

SMOOTHER SAILING IN YOUR TEACHING

TRIANGLE
EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS

BY KNOWING HOW YOUR CHILD LEARNS BEST

NEEDS / QUESTIONS:

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How To Choose A Cognitive Ability Test by Debbie Thompson

COGNITIVE ABILITY OR APTITUDE TESTS attempt to measure a student's cognitive reasoning abilities. They help you know "how" information is learned. (An achievement test measures what a student knows.) A cognitive ability or aptitude test measures how well a student can process information and solve problems, demonstrates capability for learning, and helps predict future academic success.

Many public and private schools use these tests for entry into their Academically Gifted programs.

The most common ability tests used in homeschool are the Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®) and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test® (OLSAT®). The CogAT is a companion product to the Iowa achievement test. The OLSAT is a companion to the Stanford achievement test. Though the CogAT can be ordered independently from the Iowa test, the OLSAT paper version usually is ordered when ordering the Stanford test.

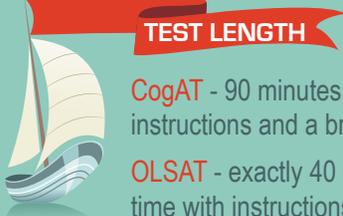


OLSAT

The OLSAT can also be administered beginning in second grade and through 12th grade, and consists of two sections, a verbal and a non-verbal section. The levels for the OLSAT are:

Level C: grade 2	Level F: grades 6 – 8
Level D: grade 3	Level G: grades 9 – 12
Level E: grades 4 – 5	

(A very few gifted programs might have OLSATs done for Gr K and 1.)



TEST LENGTH

CogAT - 90 minutes of working time. (The total testing time with instructions and a break is approximated at around 145 minutes.)

OLSAT - exactly 40 minutes of working time. (The total testing time with instructions and a break is approximated at around 60 minutes.)

EXTRA REPORT

The CogAT scores can be input into an interactive website which then gives you an instructional strategies report. This report can be very helpful to your understanding how to teach to your child's learning style, strengths, and weaknesses.

EMBARGOS

Sometimes a test publisher restricts the use of a test in a certain area. You cannot purchase the test if it is embargoed.

While the CogAT and OLSAT tests measure cognitive ability, most states require that a true IQ test is supervised by a licensed psychologist. The most commonly used IQ tests are the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, (also known as the WISC test), the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities, and the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children. These tests would allow you to assess if your child is working at their ability or below it, or above it. They usually cost quite a bit more than the CogAT or OLSAT but yield information concerning such things as short term memory, long term memory, cognitive fluency, visual-auditory learning, spatial relations and more. They help to diagnose learning differences, and are used in developing IEP or 504 plans for testing accommodations or modifications.

Triangle Education Assessments carries the CogAT and OLSAT.

Debbie Thompson (www.TriangleEd.com) is Director at Triangle Education Assessments in Apex, NC, and helps thousands of homeschoolers each year with their achievement, cognitive, college credit, career and practice testing needs. For questions, email TEA at info@triangleed.com or call toll-free (877-843-8837)

CogAT

The CogAT can be administered for grades 2 (must be at least 81 months old) through grade 12. The test consists of three parts: a verbal battery, a non-verbal battery, and a quantitative battery. The levels for the CogAT are as follows:

Level A: grades 2 and 3	Level E: grade 7
Level B: grade 4	Level F: grades 8 and 9
Level C: grade 5	Level G: grades 10 and 11
Level D: grade 6	Level H: grade 12

(A very few gifted programs might have CogATs done for Gr K and 1.)

TEST FORMAT

Test Format:

Paper: CogAT Gr 2 -12

Paper: OLSAT: Gr 2-12

TEST ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The publishers of the CogAT and the paper version of the OLSAT require the Test Administrator to have at least a Bachelor's degree in order to administer the test. (NC law allows parents to administer these to their children, if they abide by the publisher's rules and instructions.)

QUICKEST RESULTS

CogAT hand scoring option, (additional fee): results in 1 week.
CogAT machine scoring: a couple of weeks.

GROUP TESTING

CogAT: all levels may test together.
OLSAT: Levels E through G (Gr 4 – 12) may test together.

