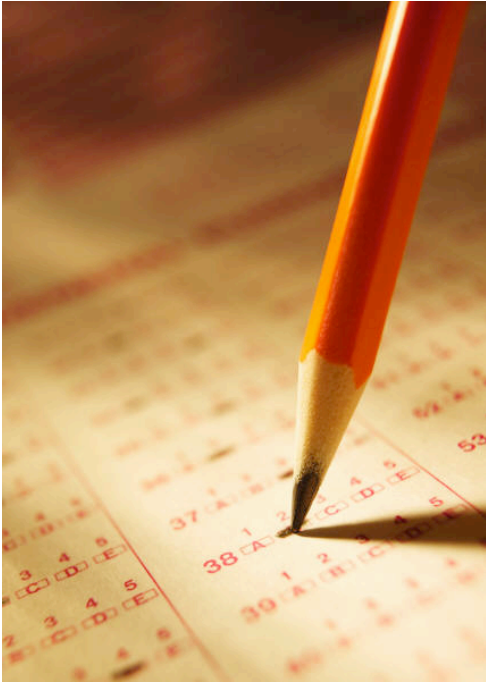


Preparing Students for the *ITBS* or *ITED*: A Professional Development Opportunity for Iowa Educators



Have you or your staff ever wondered ...

- What can be done to help prepare students for taking the *ITBS* or *ITED*?
- When does “test preparation” become “cheating?”
- When does “alignment” become “teaching the test?”
- What should you do if you feel pressured to use inappropriate test preparation activities with your students?

If so, you are not alone. Many Iowa educators are asking these same types of questions.

To assist Iowa educators in answering these types of questions, the Iowa Department of Education commissioned the production of a professional development module to promote sound decisions regarding activities associated with preparing students to take the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* or *Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED)*.

This module, titled Test Preparation: Considering the Appropriateness of these Activities, can be accessed at:

<http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/blogcategory/497/920/>

For more information, see pages 2 and 3 of this pamphlet.

Test Preparation: Considering the Appropriateness of these Activities

A Professional Development Module for Iowa Educators

What if the following headline was in your local paper? In the *Des Moines Register*?
What would be the potential fallout?

Local School Cheats on State Test

Even if the allegation isn't true, the simple suggestion of impropriety can be severely damaging to the integrity of the teachers and/or school. More importantly, the damage to students (e.g., belief that cheating is acceptable, or even expected) might be irreparable.

Although the *ITBS/ITED* have been used in Iowa schools for nearly 70 years, the enactment of NCLB has added school-level accountability to the ways in which the scores from these tests are being used. Thus, it's likely that many educators have been (or will be) inclined to respond to external pressure to increase student scores by engaging students in test-preparation activities. Because some of these activities can result in inaccurate scores and produce negative consequences for students, teachers, schools, parents, and the community, it is important that educators (teachers and administrators) be able to make educationally and ethically defensible decisions about what types of activities can be used and in what contexts.

Purpose & Objectives:

This module, commissioned by the Iowa Department of Education, was designed for use by Iowa educators to assist them in making sound decisions regarding activities associated with preparing students to take the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* or *Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED)*. At the completion of this professional development module, educators should be able to:

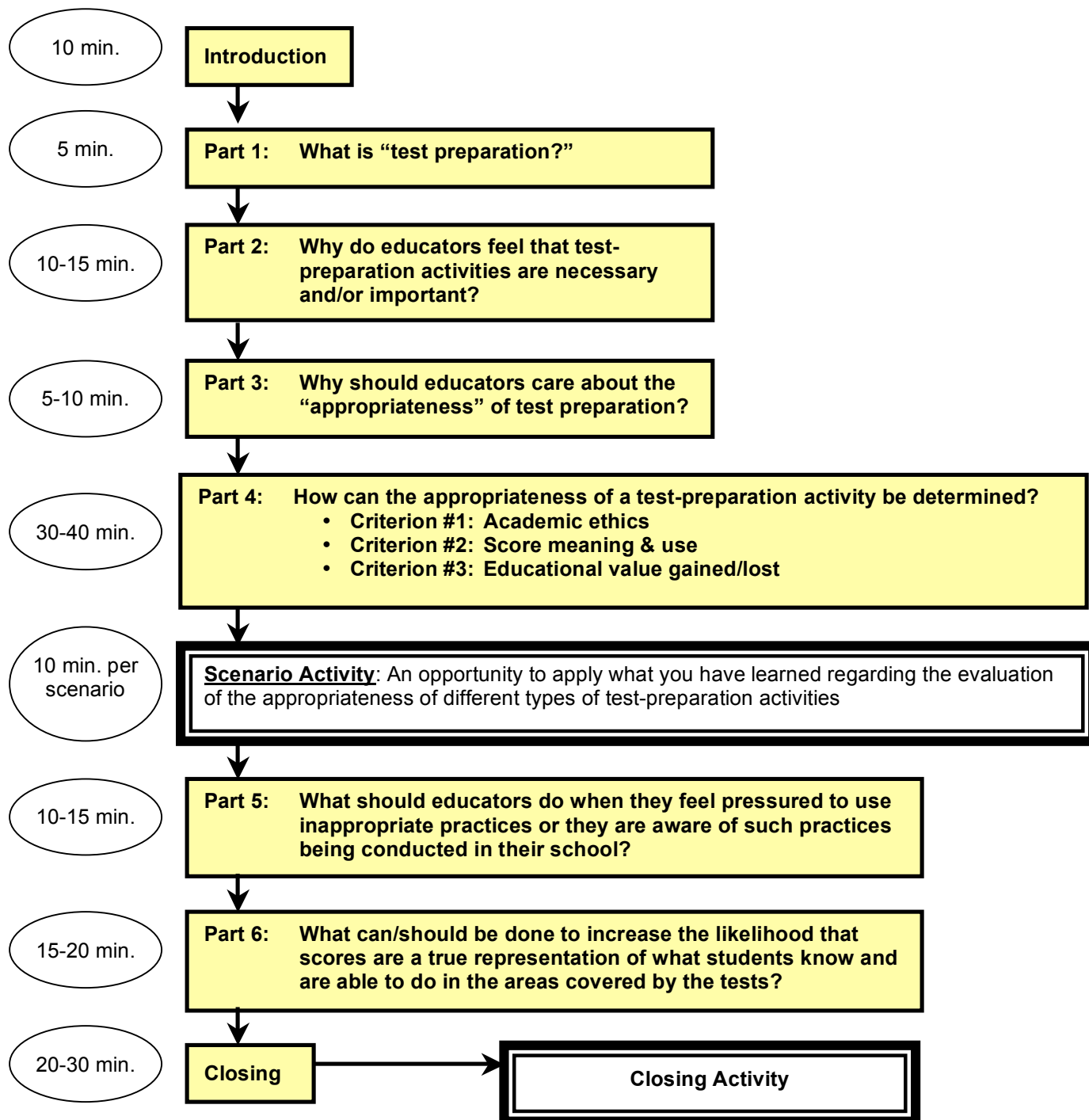
1. Explain how criteria related to academic ethics, score meaning & use, and educational value are related to test-preparation activities.
2. Explain how the ways in which the *Iowa Tests* are used in the state have bearing on the appropriateness of a given test-preparation activity, in terms of academic ethics and/or score meaning & use.
3. Use criteria related to academic ethics, score meaning & use, and educational value to evaluate the appropriateness of a given test-preparation activity and make recommendations regarding how the activity might be modified, if necessary, to be more appropriate in light of these three criteria.
4. Identify negative consequences for students, teachers, schools, parents, and the community resulting from the use of improper test-preparation activities.
5. Conceptualize a personal philosophy regarding test preparation, which incorporates the three criteria related to academic ethics, score meaning & use, and educational value.

Accessing the Module:

You can access this module at: <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/blogcategory/497/920/>
For an overview of the module: See page 3 of this pamphlet
For more information, contact: Diane Chadwick, Iowa Department of Education, 515-281-3718.

Overview of the Module:

This professional development program was designed so that individual educators could complete the program independently, or so that groups of educators could work together in small group settings with opportunities for discussion. Opportunities for reflection and interaction have been incorporated throughout the module. An outline of the program, with estimated time requirements, is provided below.



Total amount of time required: About 2.5 to 3 hours, depending on the amount and type of discussion and interactions