

## EXPLORE

The EXPLORE test assists students and their parents in five areas – preparation for the future, academic development, high school course selection, career planning and needs assessment.

Your student will receive a comprehensive easy-to-understand report on her/his results. The report indicates the responses your student chose, and if the response was incorrect, the correct response is provided. The test booklet is returned to your student with the results.

The EXPLORE test also:

- measures academic development in the areas of English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning.
- bases test scores on the number of questions answered correctly. There is no penalty for guessing.
- identifies academic strengths and weaknesses.
- defines what students are likely to know and what they should be able to do based on their test scores.
- compares results to the EXPLORE College Readiness Benchmark scores.
- supports meaningful course selection in high school.
- provides information on students' interests and plans.
- helps identify career interests and relates these to educational and training requirements.
- gives students the opportunity to indicate areas of special concern in which they feel they need assistance.
- predicts how well students will do on PLAN as 10<sup>th</sup> graders.
- provides excellent practice for PLAN because it covers the same content- English, math, reading and science reasoning – and has the same type of questions.



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#### Additional Resources:

- EXPLORE student website  
<http://www.actstudent.org/explore>  
Telephone: (319) 337-1000
- Parent resources from ACT  
<http://www.act.org/path/parent>  
Telephone: (319) 337-1000
- West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission  
<http://wvhpcnew.wvnet.edu>  
Telephone: (304) 558-2101
- PROMISE Scholarship  
<http://promisescholarships.org>  
Telephone: 1.877.WVPROMISE
- WV Clearinghouse  
<http://wvclear.wvstateu.edu>  
Telephone: (304) 766-4245



Dr. Steven L. Paine  
State Superintendent of Schools  
West Virginia Department of Education



# ACT™

## EXPLORE

Office of Assessment, Accountability and Research  
Division of Curriculum and Instructional Services

West Virginia Department of Education

## FOREWORD

Eighth grade is a time to prepare for high school. Preparing for change is not easy; however, preparing for change without sufficient information is even more difficult. West Virginia provides ACT EXPLORE, for eighth grade students, which is administered in October to measure your student's knowledge of English, mathematics, reading and science. EXPLORE includes a career interest inventory, course information survey and needs assessment to initiate career exploration and school planning.

The information provided by EXPLORE is valuable as you and your student make decisions to prepare for high school and the 21<sup>st</sup> century world that awaits her/him. Your student will be able to compare her/his results to the EXPLORE College Readiness Benchmark scores to determine if she/he is on track to achieve her/his college and/or career goals.



Steven L. Paine  
State Superintendent of Schools

## ACT EXPLORE

The EXPLORE Program contains academic tests in four curriculum areas: English, mathematics, reading and science. These tests are designed to measure student attainment of the curriculum-related knowledge and complex critical thinking skills that are acquired in junior high or middle school. All of these skills are important for later education and careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The EXPLORE academic tests have a content relationship to both PLAN (10<sup>th</sup> grade program) and ACT Assessment. EXPLORE provides students with an early indication of their educational progress in the context of the post-high school educational plans and career options they are considering. The results from EXPLORE can be used to help students select course work that will prepare them for what they want to do during and after high school.

## Academic Tests

### EXPLORE English Test

★ A thirty-minute, 40-item test that measures the student's understanding of the conventions of standard written English (punctuation, grammar and usage, and sentence structure) and of rhetorical skills (strategy, organization and style).

### EXPLORE Mathematics Test

★ A thirty-minute, 30-item test that measures the student's level of mathematics achievement. Emphasis is on the solution of practical quantitative problems that require skills encountered in junior high and middle school courses.

### EXPLORE Reading Test

★ A thirty-minute, 30-item test that measures the student's level of reading comprehension as a product of referring and reasoning skills. The test

requires students to derive meaning from several reading passages by: (1) referring to what is explicitly stated and (2) reasoning to determine implicit meanings and to draw conclusions, comparisons and generalizations.

### EXPLORE Science Test

★ A 30-minute, 28-item test that measures a student's scientific reasoning skills acquired through grade eight. The scientific information is conveyed in one of three different formats: data representation, research summaries or conflicting viewpoints. Materials are drawn from the life sciences, Earth/space sciences (e.g., geology, astronomy and meteorology) and physical sciences.

## Additional Components

- *Getting Ready for High School and Beyond*  
Provides helpful information about EXPLORE for students and parents and practical hints for making a successful transition into high school.
- *Career Interest Inventory*  
Helps students explore personally relevant career options.
- *Needs Assessment*  
Collects information about students' perceived needs.
- *Plans and Background Information*  
Gathers information about students' school coursework plans, education, career plans after high school and other relevant information.

Your student's EXPLORE results will be used during discussions to develop her/his Individualized Student Transition Plan (ISTP) for 9th and 10th grades.

For additional information contact your student's school counselor.