

Resources to prepare for the Math Content Specialty Test (CST)

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Many new Fellows are anxious about the Math CST. Since the test is not well-known, rumor has often taken the place of facts. This information may help you feel more ready for the test.

General information about the test

The test consists of 90 multiple-choice questions and one constructed-response question. You must bring your own graphing calculator. (The list of approved models, including the TI-83 and TI-84, is on page 17 of the registration bulletin at <http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/>.) I recall 90% of the test being pre-calculus topics (algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and very basic statistics and logic), with the remaining 10% being elementary calculus (limits, derivatives, and integrals). (It's very possible to pass the test without getting any points from calculus questions.) You are allowed 4 hours, but most people seem to finish in between two and three hours.

Preparation materials specifically for the test

A free **preparation guide** is at http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/PDFs/NY_fld004_prepguide.pdf. It includes 21 multiple-choice questions and a constructed-response question, (There's a similar guide for the LAST at http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/PDFs/NY_fld001_prepguide.pdf.)

Someone once sent me a Kaplan document about Math CST preparation. I've put it online at <http://www.revuluri.com/teaching/mathfellowsest.doc>. It lists many useful websites.

Related preparation guides

Some folks have found Math A and Math B review books helpful for the Math CST. (These are also good to have on hand for when you start teaching, as sources of both supplementary practice and Regents-level problems. Some students prefer the review books' presentation of some topics and procedures, because they're often more straightforward than the textbooks.)

Barron's *Let's Review: Math A* (ISBN 0764122967) and *Math B* (ISBN 0764116568) are widely available (including online) for about \$10. Their older *Regents Exams and Answers* (with red rather than blue covers) are still available for about \$6.25 (ISBN 0764115529 and 0764117289); Amsco and Prentice Hall also publish Math A and Math B exam preparation books.

Kaplan, Princeton Review, Barron's, Arco, & REA all publish LAST prep books (\$10 to \$13).

Exam resources for teachers of Math A

Many Math Fellows teach at least one section of Math A. Regardless of your feelings about "teaching to the test" (or standardized testing in general), it helps to know what the exam is like. All past Math A exams are online at the New York State Education Department website (<http://www.nysedregents.org/testing/mathre/regentmatha.html>). Even better, check out the **Jefferson Math A Project**, an effort of three Cohort 6 Math Fellows in Brooklyn. They have compiled all 611 questions from all 17 Math A Regents exams, sorted them by topic, and made them available in Word, Acrobat, JPEG, and Worksheet Builder formats – all for free. See www.jmap.org. The Prep Center (<http://regentsprep.org/Regents/math/math-a.cfm>) is also handy.