

PREPARING STUDENTS

Provision of broad and comprehensive teaching and learning programs is the best preparation schools can provide for their students and excessive practice using past test materials is not recommended. However, students should be made familiar with the format, language, question types and time constraints of the tests.

The questions in the 2013 test are based on the Western Australian curriculum documents however questions, where appropriate, have been mapped to the *Australian Curriculum: Science* and the *Australian Curriculum: History and Geography*.

Main response types

Multiple-choice: Students need to read the instructions and/or questions carefully, identify the key words and look for the best answer.

Open-responses: Students should pay attention to key words such as 'describe' and 'explain' and any words in **bold** type. When asked to 'explain' students' answers should be more **comprehensive** than when asked to 'describe'.

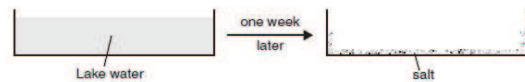
Science

Tasks may include responses that require writing in missing words, drawing tables and graphs, completing a flow chart and matching or constructing a classification key.

Example (open response):

LAKE WATER

Julie collected some lake water in a small clean dish. She left it in a warm room for one week. At the end of the week, the water was gone and there was a thin layer of salt in the dish.



What happened to the water?

Marking guide

Score 1: Response needs to indicate that the water evaporated.

- *The water evaporated because of the heat in the room.*
- *The water went into the air.*

Score 0: Repeats stimulus material or gives a vague, incorrect response

- *The water disappeared.*

Society and Environment

The content of the assessments do not require prior knowledge or experience, rather, they rely on research and understanding of the stimulus material provided. This ensures that no group of students is unfairly advantaged. Questions are chosen from a variety of contexts that reflect the diversity of Western Australia.

Example (open response):

For the questions where students are provided with stimulus in the form of text it is very important that they do not simply copy the information.

BIBBULMUN TRACK

The Bibbulmun Track is a walking trail that starts near Perth and ends in Albany. It is nearly 1000 km long. The track is named after the Bibbulmun group who are part of the Noongar people. These Aboriginal people have been living in this area for thousands of years.

Why was the track named after the Aboriginal people who live in the area?

Marking guide

Score 1: Response needs to acknowledge the significance of Aboriginal history in the area.

- *to show respect for Aboriginal history*
- *to acknowledge Aboriginal past*

Score 0: Repeats stimulus material or gives a vague, incorrect response

- *because they were there for thousands of years*

Teachers are encouraged to use previous WAMSE tests to assist students to become familiar with question types.

MARKERS WANTED

The 2013 marking of the WAMSE tests are scheduled for **24 August** to **6 September**. Marking will take place at Ascot Racecourse with markers paid \$40 per hour, including meal breaks.



There are two sessions of marking each day - daytime and evening. The evening session (4.00pm to 9.00pm) allows practising classroom teachers to participate. All teachers are encouraged to apply.

Participation in the marking is recognised by the Institute for Professional Learning as system-endorsed professional development that contributes to attainment of Senior Teacher status. While it is expected that the marker training will count as professional learning for teacher registration, the Teacher Registration Board has not released its policy on acceptable professional learning activities for renewal.

Information about the marking can be downloaded from the WAMSE website. Interested teachers should complete the online application form by Friday 21 June.

REPORTING

The WAMSE results will be available in mid-November.

Reporting to parents

Schools will receive reports for distribution to parents/caregivers. All students will have their performance reported in Science and Society and Environment. Each report shows an individual student's achievements in relation to the State mean and the range of performance of all students in the year level assessed.

These reports will supplement schools' normal second semester reports and will be one aspect of the assessment and reporting process. They will not replace other more extensive and informative judgements made by teachers.

Reporting to schools

The WAMSE results are provided at the year group level and class group level. It is also possible to create other groups. Schools will be able to access electronic copies of these reports via their system's secure websites.

The availability of results in mid-November will allow teachers and schools time to check and verify student results for reconciliation with school reports.

Students should be made aware that inappropriate comments on test papers are followed up and relayed back to the school for relevant action.

For INSIGHTS INTO WAMSE PERFORMANCE 2012 go to the WAMSE website.

CONTACTS

Assistance for teachers in relation to preparing students for the tests, analysing test results and supporting students' learning can be arranged by contacting:

System	Learning Area	Name	Contact
Government	Science	Terry Mitchelmore	T: 9442 9467 E: terry.mitchelmore@scsa.wa.edu.au
	Society and Environment	Carolyn Robinson	T: 9442 9466 E: carolyn.robinson@scsa.wa.edu.au
Catholic	Science	Margaret Martin	T: 6380 5305 E: martin.margaret@ceo.wa.edu.au
	Society and Environment	Frank Italiano	T: 6380 5362 E: italiano.frank@ceo.wa.edu.au
Independent (AISWA)	Science	Robert Hassell	T: 9441 1625 E: rhassell@ais.wa.edu.au
	Society and Environment	Robert Hassell	T: 9441 1625 E: rhassell@ais.wa.edu.au

WAMSE TESTING PROGRAM

E: wamse@scsa.wa.edu.au

W: scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Years_K10/WAMSE (WAMSE website)

T: (08) 9442 9488 F: (08) 9442 9489



2013
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WAMSE

Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education

Information for teachers



School Curriculum
and Standards
Authority

OVERVIEW

Purpose

The assessment of students' performances in Science and in Society and Environment is a companion assessment program to the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This assessment program, known as Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE), broadens the picture of students' academic performances.

The tests support schools to provide evidence of student achievement. The tests measure the skills, knowledge and understandings of the Science and Society and Environment learning areas that are common to all students in Western Australian schools.

Responsibilities

It is important that the tests are conducted under standardised conditions in all schools to give a valid indication of how students are performing across Western Australia. While the principal is responsible for the overall security and confidentiality of all tests and test support materials, the role of all staff in promoting the WAMSE program to the school community is critical to its successful administration and the engagement of students with the tasks.

Preparations for test week

The principal or their representative (WAMSE coordinator) has been instructed to ensure that each WAMSE test administrator (usually the normal classroom teacher) becomes familiar with all WAMSE testing procedures. In addition to this brochure, *Test administrators handbooks* contain comprehensive information for the administration of each test. These will be sent to schools with the test materials and the WAMSE coordinator has been advised to distribute the handbooks as soon as they arrive.

Development

The assessments were developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). They are designed to assess the full range of student abilities and cover concepts, skills and understandings indicative of each year group. They are criterion-referenced and based on the *Curriculum Framework*. Where appropriate they are mapped to the *Australian Curriculum*. After endorsement by panels of Western Australian educators from all sectors, including teachers, the assessment questions were trialled and reviewed, prior to construction of the final test forms.

Participation

All public and Catholic schools as well as many independent schools participate in the WAMSE assessments.

NEW IN 2013

The WAMSE program is now administered by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, hence any correspondence should be directed to:

School Curriculum and Standards Authority

27 Walters Drive Osborne Park WA 6017

Ph: (08) 9442 9488

Fax: (08) 9442 9489

wamse@scsa.wa.edu.au

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THE TESTS

WHEN

SCHOOL CALENDAR	EVENT	DATES
Term 2, Week 6	Marker Applications submitted online	21 June
Term 3, Week 1	<i>Student Exemption and Parent/Caregiver Withdrawal</i> forms due	26 July
Term 3, Week 2	Testing material arrives in school	1 August
TERM 3, WEEK 3	WAMSE TEST WEEK	5 – 9 AUGUST
Term 3, Week 4	Return completed test books	Monday 12 August (or Tuesday 13 August)
Term 3, Week 6-7	Marking the WAMSE assessments	24 August to 6 September

The tests can be scheduled, by the principal (WAMSE coordinator) for any time during the test week, as part of the normal school day. The tests may be administered during timetabled class time. Teacher relief is not available.

DURATION

The total time for each test session includes administration time for distributing materials, giving instructions, administering practice questions and collecting test booklets. Where more than one test session is scheduled for any particular day, a minimum of 15 minutes break time between the two sessions should be provided. The time, in minutes, needed for each test session is presented in the table below.

	TEST SESSION	YEAR 5 Time		YEAR 7 Time		YEAR 9 Time	
		Total	Working	Total	Working	Total	Working
SCIENCE	Part A	40	30	40	30	60	45
	Part B	40	30	40	30	60	45
SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT	Part A	45	35	50	40	60	45
	Part B	45	35	50	40	60	45

CONTENT

SCIENCE: Part A: Natural and Processed Materials, Earth and Beyond, and Investigating
Part B: Life and Living, Energy and Change, and Investigating

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: Part A and B: All outcomes may be assessed. A magazine is used for both parts but the DVD is viewed only in Part B (5 mins at Year 5; 8 mins at Years 7 & 9).

TEST MATERIALS

Test administrators should receive the numbers of test materials listed below from their principal.

Materials	SCIENCE	SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT
Test booklet	one per student	one per student
Magazine	-	one per student
DVD	-	one per class
Test administrators handbooks	one per class	one per class
Test-session participation and summary report	one per test-session*	one per test-session*

*The tests are designed to be administered over two test sessions, i.e. Part A and Part B.

WAMSE test booklets: are pre-printed with students' names for ease of administration and reporting. Each student's details must be the same on both Science and Society and Environment test booklets as well as the *Test-session participation and summary report*. Students' answers in the test booklet should be written using a 2B or HB pencil to avoid scanning errors.

Test-session participation and summary reports: allow test administrators to record the participation of students in a single test session. The principal will print the reports from the *Student participation website* and provide them to teachers.

PARTICIPATION

All students are encouraged to participate in the WAMSE testing. However, some students may require special arrangements.

PROVIDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Students should receive the support and encouragement they would normally receive. During the tests, test administrators act as facilitators rather than as interpreters for the students. Assistance that would help students correctly answer questions is not appropriate.

Test administrators may provide the following assistance:

- ✓ read instructions
- ✓ remind students how to complete responses, e.g. how to shade an answer bubble
- ✓ read words, phrases or questions for students, if they ask
- ✓ advise students to leave a question they are unsure about and to move on to another
- ✓ advise students to return to any unanswered questions if there is time at the end.

Test administrators **must not** provide the following assistance:

- ✗ paraphrase or interpret questions or text
- ✗ explain the meanings of words or symbols in questions or text
- ✗ give examples or hints e.g. indicate that a student's answer is correct or incorrect
- ✗ remind students about work completed in class
- ✗ allow students extra time, except as outlined in the *Test administrators handbook*
- ✗ indicate information on charts or other classroom media.

If children become distressed or upset because the demands of the task are beyond them, test administrators should allow them to stop. These students will be considered as assessed.

LEARNING ADJUSTMENTS

All students requiring learning adjustments in the WAMSE assessments should be encouraged to participate. They may receive the level of adjustment that is normally available to them, e.g. Braille, questions read to student, support person.

Guidelines: Please refer to the *Disability adjustments* document available from the WAMSE website.

Recording: Learning adjustments should be recorded on the Test-session participation and summary reports (or school equivalent) and provided to the WAMSE coordinator.

STUDENT EXEMPTIONS

The principal, with the signed agreement of parents/caregivers, may grant exemptions only in the following circumstances:

- **Students with disability:** students with significant intellectual disability and/or those with significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests. Students in this category would typically be eligible for placement in an education support centre.
- **English language proficiency:** students with a language background other than English, who arrived from overseas less than a year before the test dates.

Registration: All exemptions must be signed by the principal and submitted by **Friday 26 July**. The *Student exemption form* is available from the WAMSE website.

STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

Students may be withdrawn from the testing program by their parent/caregiver. This is a matter for consideration by individual parents in consultation with the child's school and is intended to address issues such as religious beliefs and philosophical objections to testing.

Registration: All Withdrawals must be lodged and signed by the principal and submitted by **Friday 26 July**. The *Parent/caregiver withdrawal form* is available from the WAMSE website.

ABSENCES

A student who is absent while testing occurs should be given the opportunity to complete the testing at a later date (catch-up session) but only during the test week.

Reporting: students will be deemed absent and not counted as assessed if they: are absent for the entire testing week (5 to 9 August), did not commence the test due to a temporary injury or accident and/or did not complete the test in one of the catch-up sessions.

Recording: Absences should be recorded on the *Test-session participation and summary reports* (or school equivalent) and provided to the WAMSE coordinator.