

VTest Diagnostic: Teacher Guide to the Test-Taking Process

Introduction

1 What is VTest Diagnostic?

VTest Diagnostic is a fast, stage-adaptive online Listening and Reading exam, aligned to the CEFR. It's designed to help you understand students' current English level at the start of the year — not where they were last year or where they're expected to be. It gives a reliable estimate from Pre-A1 to C2 and helps teachers organize classes and better plan their teaching based on actual ability and real-time data.

2 Who is VTest Diagnostic for? What levels and ages does it cover?

VTest Diagnostic is designed for students aged 11 and up, through to the end of secondary school. VTest Diagnostic covers the full CEFR scale, from Pre-A1 to C2, so it's suitable for a wide range of learners.

Access and Scheduling

3 How long does the exam take?

The test takes around 15–45 minutes, depending on the student's level and pace. It's designed to fit easily into one class period and can also be assigned to take at home.

4 When should the test be taken?

It is up to the teacher to decide when to set a testing window, but it's most effective when used at the beginning of the school year for placement and diagnostic purposes.

5 How do students get access?

Students using Burlington Student's Books get a code printed inside their book. This code gives access to both the digital WebBook and one VTest Diagnostic. If a student is not using a Burlington Student's Book, please contact your local Burlington office for further details.

Student and Parent Preparation

6 Do I need to prepare my students before they take VTest Diagnostic?

As this is a diagnostic assessment, no formal exam preparation is needed. However, it's important that students understand what the exam is, why they are taking it, how much time they will need to complete it, and why it's important to stay focused and take it seriously.

We recommend showing them some sample items in advance and ensuring they have a calm, quiet environment when taking the test.

7 What devices can students use?

The exam can be taken on most devices — including desktops, laptops, and tablets — with a stable internet connection and headphones for the Listening section. While it is technically possible to take the exam on a mobile phone, we do not recommend it due to the small screen size, which can affect the exam experience and student concentration.

8 Should I involve parents in the process?

VTest provides you and your school with full flexibility and control.

The diagnostic results are designed as an internal tool to support effective placement and instructional planning. However, you may choose to share these results with parents to keep them informed. If you do, it's important to communicate that the results reflect current ability levels and are intended to guide a data-driven and targeted teaching approach.

Results and Next Steps

9 What kind of feedback do I get after the exam?

Once all students complete the exam, teachers receive a clear CEFR level for each student, along with a group summary that highlights class-wide strengths and weaknesses to support instructional planning.

10 How should I interpret the results?

When using VTest Diagnostic, remember that:

- Results should be treated as a starting point, not a full picture.
- VTest Diagnostic scores reflect receptive skills only. Students may place higher than what they can actively produce in Speaking or Writing.
- The placement data should be combined with your professional judgment to decide on pacing, scaffolding, and class support needs.
- Exam results can be affected by the testing environment and how seriously students take the exam. It's important that students complete the exam in a quiet, comfortable setting, giving it their full attention.
- Results should be interpreted to identify learning gaps and strengths, helping you plan targeted instruction and interventions.

11 What should I do if students perform poorly?

Remember that the exam reflects current language ability, particularly after a break. Use the results to guide support, scaffolding, and pacing – not as a measure of effort or potential.

12 Are there other VTest tools I can use at a later stage in the year, to track progress?

VTest Diagnostic is part of the VTest for Schools product family and is designed to complement VTest for Schools. Use VTest Diagnostic at the start of the school year for placement, and VTest for Schools mid-year or at the end of the year to measure progress and outcomes.

13 Why doesn't VTest Diagnostic include Speaking and Writing?

VTest Diagnostic is designed to be quick, easy to administer, and automatically scored, making it ideal for the start of the year. It focuses on receptive skills – Listening and Reading – which are strong indicators of a student's general level. For a full four-skills profile, including Speaking and Writing, we recommend using VTest for Schools later in the school year as a progress or exit exam.

Contact us today!

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