

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COGAT

### **What type of test is the CogAT?**

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is a nationally standardized, norm-referenced test. In our district, the CogAT is administered on a computer, with the exception of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Screener which is a pencil & paper fill-in-the-bubble format. Questions are all multiple choice. On the computerized version, directions are read to the student through headphones and there is only one question per screen.

### **Are there practice questions?**

Yes. All versions of the test provide sample questions for every subtest in every section so students are familiar with the types of questions that will be asked and with the format of the test. These sample questions are given immediately before the test is administered.

### **What does the CogAT measure?**

The CogAT measures reasoning and problem-solving skills in three different areas: Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal. Reasoning skills develop gradually throughout a person's lifetime and at different rates for different individuals. The CogAT does not measure such factors as effort, attention, motivation, and work habits, which also contribute importantly to school achievement. The CogAT measures both general and specific cognitive abilities. The general reasoning abilities measured by the test show the cognitive process and strategies that help a student learn new tasks or solve problems.

### **Is the CogAT a measure of achievement?**

No. It is a measure of reasoning ability in specific aptitude areas.

### **How do the three sections of the CogAT differ?**

- The **Verbal Battery** measures flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in reasoning with verbal materials and in solving verbal problems. These reasoning abilities play an important role in reading comprehension, critical thinking, writing, and virtually all verbal learning tasks.
- The **Quantitative Battery** measures quantitative reasoning skills; flexibility and fluency in working with quantitative symbols and concepts; and the ability to organize, structure, and give meaning to an unordered set of numerals and mathematical symbols. These reasoning skills are significantly related to problem solving in mathematics and other disciplines.
- The **Nonverbal Battery** measures reasoning using geometric shapes and figures. To perform successfully, students must invent strategies for solving novel problems. They must be flexible in using these strategies and accurate in implementing them.

### **What type of results does the CogAT provide?**

The CogAT provides Raw scores, Standard Age and/or Grade scores, Percentile Rank scores and Stanine scores.

### **What are the Raw Scores?**

The raw scores are simply the number of questions asked in a particular section, the number of questions the student answered, and the number of questions the student answered correctly.

### **What is the Standard Age Score (SAS)?**

The standard age score is a number that allows the teacher to compare the rate and level of a student's cognitive development with other students the same age. It has a mean of 100, so if a student has a SAS of 100 s/he is typical of students for her/his age. If a student has a SAS of 125, that student has a higher and faster rate of learning than most students her/his age. The highest SAS a child can receive on the CogAT is 150.

### **Is the SAS the same as an IQ score?**

No. The CogAT measures a student's reasoning ability developed through experiences within and outside of school. This reasoning ability begins to develop soon after birth and continues through early adulthood. IQ tests measure what is generally considered to be a person's innate ability or aptitude.

### **What does the Percentile Rank score mean?**

A percentile rank indicates the percentage of students in the same age or grade group whose scores fall below the score obtained by a particular student. For example, if a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student receives a Grade Percentile Rank of 90 on the Quantitative Battery, it means that 90% of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the norming sample received scores lower than the one received by the student.

### **What is a stanine score?**

The stanine score is a normalized standard score ranging from 1-9 and are closely correlated to percentile rankings. Stanines are grouped as follows:

- Stanine 9: Very High
- Stanines 7-8: Above Average
- Stanines 4-6: Average
- Stanines 2-3: Below Average
- Stanine 1: Very Low

### **Do parents receive a copy of their student's CogAT scores?**

Yes. After all data is collected and the selection process is complete, parents will be mailed a results letter and a copy of their student's CogAT Student Profile Narrative. The Profile lists all scores that the CogAT provides as well as instructional strategies for helping a student build on her or his strengths and improve areas of challenge.