

REEP FAQ

Below you will find questions and answers about the REEP. As your own questions arise, please review this FAQ for answers. If you don't find your answer here, please contact Christine Ellersick at cellersick@englishatlarge.org or Marlana Patton at mpatton@englishatlarge.org or call 781.395.2374.

1. What is the REEP and why is English At Large administering it?

The REEP is a new requirement of the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE). All adult basic education (ABE) programs are required to administer this assessment to eligible learners to measure literacy gains. The letters REEP stand for the Arlington Education Employment Program writing assessment. Developed in Arlington, VA, the REEP is administered as a timed writing in response to a prompt of some kind, and the writing is often in the form of a letter.

2. Who has to take the REEP?

Existing and new low-intermediate to advanced ESOL learners are eligible to take the REEP. Lower-level learners and Basic Reading learners are *not* eligible to take the REEP.

3. Does the REEP replace the English At Large intake assessment process?

No. The REEP is a separate requirement that English At Large administers in addition to the current intake assessment.

4. How and when will the REEP be administered?

The REEP is administered to English At Large learners in groups at locations throughout our 20-town service area. Learners receive a copy of the schedule, and they can choose a date and location that is convenient to them.

5. How often is REEP be administered?

After their initial REEP assessment, eligible learners are required to take the REEP once every fiscal year and once upon exiting the program. Multiple assessment dates/times are available throughout the year.

English At Large administers the REEP in May/June, September, and January. Learners must take the REEP as soon as possible after they receive a tutor. They must then take the REEP in May/June of that year, if their initial administration is not a May/June administration. Once the learner gets on the May/June administration schedule, they take the REEP annually every May/June

6. Who will administer and score the REEP?

Individuals who participate in training offered by SABES are certified to administer and score the REEP using the included rubric. These individuals include English At Large staff and some tutors. Because the administration occurs in groups, it is *not* a requirement that each tutor administer his/her learner's assessment, and tutors *may not* score their own learner's assessments.

7. What if a learner does not improve his/her score from REEP to REEP? Are there negative repercussions for the learner or the tutor?

No. There are no negative repercussions for either the learner or the tutor. It is important to emphasize this fact to the learners, and to emphasize that this is not a test they can fail.

8. What if my learner refuses to take the REEP?

If your learner refuses to take the REEP, he or she may continue tutoring with you but will not be renewed with another tutor once they are no longer with you. Unless we have an initial standardized assessment score, an annual updated score, and an exit score in the system, English At Large cannot count your tutoring hours as part of our reporting to the DOE, which negatively impacts our ability to obtain funding.

9. Will tutors receive their learner's scores?

Yes. English At Large will communicate your learner's scores to you as well as the rubric used to score them. You can use that rubric to understand the scores.

10. Can tutors show the scores to the learners?

Yes. But because the scores mean little on their own, they should be shown only in the context of a discussion that about how those scores align with the scoring rubric and what the learner can learn from the rubric about his/her writing strengths and areas for development.

11. Can a tutor accompany a learner to the REEP administration?

No. Tutors are not allowed in the room during the administration.

12. How can we reduce anxiety and prepare our learners to be successful with the REEP?

Learners who write on a regular basis and are familiar with writing in response to a prompt will be most comfortable and successful during the assessment. If you do not already include writing in your tutoring sessions, you may want to begin including it. Specific ideas include the following:

- Have your learner write on a given subject. For example, if you have discussed television, you could offer the prompt, "Please write the good things and bad things about television."
- Encourage your learner to provide details and examples to support his or her opinions.
- Set a time limit for the writing. Start small. For example, tell them they have 10 minutes to write.
- Review their writing. Praise their strengths, and identify specifically what they have done well. Discuss areas for development. Ask the learner what he/she thinks they need help with.
- Familiarize your learner with the basic categories of the rubric. Ask them to examine their own writings and identify the strengths of each writing and how each could be refined further.

You may also want to emphasize the following about the assessment itself:

- They cannot fail.
- There are no repercussions if they have trouble with it.
- It presents a unique opportunity to understand how to improve their writing, which will ultimately increase their independence.

13. How can we use the REEP scores within our lessons?

You can match the scores with the rubric to understand your learner's strengths and where they have room to develop further. You can then use the rubric as a tool to focus further writing efforts.

14. The REEP does not reflect my learner's strengths in speaking and listening. How can it fully assess his/her literacy level?

While it is true that the REEP focuses on writing ability and does not offer a comprehensive view of literacy ability, no standardized assessment is ever 100% accurate or completely comprehensive. The REEP is one tool, and if incorporated into your lesson planning, it can be a useful tool to encourage and guide further writing development.

14. My learner has a disability. Will that be accommodated during the administration?

If your learner has a disability, please contact Christine Ellersick by email at cellersick@englishatlarge.org or by phone at 781.395.2374 to make special accommodations.