



# HAST COMPLETE GUIDEBOOK

2024

Scholarly 

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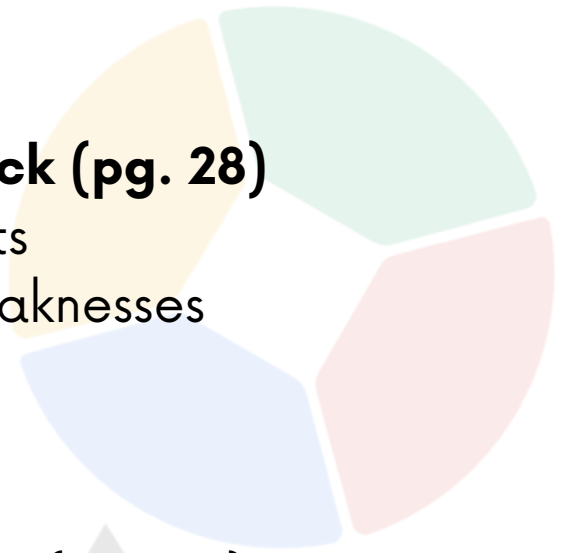
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# Chapter 1

## Understanding the HAST

The Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST) is a critical assessment tool used by educational institutions in New South Wales (NSW) to identify students with high academic potential for selective entry programs. Developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the HAST is designed to assess the cognitive abilities of students, providing schools with a detailed understanding of each student's capabilities.

The scholarship system in Australia, particularly for private schools, has evolved to become more than just a means of financial assistance. It now serves as a gateway to a holistic educational experience that can shape a student's future in profound ways.

### What is the HAST?

The HAST is a standardised test aimed at identifying students who demonstrate advanced reasoning and problem-solving skills. It is utilised by both primary and secondary schools to select students for gifted and talented programs. The test is divided into different levels to cater to various age groups, including Junior, Middle, and Senior levels for secondary students, and it also offers a version for primary students entering Years 5 and 6.

### Importance of HAST for Selective Entry

The HAST plays a pivotal role in the selection process for selective high schools in NSW. These schools are renowned for their rigorous academic environments and are designed to cater to students who can thrive in challenging settings. By using the HAST, schools can effectively sort candidates based on finely differentiated results, ensuring that only the most capable students are admitted to these prestigious programs.

The test is particularly important for students seeking entry into selective schools from Years 8 to 11. It provides a standardised measure of a student's potential to succeed in an accelerated learning environment, making it a crucial component of the admissions process.

### Structure of the HAST Exam

The HAST exam is designed to evaluate different cognitive abilities through four main components. Here are examples for each section to illustrate the types of questions and skills assessed:

#### Reading Comprehension:

This section consists of 35 questions that assess a student's ability to understand and interpret various texts. It tests skills such as identifying main ideas, drawing inferences, and understanding vocabulary in context.

- Reading Comprehension Example:

- For example, students might encounter a passage about climate change and be asked:
  - What is the author's main argument regarding renewable energy?
  - Based on the information provided, what can you infer about the future of fossil fuels?
  - In the context of the passage, what does the term 'carbon footprint' mean?

### **Mathematical Reasoning:**

Comprising 35 questions, this section evaluates a student's problem-solving abilities and logical thinking in mathematics. It covers a range of topics, requiring students to apply mathematical concepts to solve complex problems.

- Mathematical Reasoning Example:

- A rectangular garden is 24 meters long and 18 meters wide. If the owner wants to increase the area by 25% while keeping the same length-to-width ratio, what will be the new dimensions of the garden?

This question tests students' ability to apply concepts of area, percentages, and ratios in a real-world context.

### **Abstract Reasoning:**

With 30 questions, this section focuses on pattern recognition and abstract thinking. It challenges students to identify relationships and patterns in unfamiliar contexts, testing their ability to think critically and creatively.

- Example 1:

- Students might be shown a series of shapes and asked to identify the next shape in the sequence based on the pattern of rotation and colour changes.

- Example 2:

- A question could present a matrix of symbols with one missing, requiring students to determine the missing symbol by recognising the underlying pattern of changes in shape and orientation.

- Abstract Reasoning Example:

- Students might see a sequence of shapes like this:



- They would then need to determine which shape comes next in the sequence, demonstrating their ability to recognise patterns and apply logical thinking.

## Written Expression:

This section involves a 25-minute writing task that assesses a student's ability to articulate thoughts clearly and coherently. The task requires students to organise their ideas effectively and demonstrate proficiency in written communication.

- Example 1:
  - Students may be asked to write a persuasive essay on whether technology has improved education, requiring them to present a clear argument supported by evidence.
- Example 2:
  - Another task might involve writing a narrative based on a given prompt, where students must create a coherent story with a clear beginning, middle, and end while employing descriptive language and varied sentence structures.

These examples illustrate the diverse range of skills and cognitive abilities that the HAST exam seeks to assess, preparing students for the challenges of selective academic environments.

## What Schools Offer HAST in NSW

Several selective high schools in NSW use the HAST as part of their admissions process. These schools include:

- [Penrith Selective High School](#)
- [St George Girls High School](#)
- [Chatswood High School](#)
- [Ryde Secondary College](#)
- [Hurlstone Agricultural High School](#)
- [Girraween High School](#)

Full list available here: <https://www.acer.org/id/hast/participating-schools>

These schools are highly sought after due to their strong academic programs and the opportunities they provide for high-achieving students. The HAST is an essential tool for these institutions to ensure that they select students who are best suited to their rigorous academic environments.

In summary, the HAST is a vital component of the selective entry process in NSW, offering a robust assessment of students' higher-order thinking skills. It helps schools identify students who are likely to excel in challenging academic settings, thereby maintaining the high standards of selective education programs.

## Others: EduTest - Structure

Selective Entry High Schools in NSW and VIC use a combination of Ability and Achievement tests for admission. Each school has its own results transfer process, which applicants must review on the respective registration sites.

### Ability Tests:

These assess a student's capacity to think, reason, and solve problems without relying heavily on prior knowledge. They predict learning speed and comfort with complex concepts.

#### 1. Verbal Reasoning (30 minutes, multiple-choice):

- Evaluates language-based thinking, including vocabulary, word relationships, classification, and deduction.

#### 2. Numerical Reasoning (30 minutes, multiple-choice):

- Assesses number-based thinking, covering series, matrices, arithmetical reasoning, and deduction.

### Achievement Tests:

These measure performance in key academic areas, influenced by both ability and application of learned knowledge.

#### 1. Reading Comprehension (30 minutes, multiple-choice):

- Evaluates the ability to interpret written passages and handle sentence structure, completion, and punctuation.

#### 2. Mathematics (30 minutes, multiple-choice):

- Tests grade-appropriate maths knowledge across numbers, measurement, algebra, space, and data.

#### 3. Written Expression (30 minutes + 5 minutes planning):

- Assesses clear idea communication in writing, considering punctuation, creativity, construction, grammar, spelling, and task relevance. Various writing modes may be tested; including creative, descriptive, narrative, persuasive, expository, or informative.

## What Schools Offer EduTest in NSW

Several selective high schools in NSW use the HAST as part of their admissions process. These schools include:

- [Baulkham Hills High School](#)
- [Cranbrook School](#)
- [James Ruse Agricultural High School](#)
- [Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School](#)
- [Moama Anglican Grammar](#)
- [North Sydney Boys High School](#)
- [North Sydney Girls High School](#)
- [Sydney Girls High School](#)

Full list available here: [https://edutest.com.au/client\\_schools.html](https://edutest.com.au/client_schools.html)

## Scholarship Year 8-Year 10 Entry

### **AAS:**

- Ascham School
- Barker College
- Pymble Ladies' College
- Queenwood
- Roseville College
- St Catherine's School
- The Hills Grammar School
- The King's School

Full list available here:

<https://bettereducation.com.au/Scholarship/AllwellTestDate.aspx?state=nsw>

### **ACER:**

- Arndell Anglican College
- Australian International Academy
- German International School Sydney
- Hunter Valley Grammar School
- Macquarie Anglican Grammar School
- SCEGGS Darlinghurst
- Waverley College
- Wollondilly Anglican College

Full list available here:

<https://bettereducation.com.au/Scholarship/ScholarshipTestDate.aspx?state=nsw>

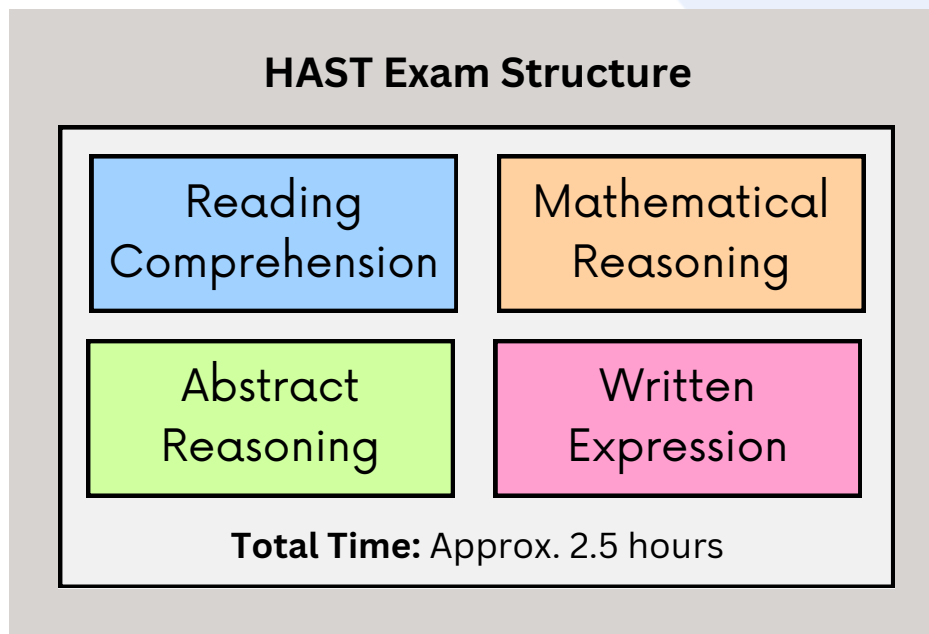




# Chapter 2

## Test Components

The Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST) is meticulously designed to evaluate a range of cognitive abilities through its distinct components. Each section of the test targets specific skills essential for academic success in selective and gifted education programs. This chapter delves into the individual components of the HAST, providing insights into the skills assessed and the types of questions students may encounter.



### Reading Comprehension

The Reading Comprehension section of the HAST consists of 35 questions aimed at assessing a student's ability to understand, analyse, and interpret written texts. This section is crucial for evaluating a student's capacity to process information and draw logical conclusions from various types of literature.

- **Types of Texts:**
  - Students are presented with a diverse array of texts, including narratives, expository passages, and persuasive articles. These texts are selected to challenge students' reading abilities and comprehension skills across different genres and styles.
- **Key Skills Assessed:**
  - Identifying Main Ideas: Students must discern the central theme or argument presented in a passage.
  - Drawing Inferences: Beyond understanding explicit information, students are required to infer meaning and implications that are not directly stated.
  - Understanding Vocabulary in Context: Students need to determine the meaning of complex words and phrases based on how they are used within the text.

## Mathematical Reasoning

The Mathematical Reasoning section, also comprising 35 questions, evaluates students' problem-solving abilities and logical thinking in mathematics. This section is designed to test students' understanding of mathematical concepts and their ability to apply these concepts in novel situations.

- **Topics Covered:**
  - The questions span a broad range of mathematical topics, including algebra, geometry, number theory, and data interpretation. These topics are chosen to reflect the mathematical knowledge expected of students at their respective educational levels.
- **Problem-Solving Strategies:**
  - Logical Deduction: Students are encouraged to use logical reasoning to arrive at solutions, often requiring multiple steps and the integration of various mathematical principles.
  - Application of Concepts: Questions often require students to apply known mathematical formulas and theorems to solve complex problems.

## Abstract Reasoning

The Abstract Reasoning section consists of 30 questions designed to assess students' abilities to recognise patterns, relationships, and logical sequences. This component is critical for evaluating a student's capacity to think abstractly and solve problems creatively.

- **Understanding Patterns:**
  - Students are presented with sequences of shapes, numbers, or symbols and are required to identify the underlying pattern or rule governing the sequence.
- **Techniques for Success:**
  - Pattern Recognition: Successful students can quickly identify changes or repetitions in sequences, allowing them to predict subsequent elements.
  - Creative Thinking: This section rewards students who can think outside the box and consider multiple possibilities when identifying patterns.

## Written Expression

The Written Expression section involves a 25-minute task that assesses a student's ability to communicate ideas effectively in writing. This component is essential for gauging a student's proficiency in organising thoughts and expressing them clearly and coherently.

- Writing Tasks Overview:
  - Students may be asked to write essays, narratives, or persuasive pieces. These tasks are designed to test a student's ability to construct logical arguments, use descriptive language, and maintain a coherent structure throughout their writing.
- **Assessment Criteria:**
  - Clarity and Coherence: Essays are evaluated based on how clearly and logically ideas are presented, with a focus on the overall flow and organisation of the text.
  - Language Use: Students are assessed on their ability to use varied vocabulary and sentence structures effectively, enhancing the impact of their writing.

Each component of the HAST is carefully crafted to provide a comprehensive assessment of a student's academic abilities, ensuring that only the most capable students are selected for advanced educational opportunities. Through rigorous evaluation, the HAST identifies students who possess the potential to excel in challenging academic environments.

# Chapter 3

## Practice Questions

### Sample Reading Comprehension Questions

*Read the stories below then answer the questions that follow.*

#### **The Chase on the Lake (Excerpt from Touch Me Not) by Dr. Jose Rizal**

"Listen, sir, to the plan that I have worked out," said Elias thoughtfully, as they moved in the direction of San Gabriel. "I'll hide you now in the house of a friend of mine in Mandaluyong. I'll bring you all your money, which I saved and buried at the foot of the Balete in the mysterious tomb of your grandfather. Then you will leave the country."

"To go abroad?" inquired Ibarra.

"To live out in peace the days of life that remain to you. You have friends in Spain, you are rich, you can get yourself pardoned. In every way a foreign country is for us a better fatherland than our own."

Crisostomo did not answer, but meditated in silence. At that moment they reached the Pasig and the boat began to ascend the current. Over the Bridge of Spain a horseman galloped rapidly, while a shrill, prolonged whistle was heard.

"Elias," said Ibarra, "you owe your misfortunes to my family, you have saved my life twice, and I owe you not only gratitude but also the restitution of your fortune. You advise me to go abroad—then come with me and we will live like brothers. Here you also are wretched."

Elias shook his head sadly and answered: "Impossible! It's true that I cannot love or be happy in my country, but I can suffer and die in it, and perhaps for it—that is always something. May the misfortunes of my native land be my own misfortunes and, although no noble sentiment unites us, although our hearts do not beat to a single name, at least may the common calamity bind me to my countrymen, at least may I weep over our sorrows with them, may the same hard fate oppress all our hearts alike!"

"Then why do you advise me to go away?"

"Because in some other country you could be happy while I could not, because you are not made to suffer, and because you would hate your country if some day you should see yourself ruined in its cause, and to hate one's native land is the greatest of calamities."

"You are unfair to me!" exclaimed Ibarra with bitter reproach. "You forget that scarcely had I arrived here when I set myself to seek its welfare."

"Don't be offended, sir, I was not reproaching you at all. Would that all of us could imitate you! But I do not ask impossibilities of you and I mean no offence when I say that your heart deceives you. You loved your country because your father taught you to do so; you loved it because in it you had affection, fortune, youth, because everything smiled on you, your country had done you no injustice; you loved it as we love anything that makes us happy. But the day in which you see yourself poor and hungry, persecuted, betrayed, and sold by your own countrymen, on that day you will disown yourself, your country, and all mankind."

"Your words pain me," said Ibarra resentfully.



# Practice Questions

## Sample Reading Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions by choosing the letter of the best answer.

**1 What is the moral lesson of the story?**

- A. The main lesson of the story is that one's love for their country is mostly based on personal gain and happiness.
- B. The main lesson of the story is the importance of loyalty to one's country and patriotism, even in the face of adversity.
- C. The main lesson of the story is that gratitude must always be paid back, even if it costs you your happiness.
- D. The main lesson of the story is that it is hard to grow in one's own country because you never grow in familiar places.

**2 What does Elias' statement about suffering and dying in his country while still feeling a bond to it reveal about his character and beliefs?**

- A. It reveals that he is a patriot who values his connection to his country and is willing to sacrifice for it. It shows that he is someone who feels a sense of responsibility towards his country.
- B. It reveals that he is a cynic who sees his country as a source of misery and believes that leaving it is the solution. It shows that he is a coward who does not stand up for his country.
- C. It reveals that he is a hypocrite who claims to love his country but is willing to abandon it at the first sign of trouble. It shows that he is a defeatist who has given up on his country.
- D. It reveals that he is a selfish person who is only concerned about his own happiness. It shows that he is a pessimist who sees no hope for his country and wants to leave and start anew.

**3 How does Elias challenge Ibarra's assertion that he loves his country and seeks its welfare?**

- A. By suggesting that Ibarra's love for his country is misguided. Elias believes that Ibarra's desire to reform his country is based on a flawed understanding of its history.
- B. By arguing that Ibarra's actions do not match his words. Elias believes that Ibarra's privileged position in society prevents him from understanding the struggles in his country.
- C. By suggesting that Ibarra's love for his country is naive. Elias believes that Ibarra's idealised view of his country ignores the reality that his country is extremely poor.
- D. By pointing out that Ibarra's love for his country is shallow. He believes that Ibarra is not willing to suffer and sacrifice for his country, unlike Elias himself.

**4 How does the tension between Ibarra and Elias over the question of whether or not to leave the country highlight broader themes of responsibility in the context of political and social change?**

- A. It raises questions about the role of individuals in effecting change and the challenges of balancing personal interests with the welfare of the community.
- B. It suggests that leaving the country is the only viable option for those seeking political and social change, and that staying behind indicates a lack of loyalty to the cause.
- C. It highlights the idea that change can only be achieved through radical actions, and that those who are not willing to take risks are not truly committed to the cause.
- D. It emphasises the tension between individual responsibility and collective responsibility, and suggests that individuals must prioritise their country over anything.

## Practice Questions

### Sample Reading Comprehension Questions

**5 How does the conversation between Ibarra and Elias reveal their differing perspectives on patriotism and love for their country?**

- A. It reveals that both Ibarra and Elias are deeply patriotic and have identical views on how to express their love for their country which is to stay and fight in the war.
- B. It reveals that Ibarra is willing to abandon his country and his people, while Elias is a coward who only knows how to talk but not take action for his country.
- C. It reveals that Ibarra is more pragmatic and focused on achieving his goals, Elias is more idealistic and values his connection to his country and its people.
- D. It reveals that Ibarra and Elias are both cynical about their country's future, but Ibarra is more passive and is not willing to take action to try to change things.

**6 How does the interaction between Ibarra and Elias highlight the theme of betrayal?**

- A. Ibarra feels betrayed by Elias' refusal to take his money and start a new life with him, while Elias feels betrayed by Ibarra's lack of understanding about his personal struggles in life
- B. Elias feels betrayed by Ibarra's sudden change of heart and willingness to abandon their plans, while Ibarra feels betrayed by Elias' pessimism about Ibarra's plans to fight in the war.
- C. Ibarra feels betrayed by Elias' suggestion to leave their country and try their luck in a foreign country, while Elias feels betrayed by Ibarra's disregard for the suffering of the less fortunate.
- D. Elias feels betrayed by Ibarra's desire to leave the country and abandon their cause, while Ibarra feels betrayed by Elias' unwillingness to join him in his pursuit of a better life abroad.

**7 Why does Elias believe that Ibarra's love for his country is superficial and conditional?**

- A. because he believes that Ibarra's love for his country is based on his desire for power
- B. because he thinks that Ibarra is not willing to suffer and sacrifice for his country
- C. because he believes that Ibarra's love for his country is not based on any noble sentiment
- D. because he believes that Ibarra's love for his country is based on his admiration for his father

**8 In what ways does Ibarra's offer for Elias to join him in Spain reflect the colonial mentality of the time?**

- A. by assuming that success and happiness can only be found outside the country, and that assimilation into Spanish culture is desirable
- B. by portraying Spain as a benevolent and generous country that can offer a better life to Ibarra and Elias' countrymen, while disregarding the exploitative nature of colonialism
- C. by presenting assimilation to Western culture as the only path to success, and that living in a foreign country means the person is one of the elites
- D. by implying that people who stay in their own country are inferior and incapable of achieving success and happiness compared to those who assimilate to Western culture

# Practice Questions - ANSWER KEY

## Sample Reading Comprehension Questions

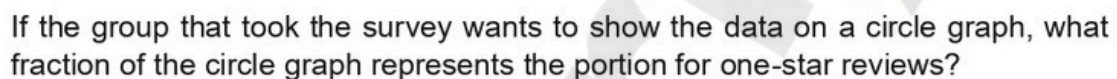
**Fiction 1 - The Chase on the Lake (Excerpt from Touch Me Not) by Dr. Jose Rizal**

1. B
2. A
3. D
4. A
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. A

Scholarly

## Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

- The histogram below summarises the results of the survey.



- He spends 20 percent of his paycheque on rent and deposits the remainder into a savings account.

**A** \$4 000  
**B** \$5 760  
**C** \$7 200  
**D** \$8 000  
**E** \$17 000

- What is the area of the rug?

- A** 40 square metres  
**B** 64 square metres  
**C** 80 square metres  
**D** 96 square metres  
**E** 100 square metres



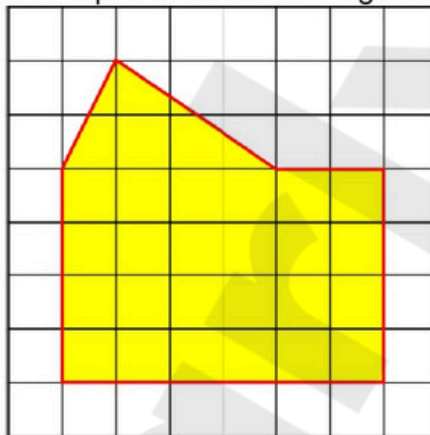
## Practice Questions

### Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

- 4 The ramp for Andrew's pet squirrel rises 6 centimetres for each 24 centimetres of horizontal run.

How many centimetres will this ramp rise for 62 centimetres of horizontal run?

- A 15  $\frac{1}{2}$  centimetres  
B 20  $\frac{2}{3}$  centimetres  
C 44 centimetres  
D 80 centimetres  
E 248 centimetres
- 5 In the grid below, each small square has a side length of 1 centimetre.



In the coloured region, each vertex lies on a vertex of a small square.

What is the area of the coloured region?

- A 28 square centimetres  
B 30 square centimetres  
C 32 square centimetres  
D 34 square centimetres  
E 35 square centimetres
- 6 During a fishing trip, Huey, Dewey, and Louie catch a total of 300 fish.
- If Huey catches 45 percent of the fish and Dewey catches 25 fish, what fraction of the 300 fish does Louie catch?
- A  $\frac{23}{30}$   
B  $\frac{41}{60}$   
C  $\frac{1}{2}$   
D  $\frac{7}{15}$   
E  $\frac{1}{3}$

## Practice Questions

### Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

- 7 The table below shows the highest and lowest scores of five students in Anastacia's class last school term.

STUDENT	HIGHEST	LOWEST
Alice	93	76
Brian	91	79
Celeste	99	81
Dave	74	56
Emily	89	70

Which student had the greatest range of scores?

- A Alice  
B Brian  
C Celeste  
D Dave  
E Emily
- 8 A 24-hour day is how many times as long as 60 seconds?

- A 12  
B 30  
C 365  
D 720  
E 1 440

- 9 Phineas is six years older than Ferb.

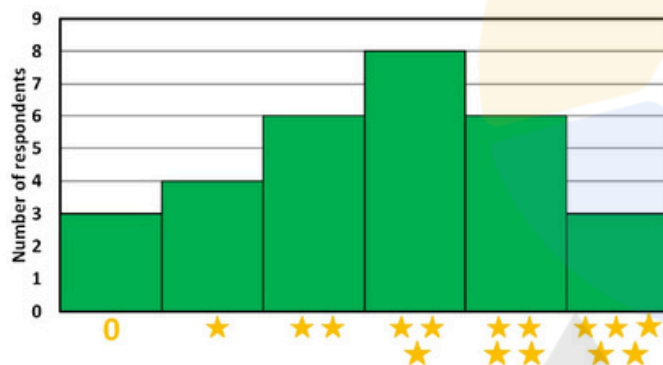
If the sum of the current ages of Phineas and Ferb equals 42 years, how old is Ferb?

- A 18 years old  
B 19 years old  
C 21 years old  
D 23 years old  
E 24 years old

# Practice Questions - ANSWER KEY

## Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

Question 1:



Step 1: There are a total of 30 respondents.  
The total of 4 respondents give 1 star to the movie.

Step 2: The fraction of the circle graph that represents the portion for one-star review is -  
Favourable number of respondents/ Total number of respondents =  $4/30 = 2/15$ .

Answer: D.  $2/15$

Question 2:

Step 1: Calisto deposits \$3200 in the savings account.  
He spends 20 percent of his paycheque on rent and deposits the remainder into a savings account.  
Say his monthly pay is \$x.

Step 2:  $x - 20\% \cdot x = 3200$   
 $x - 0.2x = 3200$   
 $0.8x = 3200$   
 $x = 3200/0.8$   
 $x = 4000$   
 So, his monthly pay is \$4000.

Answer: A. \$4000

Question 3:

Step 1: A rectangular rug has a perimeter of 36 metres, and its width is exactly 2 metres shorter than its length.

Say the length of the rectangular rug is x metres and the width is x - 2 metres.

Then, using the perimeter, we have -

$2(x + x - 2) = 36$   
 $4x - 4 = 36$   
 $4x = 40$   
 $x = 40/4 = 10$   
 $x - 2 = 10 - 2 = 8$

Step 2: The area of the rug is -  
Length \* width =  $10 \cdot 8 = 80$  square metres.

Answer: C. 80 square metres

## Practice Questions - ANSWER KEY

### Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

Question 4:

Step 1: The ramp for Andrew's pet squirrel rises 6 centimetres for each 24 centimetres of horizontal run.

For 1 cm horizontal run Andrew's pet squirrel rises  $6/24$  cm.

Step 2: For 62 cm horizontal run this ramp will rise -  
 $6/24 * 62 = 15.5$  cm or  $15 \frac{1}{2}$  cm.

Answer: A.  $15 \frac{1}{2}$  centimetres

Question 5:



Step 1: We are given that each small square has a side length of 1 centimetre.

Say we divide the coloured region into two figures one is a rectangle with side length of 4 cm and 6 cm, and a triangle with base 4 cm and height 2 cm.

Then, the area of the rectangle is -

Area = length \* width = 6 cm \* 4 cm = 24 square centimetres.

Step 2: The area of the triangle is -

Area =  $\frac{1}{2} * \text{base} * \text{height} = \frac{1}{2} * 4 * 2 = 4$  square centimetres.

The total coloured area is -

Area of the rectangle + Area of the triangle = 24 square cm + 4 square cm = 28 square cm.

Answer: A. 28 square cm

Question 6:

Step 1: During a fishing trip, Huey, Dewey, and Louie catch a total of 300 fish.

$H + L + D = 300$

Huey catches 45 percent of the fish which is  $300 * 45\% = 135$  and Dewey catches 25 fish.

Then, we have -

$135 + L + 25 = 300$

Step 2:  $L + 160 = 300$

$L = 300 - 160$

$L = 140$

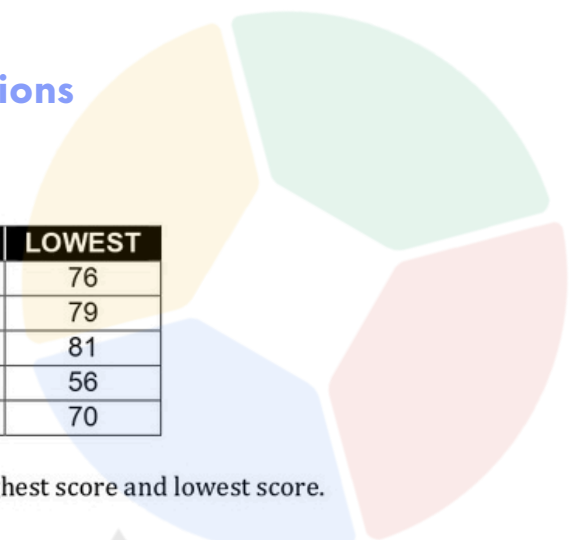
Louie catches  $140/300 = 7/15$  fraction of 300 fishes.

Answer: D.  $7/15$

## Practice Questions - ANSWER KEY

### Sample Mathematical Reasoning Questions

Question 7:



STUDENT	HIGHEST	LOWEST
Alice	93	76
Brian	91	79
Celeste	99	81
Dave	74	56
Emily	89	70

Step 1: The range of the data is the difference of highest score and lowest score.

The range of Alice scores is  $93 - 76 = 17$

For Brian the range is  $= 91 - 79 = 12$

For Celeste the range is  $= 99 - 81 = 18$

Step 2: For Dave the range is  $= 74 - 56 = 18$

For Emily the range is  $= 89 - 70 = 19$

So, Emily has the greatest range of scores.

Answer: E. Emily

Question 8:

Step 1: A 24-hour day has  $24 * 60 * 60$  seconds.

$24 * 60 * 60 = 86400$

Step 2: The 24-hour day is  $86400/60 = 1440$  times as long as 60 seconds.

Answer: E. 1440

Question 9:

Step 1: The sum of the current ages of Phineas and Ferb equals 42 years.

$P + F = 42$

Step 2: Phineas is six years older than Ferb.

$P = F + 6$

Substituting  $P = F + 6$ , we have -

$F + 6 + F = 42$

$2F = 36$

$F = 36/2 = 18$

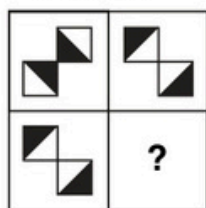
So, Ferb is 18 years old.

# Practice Questions

## Sample Abstract Reasoning Questions

Find the shape or pattern which completes the square. Circle the letter.

Example



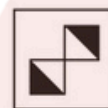
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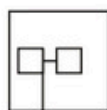
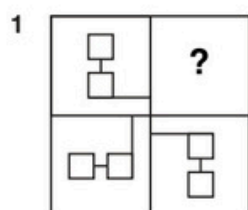
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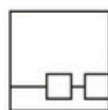
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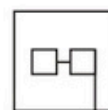
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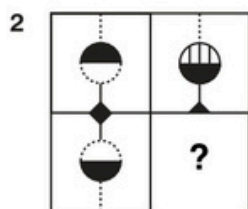
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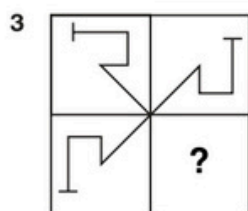
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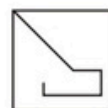
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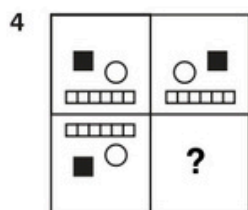
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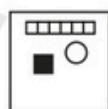
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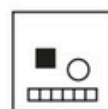
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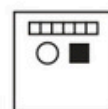
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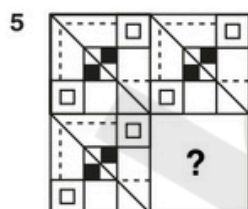
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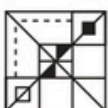
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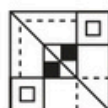
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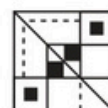
a



b



c



d

## Practice Questions - ANSWER KEY

### Sample Abstract Reasoning Questions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | c |
| 2 | d |
| 3 | b |
| 4 | a |
| 5 | a |



Scholarly

## Practice Questions

### Sample Writing Tasks

#### **Creative Writing:**

1. Write a story that begins and ends with the phrase "The clock struck thirteen." Your tale should explain the significance of this unusual time and its impact on the characters.
2. Imagine you wake up one morning to find that everyone in the world, except you, has suddenly acquired the ability to read minds. How does your day unfold?
3. You discover a mysterious door in your school that wasn't there yesterday. When you open it, you find... Continue the story, explaining what lies beyond the door and the changes brought by it.
4. In many tales, characters often exclaim, "It's now or never!" Write a story where this phrase plays a crucial role in the plot's development.

#### **Persuasive Writing:**

1. In an increasingly digital world, is handwriting still a necessary skill to learn? Present arguments for and against teaching handwriting in schools.
2. "Failure is a better teacher than success." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your answer with examples and reasoning.
3. "Technology has made modern life easier." To what extent do you agree with this statement? Provide reasons and examples to support your view.
4. Should students have a say in designing their school curriculum? Consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of involving students in this process.



# Chapter 4

## Preparation Strategies

Preparing for the Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST) requires a strategic approach to ensure students can perform at their best. This chapter provides a comprehensive guide to developing effective study plans, employing efficient study techniques, and mastering time management skills. These strategies are designed to help students maximise their potential and approach the HAST with confidence.

### Study Plans and Timelines

A well-structured study plan is essential for effective preparation. It provides a roadmap for students, helping them allocate time efficiently and focus on key areas of the HAST.

- **Creating a Study Schedule:**
  - Develop a timetable that covers all test components, ensuring a balanced approach to each section.
  - For instance, allocate specific days for Reading Comprehension, Mathematical Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, and Written Expression.
  - This structured plan helps students cover all necessary material systematically.

### Sample Weekly HAST Study Plan

	Morning (30 mins)	Afternoon (45 mins)	Evening (30 mins)
Monday	Reading Comprehension	Mathematical Reasoning	Vocabulary Building
Tuesday	Abstract Reasoning	Writing Practice	Review of the Day's Work
Wednesday	Mathematical Reasoning	Reading Comprehension	Problem-solving Strategies
Thursday	Writing Practice	Abstract Reasoning	Timed Practice Questions
Friday	Reading Comprehension	Mathematical Reasoning	Reflection and Goal-setting
Saturday	Full Practice Test (2-3 hours)		Review of Test Results
Sunday	Rest and Light Review of Challenging Topics		

- **Setting Realistic Goals:**

- Break down larger study goals into smaller, achievable tasks.
- For example, if the goal is to improve mathematical reasoning, set daily objectives such as mastering a specific topic or solving a set number of practice problems.
- This approach prevents overwhelm and builds momentum.

- **Incorporating Breaks:**

- Integrate short breaks into study sessions to maintain focus and prevent burnout.
- Techniques like the Pomodoro Technique, which involves 25-minute study intervals followed by 5-minute breaks, can enhance productivity.

## Effective Study Techniques

Employing the right study techniques can significantly enhance a student's ability to retain information and apply it effectively during the HAST.

- **Active Recall and Retrieval Practice:**

- Encourage students to actively recall information rather than passively reviewing notes.
- This can be done through self-quizzing or teaching the material to someone else.
- Studies have shown that active recall strengthens memory retention more effectively than re-reading.

- **Use of Mind Maps:**

- Create visual representations of information through mind maps.
- This technique helps organise thoughts and identify connections between concepts, particularly useful for subjects like Abstract Reasoning.

- **Practice with Sample Papers:**

- Regularly practicing with sample papers familiarises students with the test format and question types.
- It also helps identify areas that require further review and allows students to practice time management under exam conditions.

## Time Management Skills

Time management is a critical skill for success in the HAST. Students must learn to balance their study time with other commitments effectively.

- **Prioritising Tasks:**

- Use tools like to-do lists and planners to prioritise tasks based on urgency and importance.
- This ensures that critical areas receive adequate attention and prevents last-minute cramming.

- **Time Blocking:**

- Implement time-blocking techniques to allocate specific time slots for different activities.
- For example, dedicate the morning to study sessions and the afternoon to extracurricular activities or relaxation.
- This method helps students maintain a balanced lifestyle while maximising study efficiency.

- **Monitoring Progress:**

- Regularly review and adjust the study plan based on progress.
- If certain areas are proving more challenging, allocate additional time to address these weaknesses.
- This adaptability ensures continuous improvement and readiness for the test.

## Visual Aids and Diagrams

Incorporating visual aids into study materials can enhance understanding and retention of complex concepts.

- **Diagrams for Mathematical Concepts:**

- Use diagrams to illustrate mathematical problems and solutions.
- Visualising problems can simplify complex concepts and aid in comprehension.

- **Flowcharts for Logical Sequences:**

- Create flowcharts to map out logical sequences or processes, particularly useful for Abstract Reasoning.
- These visual aids help students grasp patterns and relationships more clearly.

By implementing these preparation strategies, students can approach the HAST with confidence and poise. A combination of structured study plans, effective techniques, and strong time management skills will equip students with the tools they need to excel in this challenging assessment.

# Chapter 5

## Review and Feedback

The process of reviewing practice test results and receiving feedback is crucial for effective preparation for the Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST). This chapter delves into strategies for analysing performance, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and implementing improvements. By focusing on these aspects, students can refine their skills and enhance their readiness for the test.

### Analysing Practice Test Results

A thorough analysis of practice test results provides valuable insights into a student's current performance level and areas needing improvement.

- **Score Breakdown:**
  - Begin by examining the scores for each section of the practice test.
  - Understanding which components—Reading Comprehension, Mathematical Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, or Written Expression—are stronger or weaker can help prioritise study efforts.
- **Error Analysis:**
  - Identify specific questions or types of questions that were answered incorrectly.
  - Determine whether errors were due to misunderstandings of the content, misinterpretations of the questions, or time management issues.
  - This analysis helps pinpoint areas that require targeted practice.
- **Pattern Recognition:**
  - Look for patterns in the errors.
  - For instance, if a student consistently struggles with inference questions in the Reading Comprehension section, this indicates a need to focus on developing skills in drawing logical conclusions from texts.

### Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

Understanding one's strengths and weaknesses is essential for tailoring study strategies effectively.

- **Strengths:**
  - Recognise areas where performance is consistently strong.
  - These strengths can be leveraged to boost confidence and serve as a foundation for tackling more challenging sections.
  - For example, if a student excels in Mathematical Reasoning, they can use this confidence to approach other sections with a positive mindset.
- **Weaknesses:**
  - Identify areas of weakness and develop a targeted plan to address them.
  - This might involve seeking additional resources, such as tutoring or online courses, to reinforce understanding and skills in these areas.

## Strategies for Improvement

Implementing strategies for improvement is key to transforming weaknesses into strengths and achieving overall success in the HAST.

- **Focused Practice:**

- Dedicate extra time to practicing weaker areas. Use targeted exercises and practice questions to reinforce understanding and build confidence.
- For example, if Abstract Reasoning is a challenge, students can engage in activities that enhance pattern recognition and logical thinking.

- **Feedback Utilisation:**

- Seek feedback from teachers, tutors, or peers to gain different perspectives on performance.
- Constructive feedback can provide guidance on how to improve writing style, problem-solving approaches, and test-taking strategies.

- **Adaptive Learning:**

- Use adaptive learning techniques to tailor study sessions to individual needs.
- This involves adjusting the difficulty level of practice questions based on performance, ensuring that students are consistently challenged and engaged.

- **Goal Setting:**

- Set specific, measurable goals for improvement.
- For instance, aim to increase the accuracy of Reading Comprehension questions by a certain percentage or reduce the time taken to complete Mathematical Reasoning problems.

## Reflective Practices

Encouraging reflective practices can further enhance a student's learning experience and performance.

- **Self-Reflection:**

- After each practice test, take time to reflect on the experience.
- Consider what strategies worked well, what challenges were encountered, and how these can inform future study sessions.

- **Journaling:**

- Maintain a study journal to document progress, challenges, and insights gained from each practice session.
- This ongoing record can serve as a motivational tool and provide a clear picture of growth over time.

By engaging in thorough review and feedback processes, students can develop a deeper understanding of their abilities and make informed decisions about their preparation strategies. This proactive approach ensures that students are well-equipped to tackle the HAST with confidence and achieve their academic goals.

# Chapter 6

## Test Day Preparation

The final stretch of preparation for the Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST) involves meticulous planning for the test day itself. This chapter provides a comprehensive guide to what students can expect on test day, strategies for reducing anxiety, and essential items to bring. By addressing these areas, students can ensure they are fully prepared to perform at their best.

### What to Expect on Test Day

Understanding the logistics and environment of the test day can help alleviate stress and ensure a smooth experience.

- **Arrival and Check-In:**

- Students should aim to arrive at the test centre well ahead of the scheduled start time.
- This allows for a relaxed check-in process and time to acclimate to the testing environment.
- It is advisable to verify the location and any specific entry requirements in advance.

- **Test Environment:**

- The HAST is typically conducted in a quiet, formal setting, such as a school hall or classroom.
- Students will be seated in individual desks or tables, with invigilators present to oversee the examination process.
- Familiarising oneself with the test environment can help reduce anxiety and improve focus.

- **Test Structure:**

- The HAST will follow the structured format students have practiced, with designated time limits for each section.
- Understanding the sequence and timing of each component—Reading Comprehension, Mathematical Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, and Written Expression—will help students manage their time effectively.

### Tips for Reducing Anxiety

Managing anxiety is crucial for optimal performance. Here are strategies to help students remain calm and focused:

- **Breathing Techniques:**

- Practice deep breathing exercises to calm nerves before and during the test.
- Techniques such as inhaling deeply through the nose, holding for a few seconds, and exhaling slowly can help regulate stress levels and maintain composure.

- **Positive Visualisation:**

- Encourage students to visualise themselves succeeding on the test.
- Imagining a positive outcome can boost confidence and reduce anxiety, helping students approach the test with a positive mindset.

- **Mindfulness Practices:**

- Engage in mindfulness exercises in the days leading up to the test.
- Techniques such as meditation or yoga can improve concentration and reduce stress, contributing to a more relaxed test day experience.

## Essential Items to Bring

Being prepared with the right materials ensures that students can focus on the test without unnecessary distractions.

- **Identification:**

- Ensure that students bring any required identification documents, such as a student ID or passport, as specified by the test administrators.

- **Writing Materials:**

- Pack several pens and pencils, along with an eraser and sharpener.
- It is advisable to bring extra supplies to avoid any disruptions during the test.

## Concluding Thoughts

As students approach the culmination of their preparation for the HAST, it is important to remember that the test is not only a measure of knowledge but also an opportunity to demonstrate resilience and adaptability. By preparing thoroughly, managing stress effectively, and approaching the test with confidence, students can maximise their potential and achieve their academic aspirations.

The journey to the HAST is one of growth and development, and regardless of the outcome, the skills and strategies acquired during this process will serve students well in their future educational endeavours. Embrace the challenge, trust in the preparation, and approach the test day with a sense of calm assurance.

# Appendix

## Student Success Stories

### Overcoming Obstacles and Achieving Success with Perseverance

When I first started with Scholarly, I had already been through multiple coaching programs without the results I hoped for. My OC (Opportunity Class) score was 160 out of 300, and I struggled significantly in English, scoring only 2 out of 24, and 13 out of 30 in General Ability. It was a tough period, especially with the sense of disappointment hanging over me. My parents never explicitly told me they were disappointed, but I could feel it. It was hard not to feel defeated, and starting from scratch felt overwhelming.

However, despite the setbacks, I didn't give up. I decided to trust the process and follow the tutors system at Scholarly. The tutors techniques in reading and writing were incredibly helpful, and although it was tough to be completely obliterated by some tests, I learned to put my emotions aside and focus solely on improving. I stuck to the plan, practiced relentlessly, and gradually saw improvements.

What made a real difference was how I managed to overcome the emotional toll of failure. Instead of letting my poor OC results define me, I used them as motivation to keep pushing forward. I didn't allow my weaknesses in reading to discourage me from putting in the effort across all subjects. The tutors guidance, coupled with my parents' unwavering support, kept me on track.

In the end, all the hard work paid off. I went from scoring 160 in the OC to finishing in the top 10% across all four subjects in the Selective test. The transformation was incredible, and although I was unsure at times, I kept believing in the process. While I can't take full credit for my success—it was a combination of Steve's system, my parents' dedication, and my own determination—I'm proud of the journey.

For other parents and students who might feel disheartened by their initial results, I want to say this: keep going. Success doesn't come overnight, and even if you don't get into your first-choice school, there are always opportunities for growth. My journey wasn't easy, but by persevering and staying committed, I was able to achieve results I never thought possible.



## From Struggling Writer to James Ruse Offer Holder

When I was in Year 5, I had a lot of difficulty with writing, particularly persuasive writing. It was a real challenge for me. Steve, however, was relentless in helping me improve. He would send me a writing prompt every day, and during the holidays, I ended up working on about 30 different prompts. With Steve's guidance, I noticed a huge improvement in my writing skills over time.

I started at Scholarly when I was in Year 4, and they helped me grow in every area, not just writing. I also struggled with thinking skills, especially with strengthening and weakening questions, which were my weakest point. But Scholarly's support was instrumental in helping me improve, and I eventually received an offer from James Ruse.

If I could offer advice to anyone preparing for these tests, it would be this: listen to your tutors. Everything they teach, from tips to strategies, will eventually become useful. You might not realise it at first, but it sticks with you. With regular practice, revisiting what you got wrong, and doing all your homework and trial tests, you'll start to master the material.

I practiced every day, focusing on my weak points. After that, when it came to the actual test, I found almost every question easy. Scholarly's lessons helped me master everything I needed to know.

For anyone struggling specifically with thinking skills, my advice is to keep reviewing and practicing. Thinking skills can seem like random question styles at first, but once you get used to them, they become much easier. Just stick with the lessons, keep up with the homework, and soon you'll be able to speed through those questions. That's how I managed to achieve success.