Limestone County Schools

Alabama High School Graduation Exam
Test Taking Tips
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AHSGE – READING

1. The reading test has 84 questions. Students must get 52 of these questions correct to pass this portion of the test.

2. Read through the entire passage and the questions before you do anything. Many students try reading the questions first and then looking for the answers in the passage thinking this approach is more efficient. What these students don’t realize is that it is often hard to navigate in unfamiliar roads. If you do not familiarize yourself with the passage first, looking for answers becomes not only time-consuming but also dangerous because you might miss the context of the answer you were looking for.

3. Do not read through the passage hastily. Make notes or underline ideas that you think might be asked. The best way to tackle the Reading exam is to take your time and read through the passage carefully. A surprising number of previous reading test failures are the result of students getting tired of reading passages and just quitting.

4. Take a mental break between passages. Take some deep breaths, roll your neck, clear your mind – try to keep your mind as fresh as possible as you go through the test.

5. Be sure you understand what the questions are asking. Take your time not only reading the passages, but also reading the questions.

Test Breakdown

✓ 36% Interpreting Passages
✓ 22% Literal Understanding
✓ 21% Critical Analysis
✓ 21% Enhancing Comprehension
AHSGE – SCIENCE

1. There are 100 questions on the Science portion of the AHSGE. Students will need to answer approximately 50 of these questions correctly to pass this portion of the test.

2. The Science portion of the test requires a substantial amount of basic science knowledge. Use the science fact sheets provided by your teacher. Keep them with you and review this information whenever you get a few spare minutes. Make copies to have at school, at home, in your car, etc. Set aside a specific amount of time to review these sheets each day. Make flash cards, record it on your ipod – whatever works for you.

3. There are numerous questions involving graphs, diagrams and charts. Be sure you look at the drawing carefully. Check the scale, key and/or reference data given. Examine both the question and the diagram carefully before answering each question.

4. You will be provided with a periodic table like the one provided now. Be familiar with the table. Know what information is included on this table and how to use it.

Testing Specifics

✓ 70% of the test is Biology

✓ 30% of the test is Physical Science
AHSGE – MATHEMATICS

1. You have to answer approximately 50 of the 100 questions correctly to pass this portion of the test.

2. If you have room, work your problems in the test booklet. This makes it easier for you to see what work goes with which problem. If you need to use scratch paper, draw off a block and label it with the problem number.

3. Be sure you know how to use the calculator. Although it is a simple, four function calculator, it may operate differently than the calculator you are used to using. Be sure you know how to enter negative numbers and work percent problems. After the training session, ask your instructor for help if you need it.

4. You will receive a formula sheet that has the formulas you will need to know for answering some of the questions. Be sure you know how to use these formulas.

5. Don’t get stumped and frustrated with what you don’t know. Skip it and move on to what you do know. When you finish the entire test, return to the beginning and take on the more difficult questions. Remember, the easier questions are scattered throughout the test. Don’t get so stressed that you can’t do the problems you know how to do.

6. A general math tip is to think first, then solve. Cover all of the answers and work the problem. Then look at the answer choices and choose the correct one. Work the problem the way you know to work it before looking at any answer choices.

7. If you cannot come up with an answer, work backwards. Take each answer choice, plug it into the equation, and then see if it works out. This is a good way to check all of your answers. It takes time – but you have plenty of time!

8. When the answer choices are similar, beware of simple mistakes. This might include cases where the only difference is a positive or negative sign, or the decimal point may be only off one place.

9. Read word problems carefully. Be sure you know what the question is asking. ALWAYS work out the problem and don’t just pick the answer that looks right at first glance.

Math Test Breakdown

- 16% Algebraic Expressions
- 16% Equations and Inequalities
- 8% Functions
- 8% Formulas

- 14% Graphing Techniques
- 6% Represent Problem Situations
- 32% Solving Problems Involving Algebraic and Geometric Concepts
AHSGE – Social Studies

1. There are 100 questions on the Social Studies portion of the AHSGE. Students must answer approximately 60 of these questions correctly to pass this portion of the exam.

2. The Social Studies portion of the test requires a substantial amount of basic knowledge of history. Use the history fact sheets provided by your teacher. Keep them with you and review this information whenever you get a few spare minutes. Make copies to have at home, at school, in the car, etc. Set aside a specific amount of time to review these sheets each day. Make flash cards, record it on your ipod – whatever works for you.

3. There are several questions involving graphs, charts and maps. Be sure you look at the information carefully. Check the scale, key and reference data given. Examine both the question and the diagram carefully before answering each question.

4. There are numerous questions that require reading of a short passage. First, read the passage carefully. Then read the question carefully. Then return to the passage to confirm your answer.

Specifics

- 20% Formation and Development of the United States
- 10% Pre-Colonial and Colonial Eras
- 18% Eras of Revolution, Expansion and Reform Prior to the United States Civil War
- 8% US Civil War Era
- 14% Developments of the Late 19th and 20th Centuries
- 18% World War I
- 12% the Great Depression and World War II