



What is the CogAT® (Cognitive Abilities Test) and Why Use It?

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THE Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) is a widely used group administered ability test. First developed and published in 1954 as the Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence test, it has been revised several times over the years to its current version: CogAT (Form 6). It is often used to identify gifted students and helps the parent understand their children's cognitive strengths and weaknesses and learning styles. Someone with at least a BA degree can administer these tests. Though the CogAT does not fulfill most states' homeschool testing requirements, it is very often used by home, traditional and private schools to assess academic giftedness or "learning style." It is very similar in use and purpose to the OLSAT (Otis-Lennon School Ability Test).

Supplemental Multi-page Instructions and Strategies Report!

An interactive website (www.cogat.com) can be accessed after doing the CogAT so that you can print out a report of teaching tips tailored especially to your child's cognitive

strengths and weaknesses (sample online supplemental strategies CogAT report.)

What does the CogAT measure?

CogAT measures students' abilities in reasoning and problem solving using verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal (spatial) symbols. Sequential, inductive, and quantitative reasoning abilities are assessed. These reasoning abilities develop and change over time and are good predictors of school success.

Riverside Publishing publishes the test and describes the three batteries in this manner (<http://www.riversidepublishing.com/products/cogat/parents.html>):

- The Verbal Battery measures flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in reasoning with verbal materials and in solving verbal problems. These reasoning abilities play an important role in reading comprehension, critical thinking, writing, and virtually all verbal learning tasks.

• The Quantitative Battery measures quantitative reasoning skills; flexibility and fluency in working with quantitative symbols and concepts; and the ability to organize, structure, and give meaning to an unordered set of numerals and mathematical symbols. These reasoning skills are significantly related to problem solving in mathematics and other disciplines.

• The Nonverbal Battery measures reasoning using geometric shapes and figures. To perform successfully, students must invent strategies for solving novel problems. They must be flexible in using these strategies and accurate in implementing them.

Why administer a CogAT?

- 1. To help identify academically gifted students. It is up to each school or program to set the requirements for their gifted programs. Many schools set 80-85% percentile rankings on the CogAT Composite score for special program inclusion.**
- 2. To better understand your students' cognitive strengths, weaknesses, and help them learn more effectively.** The student's score profile can indicate if there is an uneven pattern of relative strength and weakness. With this information a teacher can build on the student's strengths by providing challenging opportunities in that area or use that strength in how they present new information or tutoring a subject a student struggles with. Likewise, the teacher can provide opportunities for the student to build up their cognitively weaker area.
- 3. To get teaching tips based specifically on your student's combination of strengths and weaknesses. We love the interactive website at www.CogAT.com where you can access and print out a free supplemental report like this one (<http://www.triangleeducationassessments.com/cogatsample.pdf>) that describes your child's specific learning styles and how to teach to them!** This additional five or six page report will help you learn how to tailor your teaching to your students' cognitive (how they learn) strengths and weaknesses! When you receive the report, you will be able to determine any strong or weak areas of your student's cognitive performance and reasoning skills. This will help you decide how best to teach your unique student.
- 4. To aid in school placement:** If your student enters a public or private school at any point during his or her elementary, middle, or high school education, the CogAT experience will be valuable for placement purposes.

Since most school districts use CogAT results to identify gifted students, your child will have a better chance of being recognized for academic excellence, which will enable him or her to have more challenging educational opportunities.

- 5. To gauge future success.** The CogAT is a good way to predict future success based on current reasoning skills. In addition to determining gifted program placement, this test offers insight into a student's potential for success in school and after graduation.

Remember: CogAT takes about 145 minutes and assesses verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative reasoning abilities. Use it:

- To assess giftedness
- To better understand your students' cognitive strengths and weaknesses
- To get tips on how to best teach to their "learning style" and thereby help each student achieve academic success
- To aid schools in proper placement of a student based on their abilities
- To help predict a student's future success

CogAT/OLSAT Practice Test

Since the CogAT is a very different test compared to an achievement test, it might be helpful to use a practice test before you give the CogAT. The practice test for the CogAT is available for grades 2 – 12. This short practice test gives students an idea of what to expect on test day and it will increase their confidence in taking the CogAT test. A few practice questions are given as examples of the types of questions on the CogAT and answers are provided in the Directions for Administration manual. Students actually practice bubbling in their answers and the Directions for Administration manual contains script similar to that on the actual tests. The practice tests are untimed. Go here for more information on the CogAT Practice Test: <http://www.triangleeducationassessments.com/product.php?productid=16193&cat=261&page=1> ↑



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