

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE ISEB COMMON PRE-TESTS

The Common Pre-Tests are online, age-standardised tests taken in Year 6 or 7 as part of the entry process to senior schools. The tests are popular amongst schools as they adeptly identify pupils' aptitude through Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning, and attainment through Maths and English. There is only one set of tests meaning that your child will miss fewer lessons, with teaching and learning time prioritised over test time. The aim of the tests is to demonstrate your child's potential, rather than their current knowledge.

HOW IS YOUR CHILD REGISTERED FOR THE COMMON PRE-TESTS?

From Autumn 2022, parents/guardians will register their children for the Common Pre-Tests, via the ISEB Registration Portal.

Parent/guardian registration is:

- **Free:** there will be no charge to parents/guardians for registering children for the new Common Pre-Tests.
- **Simple:** registration will be completed through an easy-to-use online admissions platform (the ISEB Guardian Portal).
- **Quick:** you will only need to register your child for the test once, no matter how many different schools they are applying for.
- **Editable:** you may return to the Guardian Portal to add to or amend your child's registration.



HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WITH TEST PREPARATION?

There is no need for special preparation or tutoring to prepare your child for the Common Pre-Tests. Instead, you can support your child through games and activities at home, giving more time to the sections that they find challenging, which their teachers will be able to identify for you.

This resource provides a series of tips and ideas for how you can support your child at home, from a range of experienced teachers and educational experts. It also includes recommendations for resources such as free or affordable games and apps you could use with your child.

For further ideas and information about the Common Pre-Tests visit our [Families Hub](#).



@ISEBawards

www.iseb.co.uk/cpt



ISEB
Independent Schools
Examinations Board

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE ISEB COMMON PRE-TESTS

ENGLISH AND VERBAL REASONING

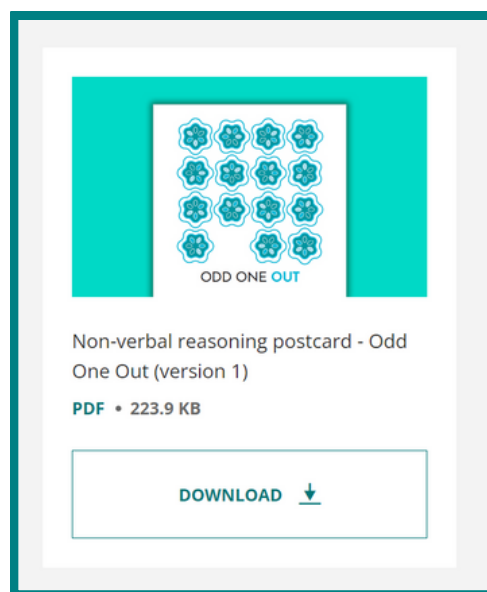
For the English and Verbal Reasoning tests, English teacher Adam Bernard and Verbal Reasoning expert Chris Pearce stress the importance of building vocabulary. They suggest:

- **Reading to your children** and encouraging them to read to you. Ensure that you show interest in their reading (regardless of the text!) and find time to discuss their thoughts and questions afterwards.
- **Using books to create word lists.** For example, ask your child how many compound words they can find in a book, or if they can find a specific letter string like -ight or -ment.
- **Using audiobooks** at bedtime or in the car.
- **Generating conversations** at dinner time. Adam says parents should 'try to get children to engage verbally and articulate ideas, as spoken word can often impact written speech'.
- **Encouraging repetition.** 'The key to building vocabulary is putting words into context' says Chris. Researchers estimate it could take as many as 17 repetitions for pupils to learn a new word. Flashcards can be a really useful way to store vocabulary and a powerful learning tool.
- **Sticking colourful post-it notes around the house** with key terminology written on them. Points systems work well; for example one point for simpler vocabulary and two points for more challenging terminology. Once a child has a certain number of points they can trade them for prizes, offering a clear incentive whilst increasing the fun around learning.
- **Making time for family game nights** with any word-based games such as Boggle, Scrabble, Word-Up, Bananagrams or Articulate.

NON-VERBAL REASONING

For the Non-Verbal Reasoning test, Chris suggests:

- **Playing SET as a family**, in order to learn the key things to look for when answering a question (shape, position, angle, number, size, shading, rotation, overlapping, symmetry).
- **Playing Spot the Difference** can help pupils recognise shapes and different positions as well as the shading, number, and the change in size of objects. Many NVR questions involve spotting differences and similarities between shapes.
- **Discussing possible answers** to make sure your child can articulate how they have achieved an answer.
- **Playing with LEGO, Meccano, or Laser Pegs** which are all great for improving spatial awareness.
- **Playing games such as Q-Bitz** which work well for rotation, symmetry, and visualisation skills.



Visit our [Families Hub](#) to download a series of free NVR postcards.



@ISEBawards

www.iseb.co.uk/cpt



ISEB
Independent Schools
Examinations Board

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE ISEB COMMON PRE-TESTS

MATHS

The ISEB Maths test is based on the National Curriculum Programme of Study, up to the end of Year 5. Your child will cover the topics included in the test at their current school. Some children find maths tests quite daunting, however they will be allowed a pen and paper during the test to jot down any calculations or notes that they want to make. This working paper is not marked.

Sometimes in maths tests, pupils make mistakes because they haven't read the question properly or have used the wrong operation. Reading the question carefully is very important. Supporting your child in learning their times tables is also a good way to help them become more confident.



EXAMPLES OF GAMES AND RESOURCES

ENGLISH AND NON-VERBAL REASONING

- Word-based board games - if you are tired of the traditional ones such as Scrabble, try [The Happy Puzzle Company](#).
- Word Search and vocabulary crosswords - encourage your children to make up their own, too.
- Online games such as [BBC Bitesize Small Town Superheroes](#) for spelling and punctuation.
- iPad/tablet apps such as [Vocab Victor](#), [Endless Alphabet](#), [Spelling City](#) and [Wordle](#).

NON-VERBAL REASONING

- Download our free [NVR postcards](#) from our Families Hub.
- Board games such as [Q-Bitz](#), or shape games from [The Happy Puzzle Company](#).
- iPad/tablet apps such as [Learning Patterns](#) and [Patterns](#).

MATHS

- [BBC Bitesize](#) offers a range of Maths games and resources.
- Maths games from [The Happy Puzzle Company](#).
- iPad/tablet apps such as [DoodleMaths](#) and [Prodigy](#).
- [Times Table Rock Stars](#)

THE ISEB FAMILIES HUB

Visit our [Families Hub](#) to access an ever-growing range of exam support and guidance.



@ISEBawards

www.iseb.co.uk/cpt



ISEB
Independent Schools
Examinations Board

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE ISEB COMMON PRE-TESTS

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING

Creating a clear, organised, and comfortable study area for your child is key for both wellbeing and motivation. Try to make revising fun - using flash cards and games can help keep it exciting. Make sure your child is taking breaks to enjoy other activities and to keep energy levels up. Avoid any pressure - try to focus your child to doing their best.



THE ISEB TEST WALKTHROUGH

The ISEB Test Walkthrough (available from July 2022) is an essential support tool, especially for pupils with SEND. Exploring this with your child means you can:

- Try out the different coloured overlays provided to find out which colour best reduces any visual disturbance.
- Practice increasing and decreasing the font size so your child becomes familiar with this feature.
- View the different tests to get an idea about the style of questions that could come up.
- Practice selecting the correct answer to become used to the platform.

TIPS FOR TEST DAY

Chris suggests that as parents/guardians you:

- Make sure that your child eats a good breakfast on exam day.
- Do not encourage last-minute exam practice, as this may cause panic and stress if your child doesn't remember something.
- Be positive and promote the tests as an opportunity for your child to show off their learning.
- Leave for the exam in good time in order to keep stress levels down.

PUPIL REGISTRATION

From September 2022, you will need to register your child for the ISEB Common Pre-Tests, as their parent/guardian.

To find out more, visit our [Common Pre-Tests registration information for parents/guardians web page](#), and join our mailing list to be kept up to date on all available registration information, news and timelines.

FURTHER SUPPORT

Visit the [ISEB Families Hub](#) to access an ever-growing resource of information, support and guidance for families. For specific information about the ISEB Common Pre-Tests, visit the [Common Pre-Tests Information for families page](#) on our website, where you will find exam resources, information and FAQs, as well as important news and updates.



@ISEBawards

www.iseb.co.uk/cpt



ISEB
Independent Schools
Examinations Board