

Standardized Testing Glossary of Terms



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Columbia University
Office of Work/Life
School and Child Care Search Service

Glossary of Test Related Terms

(Reference List: *P* = Public; *I* = Independent; *SN* = Special Needs; *R* = Religious; *A* = All)

TERM	DEFINITION
Academic Aptitude	The type of learning ability that is needed to succeed at school work.
Achievement Test	An evaluation of acquired information, abilities, or skills.
Aptitude Test	An evaluation used for estimating ability to learn or acquire skills in one or more areas.
Committee on Special Education (CSE)(P, SN)	The CSE assists public and private school students who might need special education services by referring them for a variety of assessments.
Early Intervention (A):	Free evaluation and services available for very young children birth to age three who have developmental or physical problems such as cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional and or adaptive delays.
<u>Educational Records Bureau (ERB):</u>	Many schools will require testing from ERB for admission. Younger students will take the Early Childhood Admissions Assessment (ECEE), while students applying for Middle School and High School will take the Independent Schools Entrance Exam (ISEE). There is a fee for this test; however a fee reduction is available .
<u>Gifted and Talented Programs (G&T)(P):</u>	School or program available in some schools for students determined to be “exceptional” by free tests administered by the Department of Education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are selected to enter Kindergarten through Grade 2 G&T classes based on the results of two tests, the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) and the The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). • Some gifted programs are open to students who live outside the program’s school zone or district. • G&T programs often teach material that is accelerated above the student’s grade level. • Hunter College Elementary School, a free G&T public school run by Hunter College separate from the DOE, limits admission to Manhattan students entering Kindergarten only and requires students to take a modified Stanford-Binet test for which there is a fee.
Group Test	A test that can be administered to a number of students simultaneously by a single examiner. Example. ISEE
Individual Test	A test that can be administered to only one individual at a time.

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Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (SN):	<p>A document that describes the special needs of students who need special education services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s IEP determines the services, modifications, and aids to be provided to the child. • The IEP also includes the student’s present level of educational performance and a list of measurable annual learning and achievement goals for the student.
Mean	The average score of a group.
Median	The middle score obtained by a group of students. It corresponds to the 50th percentile and divides the top half of the class from the bottom half.
Multiple-choice Items	A type of objective test item that requires the student to choose the correct or best answer from three or more choices offered.
Norm	A single value (or score) or range of values (or scores) constituting the usual performance of a given group that serves as a reference by which to gauge the performance of other individuals who take the test.
Norm Group	A group used as the criterion for gauging test scores. One Norm Group for the tests administered by ERB is a large-scale nationally representative sample of public schools. A second ERB Norm Group is based on member suburban public schools, and a third ERB Norm Group is based on member independent schools.
Objective Test	An examination that can be scored objectively with a scoring key in contrast to a free-response or essay type of examination that requires the grader to use subjective judgment.
Percentile or Percentile Rank	A rating with a possible range of 1 to 99 that indicates the percent of individuals in the Norm Group that fall below a given score. It does not represent the number of items answered correctly.
Raw Score	The initial score obtained before conversion to a Scaled Score. It may be the number of right responses, the number of right responses reduced by a proportion of the wrong responses, or the number of responses in a given category.
Reliability	The degree of consistency, stability, or dependability of a test.
Scaled Score	A uniform score range, derived by formula, indicating how far a Raw Score is from the Mean in terms of Standard Deviation units. Used to compare similar but different tests.

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Special Education (A):	<p>A set of services determined by qualification through free evaluation and IEP. The services which children with disabilities have a right to receive in order to meet their individual needs can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specially designed instruction, • occupational or speech therapy, • supplemental aids and supports.
Special Needs (A):	Children who have developmental or physical problems such as cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional and or adaptive delays, and might require special services or accommodations.
Standard Deviation	A basic measure of variability of a distribution in both directions from the average score.
Standardized Tests	An objective examination administered under carefully prescribed conditions, scored according to definite rules, yielding results that can be evaluated in terms of established norms.
Stanine (Standard Nine)	A score from 1 to 9, with 5 as the midpoint. Stanines are derived by dividing the entire range of students' scores into nine segments
Validity	The extent to which a test measures what it is designed to measure.