ETS® Proficiency Profile Content

The ETS® Proficiency Profile was developed to measure and demonstrate the outcomes of general education programs in order to help institutions improve the quality of instruction and learning. It is a test of college-level skills in reading, writing, critical thinking and mathematics designed to measure the academic skills developed through general education courses, rather than the subject knowledge specifically taught in those courses.

All of the subject knowledge required to answer each question is contained in the question itself or the supporting materials that accompany the question.

Skills Measured

Reading
College-level reading questions measure students’ ability to:
- interpret the meaning of key terms
- recognize the primary purpose of a passage
- recognize explicitly presented information
- make appropriate inferences
- recognize rhetorical devices

Writing
College-level writing questions measure students’ ability to:
- recognize the most grammatically correct revision of a clause, sentence or group of sentences
- organize units of language for coherence and rhetorical effect
- recognize and reword figurative language
- organize elements of writing into larger units of meaning

Critical Thinking
Critical thinking questions measure students’ ability to:
- distinguish between rhetoric and argumentation in a piece of nonfiction prose
- recognize assumptions
- recognize the best hypothesis to account for information presented
- infer and interpret a relationship between variables
- draw valid conclusions based on information presented

Mathematics
Mathematics questions measure students’ ability to:
- recognize and interpret mathematical terms
- read and interpret tables and graphs
- evaluate formulas
- order and compare large and small numbers
- interpret ratios, proportions, and percentages
- read scientific measuring instruments
- recognize and use equivalent mathematical formulas or expressions