whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. The upper levels also assess understanding of integers, algebraic expressions, exponents, and percent. The applied mathematics subtest assesses the examinee’s ability to apply a wide range of basic mathematical skills, methods, and concepts to task such as budgeting, planning, predicting results, and interpreting data; as well as more routine tasks such as comparison shopping, tax computation, using household measurements, cooking, estimating quantities, and making computations that involve time, distance, and weight. Item sets were integrated by mathematical contexts appropriate for adults.

The language subtest was designed to help determine if adults had the communication skills necessary to function effectively on the job and in society. The focus in adult-education programs is on general writing competency. This subtest assesses skills in usage, mechanics, sentence formation, and paragraph development. Language items are presented in meaningful contexts reflecting the writing process as it is taught in adult programs. The language items assess skills used to write business letters, resumes, and job-related reports. The items format is designed to present complete paragraphs and thematically related sentence sets-allowing examinees to react as they might to a price of writing in need of revision.

The reading, mathematics computation, applied mathematics, and language are classified in terms of three process dimensions: recall and recognition, inference, and evaluation. As part of the test development process, items were administered to a large sampling of adults in Adult Basic Education programs, vocational/technical centers, and corrections facilities, as well as to a sample of college students. A total of 94 institutions participated in the study, with total sample sizes of 9,615 students for Reading, 8002 for Mathematics Computation, 7,863 for Applied Mathematics, and 8,066 for Language.