What is the WRAT and What Is It’s Purpose?
The Wide Range Achievement Test, known as the “WRAT”, is a norm-referenced screening test used to measure basic academic skills that are needed for effective learning, communication and thinking. It is commonly used when screening to diagnose for learning disabilities in reading, spelling and arithmetic.

Quick History of the WRAT:
The WRAT was first created in the 1930s by Joseph Jastak and Sidney Bijou and published in 1946. There have been revisions to the original publication including the most recent, WRAT-4 in 2006. It’s popularity has increased over time due to ease of administration and scoring.
Who administers the WRAT?

The only people who administer WRAT are trained examiners who lead the students through each subsection of the test. The administrator must be trained in pronunciation guides, timing criteria, proper use of materials, structure prompts and the scoring criteria. A psychometrist converts the raw data to standardized scores which are then compared to provide results for analysis.

How is the WRAT Administered?

The test is primarily administered on an individual basis, although it can be given to small groups of 5 or less students. The exception to this is the reading test which must be administered individually. The testing takes place in an environment free of distractions with an appropriate amount of workspace. The administrator leads the examinee through each of the appropriate subtests, scoring as the test is administered (these are the raw scores which will be converted later).

The test is structured in 4 parts and is administered in this order:

1) **Word Reading**: This section measures letter and word decoding. It is in 2 parts: Part 1 is Letter Reading and consists of 15 letters, while Part 2 is Word Reading and consists of 55 words.

2) **Sentence Comprehension**: This section measures the student’s ability to understand the meaning of words and ideas contained in a sentence. 50 sentence comprehension items are provided.

3) **Spelling**: This section measures the student’s ability to encode sounds into written form through the use of dictated spelling format of both letters (13 of them) and words (42 of them).

4) **Math Computation**: This last section is used to measure the student’s ability to perform basic math computations through counting, number identification, simple oral problems and written problems. Part 1 is the oral math component, consisting of 15 items while Part 2 consists of 40 items and has a time limit of 15 minutes.

A reading composite score is calculated by combining the Word Reading and Sentence Comprehension sections.
More Information About the WRAT

There are two alternate testing forms, the Blue Forms and the Green Forms, which can be used interchangeably and permit for retesting within a short period of time without “practice effects” as they are different. They can also be administered together for a combined result for a more in-depth analysis of the student’s abilities.

The results of this test are compared to a national (US) normative sample of over 3,000 people and proportionately allocated for age, grade, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and geographic region, making the test both valid and reliable. Scores are referenced against both grade groups and age groups.

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<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
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<td>The WRAT provides a significant amount of info through a relatively short test</td>
<td>The WRAT results alone do not provide identification of learning or cognitive disorders. Instead, it must be used in conjunction with additional formal assessments, psychometric data, student history and behavioural observations</td>
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<td>The test is easy to administer and to score</td>
<td>Although the screening may save time, it can have misleading results as the scores may overestimate or underestimate a student’s skills</td>
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<td>The WRAT can be given to a large section of the population, aged 5 to 94 years of age</td>
<td>Is not a good indicator of overall ability as it only tests for 3 distinct skills: word recognition, spelling from dictation and arithmetic computation</td>
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<td>It is a reliable test excellent for screening students to see who requires further evaluation</td>
<td>Does not measure skills of above average and advanced readers in adolescents.</td>
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