Most of the reading is about topics that you would study in high school and about issues that you might see discussed in a newspaper or on TV. You can expect to read and answer questions about at least one “practical” document, such as a voter’s guide or tax form. Finally, you will see at least one U.S. historical document, such as the Declaration of Independence.

The social studies topics you encounter on the test will come from five subject areas:

- ▶ **United States History** – Past events in the United States.
- ▶ **Geography** – About the earth and its people.
- ▶ **Civics and Government** – How the government works or should work.
- ▶ **Economics** – How goods and services are produced and used.
- ▶ **World History** – Topics such as the beginnings and development of human societies as well as political and economic revolutions and the causes and consequences of wars in the modern era.

The questions you are asked will address:

- ▶ **Comprehension** – Understanding what you have read.
- ▶ **Application** – Using what you’ve read to solve a problem or make a decision.
- ▶ **Evaluation** – Making a value judgment about what you have read.
- ▶ **Analysis** – Comparing or contrasting the ideas, information, or data that were presented in the reading.
- ▶ **Interpretation** – Identifying trends or make inferences from the data presented.

Get familiar with the social studies topics and resources for improving your ability to work with the information in charts and graphs at

[FirstFind.org](#) > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [Skills Review](#).

TIP:

Keep up with current events as most of the reading is about topics discussed in the newspaper or on TV.





Science

Number of questions: 51

Time: 75 minutes

The Science test evaluates your ability to understand, interpret, and apply scientific information. Most questions will be multiple choice, but you may also see multiple-response selections.

The subject areas are:

- ▶ **Life Science** – Topics include cell structures and processes, human body systems, health and nutrition, reproduction, evolution and the organization of ecosystems.
- ▶ **Earth and Space Science** – Topics include the structure of earth, natural resources, weather and climate, the solar system and the universe.
- ▶ **Physical Science** – Topics include atoms and molecules, properties and states of matter, chemical reactions, energy and work, electricity and magnetism.



You can get familiar with the science vocabulary and topics by using resources at your library. You can also go to [FirstFind.org](https://www.firstfind.org) > [Get Your HS Diploma](#) > [Skills Review](#).

TASC TEST TAKING TIPS!

- ▶ Read the instructions carefully before starting each test.
- ▶ Don't get hung up on reading something over and over again if you don't understand it. You're better off moving on to the next reading or question and getting right what you do understand. Remember, some of the easier questions may come toward the end of the test!
- ▶ Don't spend too much time on one answer! The time averages out to less than two minutes for each question. And that includes the time it takes you to get through the readings that come before the questions!
- ▶ Take quick notes or draw a simple picture or diagram to help you figure out something that seems complicated. You will be given scratch paper to do this.
- ▶ It's okay to skip questions, but make sure you skip them on the answer sheet also. Remember if you finish the test ahead of time, you can go back and try to answer, or at least guess at, the questions you skipped. Whatever you do, do not leave any answers blank.
- ▶ On a lot of multiple-choice tests, where you have five answers to choose from, there are usually two, if not three, answers that make no sense in terms of what you've just read. If you can spot these and eliminate them, you will have fewer answers to choose from. It's a test-taking skill called the "process of elimination." If you don't understand the idea, try to read more about it in the TASC preparation books.
- ▶ Remember the common sense lesson you probably learned as a young child: If you don't ask the right question, you'll never come up with the right answer. In other words, make sure you know what the question is asking before you choose an answer.

- ▶ Read carefully the information the test center sent to you so that you'll know what to bring with you the day of the test — **don't forget your picture I.D.!**
- ▶ Get a good night's sleep and have a good breakfast.
- ▶ Bring your lunch with you, just in case you don't get enough time during the lunch break to find some place to eat.
- ▶ Bring a watch — just in case there's no clock in the room, or so that you won't have to spend time looking up at the wall if there is a clock in the room.



WESTCHESTER COUNTY PROGRAMS

This is a selected list of groups and locations that can help you toward your goal. You can write, call, or visit their web sites to learn about specific course schedules and locations. Note that classes generally meet a few times each week. Most classes are free, but may have a registration or materials fee. An expanded and regularly updated list of these programs is available at FirstFind.org.

The Guidance Center

256 Washington Street, Mount Vernon, NY 10553
(914) 613-0700 x7099

<http://www.theguidancecenter.org/vocational-services/>

TASC classes in several locations; also sponsors the NEDP program.

New Rochelle Public Library

1 Library Plaza, New Rochelle, NY

(914) 632-7878 | <http://nrpl.org/adults/help-learning/>

Free weekly TASC tutoring and monthly information sessions.

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES (PNW BOCES)

200 BOCES Drive, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

(914) 248- 2414 | <https://www.pnwboces.org/adulted/>

TASC classes in several locations; Yorktown location is also a TASC testing center.

Southern Westchester BOCES, Center for Adult and Community Services

65 Grasslands Road, Valhalla, NY 10595

(914) 937-3829 | (914) 637-1936 | (914) 347-2314

<https://adulted.swboces.org/hseprep/>

TASC classes in several locations; courses offered in both English and Spanish.



Note that classes generally meet a few times each week. Most classes are free, but may have a registration or materials fee.

SUNY Westchester Educational Opportunity Center of Westchester (EOC)

26 South Broadway, Yonkers, NY 10701

(914) 606-7620 | <http://www.sunywcc.edu/locations/eoc/>

TASC classes offered at several locations; Yonkers location is also a TASC testing center.

VIVE / Yonkers Pathways to Success

75 Riverdale Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10701

(914) 376-8612 | <https://www.yonkerspublicschools.org>. Go to “Schools & Programs” and “Specialty Schools.”

TASC classes and an NEDP sponsor; this location coordinates TASC testing.

Westchester Community College

75 Grasslands Road, Valhalla, NY 10595

(914) 606-6600 | <http://www.sunywcc.edu/admissions/admissions-information/ged/>

Offers 24 Credit Program as part of Associates Degree as well as other adult education opportunities. Extension Centers in several locations may make it easier for you to get to classes; for more information to to: <http://www.sunywcc.edu/locations/extension-center-faqs/>

Yonkers Public Library

1 Larkin Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701

(914) 337-1500 | <http://www.ypl.org/tasc/>

Free TASC tutoring several days each week.

Your Westchester Library System

Libraries help you to identify and learn how to use tools that help to get a job, an education, and enrich your life. They offer classes and one-to-one assistance in accessing databases and devices. All library programs and resources are free. Think of them when you want to bring your child to storytelling and crafts programs, borrow or watch a movie, use a computer, join a discussion group, or simply want to sit quietly to read, study, plan and imagine.

There are 38 public libraries in Westchester County with resources that can help you toward your goal. Each library is independent, but they work cooperatively through the Westchester Library System, so you can borrow books and uses resources at any of our locations. Find your way to the one nearest you.

Ardasley	(914) 693-6636	Mount Kisco	(914) 666-8041
Armonk	(914) 273-3887	Mount Pleasant	(914) 769-0548
Bedford Hills	(914) 666-6472	Mount Vernon	(914) 668-1840
Bedford	(914) 234-3570	New Rochelle	(914) 632-7878
Briarcliff Manor	(914) 941-7072	North Salem	(914) 669-5161
Bronxville	(914) 337-7680	Ossining	(914) 941-2416
Chappaqua	(914) 238-4779	Peekskill	(914) 737-1212
Croton	(914) 271-6612	Pelham	(914) 738-1234
Dobbs Ferry	(914) 693-6614	Port Chester/Rye Brook	(914) 939-6710
Eastchester	(914) 793-5055	Pound Ridge	(914) 764-5085
Greenburgh	(914) 721-8200	Purchase	(914) 948-0550
Harrison	(914) 835-0324	Rye	(914) 967-0480
Hastings	(914) 478-3307	Scarsdale	(914) 722-1300
Irvington	(914) 591-7840	Somers	(914) 232-5717
Katonah	(914) 232-3508	Tarrytown	(914) 631-7734
Larchmont	(914) 834-2281	Tuckahoe	(914) 961-2121
Lewisboro	(914) 763-3857	White Plains	(914) 422-1400
Mamaroneck	(914) 698-1250	Yonkers	(914) 337-1500
Montrose	(914) 739-5654	Yorktown	(914) 245-5262



Empowering libraries. Empowering communities.