

# PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE ISEB PRE-TESTS

The ISEB Pre-Tests are a set of four online, age-standardised tests taken in Year 6 or 7 and used by many independent schools as part of their admissions process. The four test subjects include English and mathematics to identify a child's ability and non-verbal and verbal reasoning tests to assess a child's potential. The ISEB Pre-Tests are taken once in an academic year, and the results are shared with all schools that the child has applied to.

## HOW IS YOUR CHILD REGISTERED FOR THE ISEB PRE-TESTS?

Parents and guardians register their children for the ISEB Pre-Tests via the [Guardian Portal](#).

Parent/guardian registration is:

- **Free:** there is no charge to parents/guardians for registering children for the ISEB Pre-Tests.
- **Simple:** registration is completed through an easy-to-use online admissions platform (the ISEB Guardian Portal).
- **Quick:** you only need to register your child for the test once, no matter how many different senior 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?

The ISEB Pre-Tests have been designed to enable your child to demonstrate their skills, abilities and potential and are used by independent schools as one part of a larger admissions process. It is important to approach any additional test practice or preparation in a holistic and healthy way. Additional test practice is not a requirement of the ISEB Pre-Tests; however, some parents, guardians and families may benefit from preparation work to reduce test anxiety.

In this resource, we have provided a list of ideas and suggestions to support your whole family navigate their admissions journey with confidence. This list is not exhaustive, and there may be other resources you already use that work well for your family. For further ideas and information about the Common Pre-Tests visit the [ISEB Pre-Tests Admissions Toolkit](#).



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## ENGLISH AND VERBAL REASONING

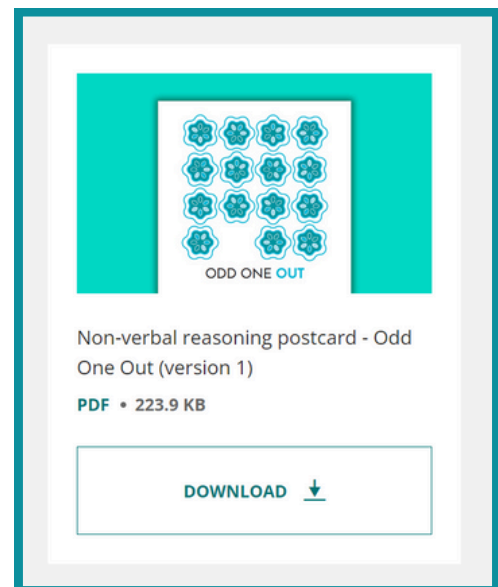
For the English and verbal reasoning tests, English teacher Adam Bernard and verbal reasoning expert Chris Pearse stress the importance of building vocabulary. They suggest:

- **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.



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## 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](#)

## PREMIUM FAMILY RESOURCES

### Bond Online Premium Plus

Developed in partnership with CENTURY and Bond, Oxford University Press, **Bond Online Premium Plus** is the only test practice platform for the Common Pre-Tests endorsed by ISEB and the only practice platform that has been quality-checked by ISEB to ensure consistency with the live Pre-Tests and current question content.

Parents and guardians can try it free for 7-days by visiting [century.tech/bond](https://century.tech/bond)



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## SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING

At ISEB, we have been working in partnership with parenting expert Dr Kathy Weston and her team of child psychologists, researchers and authors at Tooled Up Education to produce a set of premium resources designed to help parents and guardians support their children optimally.

The four-part **Parent Power Toolkit** contains a wealth of resources, including videos from Dr. Weston, worksheets, recommended reading material, and activities for the whole family.

Visit the [Pre-Tests Admissions Toolkit](#) for more information.



## THE ISEB TEST WALKTHROUGH

The **ISEB Test Walkthrough** is an essential support tool for all families and children preparing for the ISEB Pre-Tests, including those with SEND or EAL requirements. By exploring this resource with your child, 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.
- 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.

## PUPIL REGISTRATION

**Pupil registration for the 2024-25 ISEB Pre-Tests testing window opens on 10 June 2024.**

To find out more about the registration process, visit the [ISEB Pre-Tests Admissions Toolkit](#) and [join our mailing list](#) to stay updated 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 Common Pre-Tests, visit the [ISEB Pre-Tests Admissions Toolkit](#), where you will find information and resources to support your family with registration and preparation, as well as important news and updates.