ACT® WorkKeys®/NCRC®

Tips for K-12 Practitioners

ACT® WorkKeys® Assessments help measure the workplace skills that can affect job performance. The WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate® (NCRC), which students can earn through WorkKeys Assessments, is a valuable credential for students entering the workforce. Use these tips to help your students succeed before, during, and after WorkKeys Assessments. Learn more at act.org/workkeysforeducators

1] Pre-Test Activities

▪ Provide students with ACT WorkKeys practice tests and sample questions from the ACT website to show them what the tests measure: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workkeys-for-educators/assessments/preparation.html.

▪ Give students an overview of WorkKeys/NCRC and its value:
  o ACT WorkKeys is a set of tests measuring skills that are needed in the workplace. Unlike education assessments, WorkKeys measures your ability to apply knowledge in solving work-related problems.
  o Scores on three WorkKeys assessments (Workplace Documents, Applied Math, and Graphic Literacy) may qualify a student to earn the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). The NCRC is a nationally-portable, industry-recognized credential.
  o Students with higher WorkKeys and NCRC scores have been shown to earn higher wages and have better postsecondary education outcomes (e.g., GPA; completion).

▪ Do a career exploration activity: show students the occupational profile database and explain how the scores relate to different types of careers: http://jobprofiles.act.org/.

2] Day of Testing

▪ Encourage students to do their best.

▪ Inform students about creating their accounts on www.myworkkeys.com. Through their accounts, students will be able to view, print, and share their scores.

▪ Encourage students to engage in conversations with their school counselor and teachers about their scores.

3] Post-Test Activities

▪ Remind students to check their scores at www.myworkkeys.com.

▪ Talk to students about how to interpret their scores:
  o There are five levels of difficulty for each test. Level 3 is the least complex, and Level 7 is the most complex. The levels build on each other, each incorporating the skills assessed at the previous levels.
  o Assessment scores are reported with both the level and a description of the skills the student demonstrated along with recommendations for skill improvement.

▪ Hold a career exploration activity; have students compare their skill levels against three different occupations of interest in the occupational profile database: http://jobprofiles.act.org/.

▪ For students with skill gaps: encourage them to explore available Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses at the high school to improve their ability to solve problems in different contexts.

▪ Conduct a work-based learning activity: have students participate in mock interviews with an employer so they can practice articulating their skills in a hiring situation.

4] Resources

