



# NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE

*Core Assessments for Certification*



# The Career Readiness Initiative

WorkKeys® is the foundation of the **National Career Readiness Certificate**, which gives job seekers, those who prepare them, and employers a way to connect and communicate.



When individuals score at certain levels on three WorkKeys assessments—Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information—they confirm their competence in a specific set of workplace skills, with each higher-level score indicating readiness for a greater range of jobs.

The National Career Readiness Certificate is designed to complement other traditional credentials—such as a high school diploma, community college degree, or college degree—that mark the fulfillment of an individual’s classroom learning experiences. States or regions with existing certificate programs now have the opportunity to affiliate with the national certificate program. Individuals who hold or obtain an affiliated state or regional certificate can receive a national certificate seal to affix to their certificate and can obtain a national certificate from ACT.

## Using the Core Assessments Booklet

The tables in this booklet are designed to help individuals, employers, educators, and trainers understand the content of the three WorkKeys tests used in the National Career Readiness Certificate.

The tables include:

- The skill levels for each test
- Competencies that individuals are expected to demonstrate at each level
- Characteristics of the questions provided at each level
- A sample test item for each skill level
- Item distribution guidelines that relate to each skill level
- Information about how skills are assessed in relation to specific applications

There also is a section of Frequently Asked Questions about the National Career Readiness Certificate in the back of this booklet.

## WorkKeys is ideally suited for the National Career Readiness Certificate because the system is:

- Meaningful to employers, individuals, educators, and trainers
- Based on work skill levels documented by the national occupational database
- Built on objective, standardized, valid assessment results
- Linked to education/training programs to improve skill levels
- Designed to provide nationwide portability
- Developed by ACT, an internationally recognized measurement and research company
- Available for immediate use in a variety of formats, including Internet-based and paper-and-pencil tests and alternate forms

## Career Readiness Certificate Skill Levels

WorkKeys has generated a database with occupational profiles for thousands of jobs across the country. A majority of the jobs require certain skill levels in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. Individuals with higher skill levels qualify for more jobs. The National Career Readiness Certificate uses test results from these assessments to award certificates in three categories:

**Bronze Level** signifies an individual has scored at least a Level 3 in each of the three core areas (Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information) and has the necessary foundational skills for 35 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

**Silver Level** signifies an individual has scored at least a Level 4 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 65 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

**Gold Level** signifies an individual has scored at least a Level 5 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 90 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.



## WorkKeys Assessments

**Applied Mathematics** measures the skills people use when they apply mathematical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving techniques to work-related problems. The test questions require the individual to set up and solve the types of problems and do the types of calculations that actually occur in the workplace.



**Locating Information** measures the skills people use when they work with workplace graphics. Individuals are asked to find information in a graphic or insert information into a graphic. They also must compare, summarize, and analyze information found in related graphics.

**Reading for Information** measures the skills people use when they read and use written text in order to do a job. The written texts include memos, letters, directions, signs, notices, bulletins, policies, and regulations. It is often the case that workplace communications are not necessarily well written or targeted to the appropriate audience. Reading for Information materials do not include information that is presented graphically, such as in charts, forms, or blueprints.

## WorkKeys Skill Scores

Each of the WorkKeys core assessments generates Level Scores and Scale Scores. Both types of scores indicate an individual's ability to perform more complex skills as the scores increase.

**Level Scores** can be used by employers for selection, promotion, or other individual high-stakes purposes. The scores are designed to be used with the WorkKeys job profiling process for employee selection and promotion decisions and to compare to occupational profiles. Level Scores consist of a range of four or five broad score bands across the performance range.

**Scale Scores** can be used to show growth over time, provide group comparisons in outcomes measurements, and show evidence of ability to benefit. Educators and trainers frequently assess the achievement of their students by administering a pre-test and a post-test in selected subject areas. The Scale Scores can be used to determine improvement as they are finer-grained and sensitive to subtle score changes. Scale Scores are not to be used for hiring or promotion decisions. They are specifically provided for use by education and training organizations to measure growth over time.

# Applied Mathematics

## Items at this Level:

- Translate easily from a word problem to a math equation
- Present all needed information in logical order
- Give no extra information

## Individuals with Level 3 skills can:

- Solve problems that require a single type of mathematics operation (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) using whole numbers
- Add or subtract negative numbers
- Change numbers from one form to another using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, or percentages
- Convert simple money and time units (e.g., hours to minutes)

## Sample Item:\*

In your job as a cashier, a customer gives you a \$20 bill to pay for a can of coffee that costs \$3.84. How much change should you give back?

- A. \$15.26
- B. \$16.16
- C. \$16.26
- D. \$16.84
- E. \$17.16

Level  
Score

3

Scale  
Score  
71–74

## Items at this Level:

- May present information out of order
- May include extra, unnecessary information
- May include a simple chart, diagram, or graph

## Individuals with Level 4 skills can:

- Solve problems that require one or two operations
- Multiply negative numbers
- Calculate averages, simple ratios, simple proportions, or rates using whole numbers and decimals
- Add commonly known fractions, decimals, or percentages (e.g.,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , .75, 25%)
- Add up to three fractions that share a common denominator
- Multiply a mixed number by a whole number or decimal
- Put the information in the right order before performing calculations

## Sample Item:\*

Over the last 5 days, you made the following number of sales calls: 8, 7, 9, 5, and 7. On the average, how many calls did you make each day?

- A. 5.8
- B. 7.0
- C. 7.2
- D. 9.0
- E. 36.0

Level  
Score

4

Scale  
Score  
75–77

\* The format or graphics of the sample item may differ from the practice test item.

**Level  
Score****5**Scale  
Score  
78–81**Items at this Level:**

- Require several steps of logic and calculation (e.g., problem may involve completing an order form by totaling the order and then computing tax)

**Individuals with  
Level 5 skills can:**

- Decide what information, calculations, or unit conversions to use to solve the problem
- Look up a formula and perform single-step conversions within or between systems of measurement
- Calculate using mixed units (e.g., 3.5 hours and 4 hours 30 minutes)
- Divide negative numbers
- Find the best deal using one- and two-step calculations and then comparing results
- Calculate perimeters and areas of basic shapes (rectangles and circles)
- Calculate percent discounts or markups

**Sample Item:\***

Quik Call charges 18¢ per minute for long-distance calls. Econo Phone totals your phone usage each month and rounds the number of minutes up to the nearest 15 minutes. It then charges \$7.90 per hour of phone usage, dividing this charge into 15-minute segments if you used less than a full hour. If your office makes 5 hours 3 minutes worth of calls this month using the company with the lower price, how much will these calls cost?

- A.** \$39.50
- B.** \$41.48
- C.** \$41.87
- D.** \$54.00
- E.** \$54.54

**Level  
Score****6**Scale  
Score  
82–86**Items at this Level:**

- May require considerable translation from verbal form to mathematical expression
- Require considerable setup and involve multiple-step calculations

**Individuals with  
Level 6 skills can:**

- Use fractions, negative numbers, ratios, percentages, or mixed numbers
- Rearrange a formula before solving a problem
- Use two formulas to change from one unit to another within the same system of measurement
- Use two formulas to change from one unit in one system of measurement to a unit in another system of measurement
- Find mistakes in questions that belong at Levels 3, 4, and 5
- Find the best deal and use the result for another calculation
- Find areas of basic shapes when it may be necessary to rearrange the formula, convert units of measurement in the calculations, or use the result in further calculations
- Find the volume of rectangular solids
- Calculate multiple rates

**Sample Item:\***

You are preparing to tile the floor of a rectangular room that is  $15\frac{1}{2}$  feet by  $18\frac{1}{2}$  feet in size. The tiles you plan to use are square measuring 12 inches on each side, and are sold in boxes that contain enough tile to cover 25 square feet. How many boxes of tile must you order to complete the job?

- A.** 11
- B.** 12
- C.** 34
- D.** 59
- E.** 287

\* The format or graphics of the sample item may differ from the practice test item.

**Items at this Level:**

- May contain unusual content or format
- Include information that may be incomplete or implicit
- Involve multiple steps of logic and calculation

**Individuals with Level 7 skills can:**

- Solve problems that include nonlinear functions and/or that involve more than one unknown
- Find mistakes in Level 6 questions
- Convert between systems of measurement that involve fractions, mixed numbers, decimals, and/or percentages
- Calculate multiple areas and volumes of spheres, cylinders, or cones
- Set up and manipulate complex ratios or proportions
- Find the best deal when there are several choices
- Apply basic statistical concepts

**Sample Item:\***

The farm where you just started working has a cylindrical oil tank that is 2.5 feet across on the inside. The depth of the oil in the tank is 2 feet. If 1 cubic foot of space holds 7.48 gallons, about how many gallons of oil are left in the tank?

- A. 37
- B. 59
- C. 73
- D. 230
- E. 294

**Level  
Score****7**Scale  
Score  
87–90

\* The format or graphics of the sample item may differ from the practice test item.

## Applied Mathematics Item Distribution Guidelines

Applied Mathematics test items are designed to assess the following skills. The number of items per level also are provided.

Skill	Number of Items per Level					Total
	Level 3 $\pm^*$ one item	Level 4 $\pm$ one item	Level 5 $\pm$ one item	Level 6 $\pm$ one item	Level 7 $\pm$ one item	
Add, subtract, multiply, and divide positive and negative numbers	5	0	0	0	0	5
Understand and work with fractions	0	1	1	0	0	2
Calculate and convert to percentages	0	1	1	1	1	4
Understand and work with ratios and proportions	0	1	1	1	1	4
Convert from one unit of measurement to another	0	0	0	1	1	2
Calculate time intervals and changes as well as production rates	1	1	1	1	1	5
Use formulas, including those involving perimeter, area, and volume	0	1	1	1	1	4
Solve assorted word problems	0	1	1	1	1	4
<b>Total Number of Items</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30**</b>

\* The symbol  $\pm$  means "plus or minus."

\*\* A small number of additional items are included for developmental purposes. Answers to these developmental questions do not count toward the examinee's score.

## Applied Mathematics Item Application

Applied Mathematics skills are assessed in problems that involve:

Application	Number of Items per Form
Quantities of items	4 $\pm^*$ 1
Money	7 $\pm$ 1
Time	3 $\pm$ 1
Various types of measurement	6 $\pm$ 1
Proportions	4 $\pm$ 1
Percentages	3 $\pm$ 1
Averaging numbers	2 $\pm$ 1
The order or placement of numbers in a sequence	1 $\pm$ 1

\* The symbol  $\pm$  means "plus or minus."



**Level  
Score**

**5**

Scale  
Score  
80–85

**Items at this Level:**

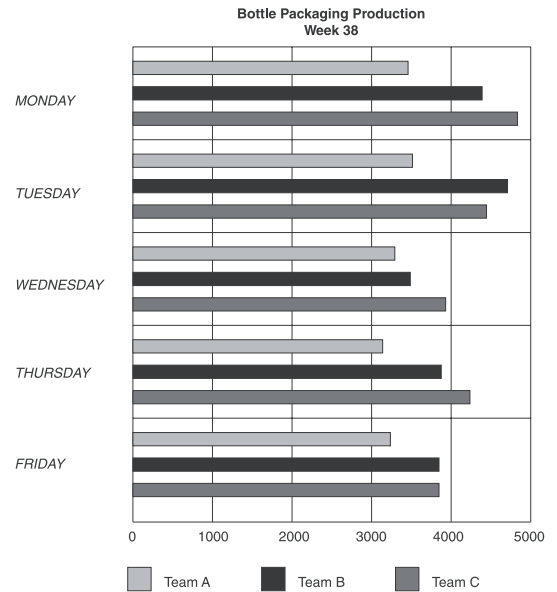
- Use complicated workplace graphics, such as detailed forms, tables, graphs, diagrams, maps, or instrument gauges
- Have graphics with less common formats
- Use one or more graphics at a time

**Individuals with Level 5 skills can:**

- Sort through distracting information
- Summarize information from one or more detailed graphics
- Identify trends shown in one or more detailed or complicated graphics
- Compare information and trends from one or more complicated graphics

**Sample Item:\***

You are a line supervisor at a plant that packages dishwashing soap in bottles. Each week you review the production rates for the three teams that work on your line. According to the bar chart shown, which team had the highest overall production for Week 38?



- A.** Team A
- B.** Team B
- C.** Team C
- D.** Team A and Team B had the same high production rate.
- E.** Team B and Team C had the same high production rate.

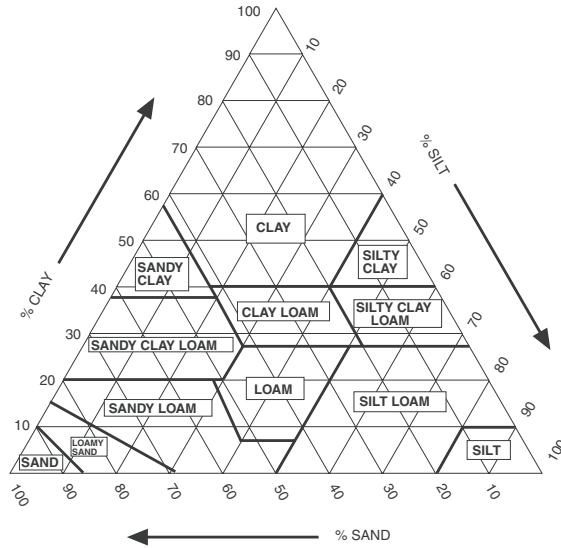
\* The format or graphics of the sample item may differ from the practice test item.

**Items at this Level:**

- Use very complicated and detailed graphs, charts, tables, forms, maps, and diagrams
- Contain graphics with large amounts of information and challenging formats
- Use one or more graphics at a time
- Make subtle connections between graphics

**Individuals with Level 6 skills can:**

- Draw conclusions based on one complicated graphic or several related graphics
- Apply information from one or more complicated graphics to specific situations
- Use the information to make decisions



Soil name	Texture class	Depth (inches)	Shrink-swell potential
Sarpy	sandy loam	0-7 7-60	low low to moderate
Kennebec	silt loam	0-38 38-60	moderate low to moderate
Colo	silty clay loam	0-31 31-60	high high
Blend	silty clay	0-17 17-29 29-60	high moderate to high high
Nevin	clay loam	0-28 28-48 48-60	moderate to high moderate moderate
Kenmoor	loamy sand	0-24 24-60	low high

**Sample Item:\***

You are a road contractor and you have analyzed a soil that you want to use for road fill. Your analysis shows that the soil contains 15% sand, 65% silt, and 20% clay. You need to know what the shrink-swell potential is for the soil because it will affect the durability of the road. Based on the diagram and table shown, what is the shrink-swell potential at a 30-inch depth for this soil?

- A. Low
- B. Low to moderate
- C. Moderate
- D. Moderate to high
- E. High

**Level Score**

**6**

Scale Score  
86-90

\* The format or graphics of the sample item may differ from the practice test item.

## Locating Information Item Distribution Guidelines

Locating Information test items are designed to assess the following skills. The percent of items for each skill also are provided.

Skill	Number of Items per Level				
	Level 3	Level 4 ±* one item	Level 5 ± one item	Level 6 ± one item	Total
Finding one, two, or several pieces of information in one or more graphics	8	3	2	0	<b>13</b>
Summarizing and/or comparing information in one or more graphics	0	3	3	2	<b>8</b>
Drawing conclusions from the information presented	0	1	1	2	<b>4</b>
Applying information from the graphic(s) to specific situations	0	1	1	2	<b>4</b>
Making decisions and/or predictions based on the information presented	0	0	1	2	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Number of Items</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>32**</b>

\* The symbol ± means "plus or minus."

\*\* A small number of additional items are included for developmental purposes. Answers to these developmental questions do not count toward the examinee's score.

## Locating Information Item Application

Items in each test form use workplace graphics such as the following. At the more complex levels, more graphics are used and they are more complicated.

Type of Graphic	Number of Items per Form
Tables	10 ±* 2
Graphs (line graphs, bar graphs, pie charts)	7 ± 2
Forms	5 ± 2
Charts (flow charts, Gantt charts, schedules, timelines)	2 ± 1
Diagrams	6 ± 2
Maps and blueprints	2 ± 1

\* The symbol ± means "plus or minus."

# Reading for Information

<p><b>Materials at this Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Include basic reading materials (company policies, procedures, and announcements)</li> <li>■ Are short and simple, with no extra information</li> <li>■ Tell readers what they should do</li> <li>■ Are stated clearly and directly</li> </ul> <p><b>Items at this Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Focus on the main points of the passages</li> <li>■ Use wording that is similar or identical to the wording used in the reading materials</li> </ul>	<p><b>Individuals with Level 3 skills can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify main ideas and clearly stated details</li> <li>■ Choose the correct meaning of a word that is clearly defined in the reading</li> <li>■ Choose the correct meaning of common, everyday workplace words</li> <li>■ Choose when to perform each step in a short series of steps</li> <li>■ Apply instructions to a situation that is the same as the one in the reading materials</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sample Item:*</b></p> <p><i>MEMO</i></p> <p>To: All businesses in Logan City Mall From: Philip Charles, Logan City Mall Manager</p> <p>Re: New garbage collection rules</p> <p>Logan City Mall has hired a new garbage collection company. Speedy Sanitation, Inc. will be collecting garbage from all businesses starting next Monday. Collection days will not change. The pick-up time will be one hour later. Each business will be given one blue garbage can to use. Each business may ask for 2 extra garbage cans. You may have a total of 3 garbage cans. You will not need yellow collection tags anymore. Full garbage cans must weigh less than 30 pounds. Put your garbage cans in the alley behind your business's back door.</p> <p>Based on the memo shown, starting next Monday, what is the greatest number of garbage cans each business is allowed to have?</p> <p><b>A.</b> 1 <b>B.</b> 2 <b>C.</b> 3 <b>D.</b> 15 <b>E.</b> 30</p>
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**Level Score**

**3**

Scale Score  
73–74

<p><b>Materials at this Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Include company policies, procedures, and notices</li> <li>■ Are straightforward, but have longer sentences and contain a number of details</li> <li>■ Use common words, but do have some harder words, too</li> <li>■ Describe procedures that include several steps</li> </ul> <p><b>Items at this Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Require individuals to think about changing conditions that affect what they should do when following procedures</li> <li>■ Paraphrase text from the document</li> </ul>	<p><b>Individuals with Level 4 skills can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify important details that may not be clearly stated</li> <li>■ Use the reading material to figure out the meaning of words that are not defined</li> <li>■ Apply instructions with several steps to a situation that is the same as the situation in the reading materials</li> <li>■ Choose what to do when changing conditions call for a different action (follow directions that include “if-then” statements)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sample Item:*</b></p> <p><i>Greenfield Memorial Hospital</i></p> <p>During and after a snowstorm, there will be both route and schedule changes for the hospital employee bus. The bus will run 15 minutes early, so be at your stop early. The bus will not stop at Bellevue Square or the Stadium. Employees usually boarding at those places will be picked up at the Eastdale Mall stop. Olive Street will be closed, so people usually picked up at that stop must walk to the Spring Street stop. If your stop is on a hillside, wait at the city bus stop closest to the top of the hill, so that the driver can stop safely. At stops where the snow has been piled deep at the curb, be prepared to board out in the street. Ice storms may cause the shuttle service to be canceled for a period of time. Listen to your local radio station after an ice storm. Any cancellations will be announced regularly.</p> <p>Bellevue Square is your usual stop. According to the instructions shown, after a snowstorm, you should go to which stop?</p> <p><b>A.</b> Bellevue Square <b>B.</b> Eastdale Mall <b>C.</b> Olive Street <b>D.</b> Spring Street <b>E.</b> The Stadium</p>
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**Level Score**

**4**

Scale Score  
75–78

\* Actual WorkKeys materials are formatted to mimic real workplace documents.

**Level  
Score**

**5**

Scale  
Score  
79–81

**Materials at this Level:**

- Include policies, procedures, and announcements
- Include all of the information needed to finish a task
- Are stated clearly and directly, but the materials have many details
- Include jargon, technical terms, acronyms, or words that have several meanings

**Items at this Level:**

- Require application of information given in the passage to a situation that is not specifically described in the passage
- Require several considerations to be taken into account in order to choose the correct actions

**Individuals with  
Level 5 skills can:**

- Figure out the correct meaning of a word based on how the word is used
- Identify the correct meaning of an acronym that is defined in the document
- Identify the paraphrased definition of a technical term or jargon that is defined in the document
- Apply technical terms and jargon and relate them to stated situations
- Apply straightforward instructions to a new situation that is similar to the one described in the material
- Apply complex instructions that include conditionals to situations described in the materials

**Sample Item:\***

Goldberg's Auto Parts is served by more than fifty different accounts, each with its own sales representative, company name, corporate address, and shipping address. As a shipping and receiving clerk at Goldberg's, you are required to return defective merchandise to the manufacturer.

Standard procedure for returning an item begins with your written request to the company for authorization. Always send the request to the corporate address, not to the shipping address. Unless the company file folder contains a form for this procedure, write a business letter to the manufacturer supplying the item's stock number, cost, and invoice number; the date it was received; and the reason for its return. The manufacturer's reply will include an authorization number from the sales representative, a sticker for you to place on the outside of the box to identify it as an authorized return, and a closing date for the company's acceptance of the returned item. If you do not attach the provided sticker, your returned box will be refused by the manufacturer as unauthorized, and you will need to obtain a new letter, authorization, sticker, and closing date. Always send a returned box to the shipping address, not to the company's corporate address.

According to the policy shown, what should you do if you lose an authorization sticker?

- A.** Send a request for a return authorization along with the rejected part directly to the manufacturer's shipping address.
- B.** Send a request for a return authorization along with the rejected part directly to the manufacturer's corporate address.
- C.** Repeat the standard procedure to obtain a new letter, authorization, sticker, and closing date.
- D.** Use a sticker from another company's folder.
- E.** Send the rejected part to your sales representative.

\* Actual WorkKeys materials are formatted to mimic real workplace documents.

**Materials at this Level:**

- Include elaborate procedures, complicated information, and legal regulations found in all kinds of workplace documents
- Have complicated sentences with difficult words, jargon, and technical terms
- Do not clearly state most of the information needed to answer the item

**Individuals with****Level 6 skills can:**

- Identify implied details
- Use technical terms and jargon in new situations
- Figure out the less common meaning of a word based on the context
- Apply complicated instructions to new situations
- Figure out the principles behind policies, rules, and procedures
- Apply general principles from the materials to similar and new situations
- Explain the rationale behind a procedure, policy, or communication

**Sample Item:\*****Section 113.18**

A lawful fence shall consist of:

- 1) Three rails of good substantial material fastened in or to good substantial posts not more than ten feet apart.  
OR
- 2) Three boards not less than six inches wide and three-quarters of an inch thick, fastened in or to good substantial posts not more than eight feet apart.  
OR
- 3) Three wires, barbed, with not less than thirty-six iron barbs of two points each on each rod of wire; or four wires, two thus barbed and two smooth. The wires are to be firmly fastened to posts not more than two rods apart, with not less than two stays between posts, or with posts not more than one rod apart without such stays, the top wire to be not more than fifty-four or less than forty-eight inches in height. The bottom wire should be not less than twelve or more than eighteen inches above the ground. The middle wire should be not less than twelve or more than eighteen inches above the bottom wire.  
OR
- 4) Wire either wholly or in part substantially built and kept in good repair, the lowest or bottom rail, wire, or board to be not more than twenty or less than sixteen inches from the ground, the top rail, wire, or board, between forty-eight and fifty-four inches in height; and the middle rail, wire, or board, not less than twelve or more than eighteen inches above the bottom rail, wire, or board.

*A farmer's fence has three barbed wires attached to posts spaced two rods apart with two stays between posts. The top wire is forty-nine inches in height. The bottom wire is ten inches above the ground. Based on the regulation shown, why is the fence NOT lawful under Section 113.18?*

- A.** The fence must have four wires, two smooth and two barbed.
- B.** The fence posts should be spaced closer together.
- C.** The top wire should be higher.
- D.** There should be more stays.
- E.** The bottom wire should be higher.

**Level  
Score**

**6**

Scale  
Score  
82–84

\* Actual WorkKeys materials are formatted to mimic real workplace documents.

**Level  
Score**

**7**

Scale  
Score  
85–90

**Materials at this Level:**

- Include very complex reading materials
- Include a lot of details
- Include complicated concepts
- Use difficult vocabulary
- Contain unusual jargon and technical terms that are not defined
- Include writing that lacks clarity and direction

**Items at this Level:**

- Require readers to draw conclusions from some parts of the reading and apply them to other parts

**Individuals with Level 7 skills can:**

- Figure out the definitions of difficult, uncommon words based on how they are used
- Figure out the meaning of jargon or technical terms based on how they are used
- Figure out the general principles behind policies and apply them to situations that are quite different from any described in the materials

**Sample Item:\***

**Section 108**

- a) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 106, it is not an infringement of copyright for a library or archive, or any of its employees acting within the scope of their employment, to reproduce no more than one copy or phonorecord of a work, or to distribute such copy or phonorecord under the conditions specified by this section if
- 1) the reproduction or distribution is made without any purpose of direct or indirect commercial advantage;
  - 2) the collections of the library or archive are (i) open to the public, or (ii) available not only to researchers affiliated with the library or archive or with the institution of which it is a part, but also to other persons doing research in a specialized field; and
  - 3) the reproduction or distribution of the work includes a notice of copyright.
- b) The rights of reproduction and distribution under this section apply to a copy or phonorecord of an unpublished work duplicated in facsimile form solely for purposes of preservation and security, or for deposit for research use in another library or archive of the type described by clause (2) of subsection (a), if the copy or phonorecord reproduced is currently in the collections of that library or archive.
- c) The right of reproduction under this section applies to a copy or phonorecord of a published work duplicated in facsimile form solely for the purpose of replacement of a copy or phonorecord that is damaged, deteriorating, lost, or stolen, if the library or archive has, after a reasonable effort, determined that an unused replacement cannot be obtained at fair cost.

*Based on the information given, which of the following conditions would prohibit a city employee from photocopying an unpublished manuscript?*

- A.** If the city library is accessible to any and all citizens and researchers
- B.** If the city library's original copy of the manuscript is in danger of damage through use
- C.** If the employee makes only one copy of the manuscript as a secure transcription
- D.** If the photocopy is to be sent to a public research library that does not have a copy of the manuscript
- E.** If the photocopy would not produce any income for the city library

\* Actual WorkKeys materials are formatted to mimic real workplace documents.

## Reading for Information Item Distribution Guidelines

Reading for Information test items are designed to assess the following skills. The number of items per level also are provided.

Skill	Number of Items per Level					
	Level 3 ±* one item	Level 4 ± one item	Level 5 ± one item	Level 6 ± one item	Level 7 ± one item	Total
Identifying the main idea or details, both obvious and implied	3	2	2	1	1	9
Understanding word and acronym meanings using context, ranging from explicit to implied definitions	1	1	1	1	1	5
Applying instructions by sequencing steps, knowing when to use conditions and cause and effect	2	2	1	1	0	6
Applying information to described and new situations	0	1	2	1	1	5
Analyzing and synthesizing information to identify rationale and principles and apply them to new situations	0	0	0	2	3	5
<b>Total Number of Items</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30**</b>

\* The symbol ± means "plus or minus."

\*\* A small number of additional items are included for developmental purposes. Answers to these developmental questions do not count toward the examinee's score.

## Reading for Information Document Types

Items are based on the following types of workplace documents:

Document Type	Number of Items per Form
Contract	2 ±* 1
Policy	7 ± 2
Instructions	13 ± 2
Legal Document	2 ± 1
Information	6 ± 2

\* The symbol ± means "plus or minus."

# Frequently Asked Questions About the National Career Readiness Certificate

## **When is the certificate issued?**

The National Career Readiness Certificate is issued after an individual achieves at least skill Level 3 on three of the WorkKeys assessments—Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. These assessments are administered by colleges, schools, employers, and government entities.

## **How do employers use the certificates?**

The certificates can be considered along with other education and background information when making employment and training decisions. They might be considered as a “plus” when presented to an employer during the hiring process. They also may help identify who can benefit from specific training programs.

## **How does the certificate fit into an employer’s existing hiring practices?**

Certificates provide an additional data point to make employment decisions. If an employer is already using one or more of the WorkKeys assessments, applicants with a national certificate may be able to skip those tests, resulting in cost savings for the employer. In other cases, an employer may ask for certificate results to reduce hiring time and costs.

## **Are the skill levels on the assessments related to job skill requirements?**

The WorkKeys assessments contain situations, reading materials, problems, and messages directly related to activities in the workplace. The assessments are criteria-referenced to skills and skill levels that employers have determined are necessary for successful performance in the workplace.



## What are the certificate skill levels?

The WorkKeys job profiling process has generated a database with occupational profiles for thousands of jobs across the country. A majority of the jobs in the database require certain skill levels in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. The higher the skill levels, the more jobs for which the applicant qualifies.

The certificates are given in three categories:

**Bronze Level** signifies an individual has scored at least a Level 3 in each of the three core areas (Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information) and has the necessary skills for 35 percent of the jobs as documented in the occupational database.

**Silver Level** signifies an individual has scored at least a Level 4 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary skills for 65 percent of the jobs as documented in the occupational database.

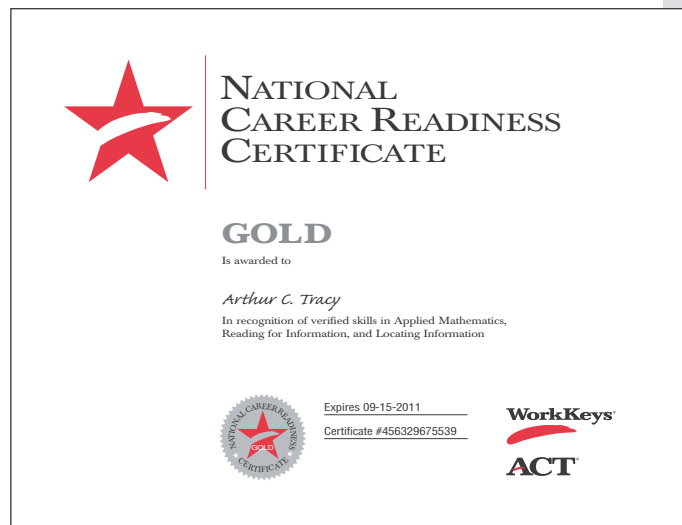
**Gold Level** signifies an individual has scored at a Level 5 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary skills for 90 percent of the jobs as documented in the occupational database.

## What is the life cycle of the certificate?

Certificates should be renewed after five years. As with any educational or skill credential, the experiences or skills it represents may change.

### **I have a high school diploma. Do I still need a National Career Readiness Certificate?**

Yes. The certificate shows your qualifications in essential workplace skills.



## Benefits of Career Readiness Certificate Programs

- Enable educators, economic developers, and businesses to work collaboratively toward the common goal of a well-trained workforce
- Document that the workforce is ready for jobs that are available
- Serve as a proven economic development tool
- Explain to job seekers and applicants the skills they are going to need for jobs
- Increase the tax base of a state
- Help educators adequately prepare students for careers and the workplace
- Increase communication between educators, workforce developers, and employers

### How can individuals prepare to do well on the WorkKeys assessments?

Individual practice tests and test prep packages are available for Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, Reading for Information, and Applied Technology. These paper-and-pencil test prep items are available to education and government testing sites only. Call 1-800/WORKKEY (967-5539) for information. Computer-based practice tests are available for individuals to purchase at [www.act.org/workkeys/practice/index.html](http://www.act.org/workkeys/practice/index.html).

### How can work readiness skills be integrated into the curriculum?

Our *Targets for Instruction* can help with curriculum development and instructional strategies for each WorkKeys skill area. The *Targets* can help identify skill-building strategies and learning objectives and provide detailed information about each assessment and skill levels. Outside publishers also offer prepackaged curriculum programs. For more information, go to [www.act.org/workkeys/sktrain/index.html](http://www.act.org/workkeys/sktrain/index.html).

### Do minority populations benefit from participating in certificate programs?

WorkKeys provides all individuals, independent of their racial/ethnic background, a fair opportunity to demonstrate their skills. To ensure this opportunity, the WorkKeys assessments are developed according to high professional standards. Assessment items are subjected to an external review for cultural bias and are analyzed to ensure they provide a fair test of the skills being assessed. The important consideration is that individuals have access to a valid and reliable indicator of their skills so their strengths and weaknesses can be accurately identified and addressed.



### **How many states have affiliated with the National Career Readiness Certificate?**

Several states already have affiliated with the National Career Readiness Certificate, including Alabama, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Many other state and regional programs are in the development and implementation stages. Individuals who meet national performance standards through their state programs are eligible to receive the National Career Readiness Certificate or obtain a national certificate seal to affix to their state certificate. Individuals can also request a national certificate if they are searching for employment on a national basis. For the most up-to-date list of state initiatives, visit our website at [www.NationalCareerReadiness.org](http://www.NationalCareerReadiness.org).

### **Are the assessments or the certificates approved by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)?**

The EEOC does not approve assessments or certificates; rather, the EEOC has established a set of guidelines, called the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures. The Guidelines note that employers are ultimately responsible for the procedures they use in making employment decisions. When assessments are involved in making high-stakes decisions in the employment context, such as hiring and promotion, the Guidelines allow employers to support their use by referencing studies conducted by test publishers or distributors. The studies must show that the assessments are job-related, valid, and fair. The WorkKeys system, and the assessments used to award the National Career Readiness Certificate, are designed to comply with these Guidelines.









# WorkKeys®



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