

## **A Brief Discussion of Individual Achievement Tests** by Shirley M.R. Minster, M.S. Ed.

What makes an individual standardized achievement test unique? Reasons include that the complete test is not timed, the student does not fill in little circles on an answer sheet, and the test is not usually administered to a group. The test also does not typically require more than one session be devoted to taking it. The approximate time necessary for each test administration is given below. Of course, individual children's times vary. Tests are not sent away to be scored by a company. Test results are not given to anyone other than the parents or legal guardians, unless the parents give their permission in writing.

Individual standardized achievement testing is useful when children are being taught in unique, one-on-one situations. The testing time allows the test administrator to meet and establish a rapport with your child and evaluate academic levels in specific subject areas. The test administration can be done in your home or in a centrally located spot in one day, with the written results completed that same week. When you schedule a follow-up appointment, you have the opportunity to discuss observations made during the testing time, curriculum choices, and other pertinent educational topics.

The following tests provide results such as percentile rank, grade or age equivalent, standard score, and stanine. These nationally recognized tests were normed with children in both public and private schools throughout the United States.

**The Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement-II** is designed for students in grades K-12 and pre-school through college-age (ages 4.5 - 25). There are parallel forms (A and B). The basic areas covered are math concepts and applications, math computation, letter and word recognition, reading comprehension, nonsense word decoding, spelling, and written expression. The test results include lists of specific strengths and/or weaknesses. Supplemental tests include phonological awareness, listening comprehension, oral expression, word recognition fluency, decoding fluency, and associational fluency and naming facility. The total test time varies, depending upon which tests are administered. The basic achievement test takes about 1.5 hours.

**The Peabody Individual Achievement Test - Revised** is designed for children in grades K-12 (ages 5-18). The areas covered are general information, reading recognition, reading comprehension, mathematics, spelling, and written expression. This test is unique in that paper and pencil are used only during the written expression section. I recommend this test if your child dislikes having to write a lot. Please note that no scratch paper and pencil can be used during the mathematics section. (It is a multiple choice test.) The total test takes about 1.5 hours.

**The Woodcock - Johnson Tests of Achievement, III** is designed for people between the ages of 5 and 90. Many areas are covered in the basic achievement test: letter/word identification, passage comprehension, math calculation, math applied problems, spelling, writing, general knowledge. Supplemental tests are available: reading fluency, math fluency, writing fluency, handwriting evaluation, story recall, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, punctuation and capitalization. The total test time varies, depending upon which tests are administered. The basic achievement test takes about 1.5 hours.

**The Diagnostic Achievement Battery-2** is designed to 1) test children through age 14 who are suspected of having learning problems, 2) identify areas of academic strengths and/or weaknesses, and 3) measure academic progress. The twelve subtests cover the skills of listening, speaking, writing, reading, and mathematics. The total time takes about 1.5 hours.

**The Diagnostic Achievement Test for Adolescents-2** is designed for students in grades 7-12. This comprehensive achievement test covers reading decoding, reading comprehension, spelling, math computation, math problem-solving, science, social studies, reference skills, written expression, vocabulary, and grammar. The total test time is usually from two to four hours, depending upon the student's skill levels.