EDUCATION

Kaufman Test Of Educational Achievement

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Understanding the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Second Edition (KTEA-II)

Educational assessments play a critical role in identifying students' academic strengths and challenges. Among the most respected tools in psychoeducational evaluation is the **Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Second Edition (KTEA-II)**. This comprehensive, individually administered measure provides educators, psychologists, and clinicians with a reliable snapshot of academic skills across key domains. Whether used to diagnose learning disabilities, monitor progress, or guide intervention planning, the KTEA-II remains a trusted resource in schools and clinical settings alike. This article explores the test's design, components, administration, applications, and how it compares to other achievement assessments.

What Is the KTEA-II?

The **Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Second Edition** is a norm-referenced assessment developed by Alan S. Kaufman and Nadeen L. Kaufman. Published by the American Guidance Service (now part of Pearson), the KTEA-II is designed to measure academic achievement in children and adults aged 4 years 6 months through 25 years. Unlike group-administered tests, the KTEA-II is given one-on-one, allowing examiners to observe test-taking behaviors and obtain a more accurate picture of an individual's abilities.

The test is grounded in the same theoretical framework as the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC) and other Kaufman instruments, emphasizing a blend of cognitive and achievement theory. The second edition refined the original by adding new subtests, updating norms, and expanding the age range. It is widely used for special education eligibility, gifted identification, and comprehensive psychoeducational evaluations.

Key Features and Components of the KTEA-II

The KTEA-II includes two parallel forms (A and B), allowing for retesting without practice effects. It covers core academic areas through a series of subtests organized into composites. The main composites include:

- Reading – Subtest areas: Letter & Word Recognition, Reading Comprehension, and Phonological Awareness (for younger children).
- Mathematics – Subtest areas: Math Concepts & Applications, Math Computation, and Written Expression (indirectly through math problem solving).
- Written Language – Subtest areas: Spelling, Writing Fluency, and Written Expression.
- Oral Language – Subtests: Listening Comprehension and Oral Expression (available for ages 4–6 through 12).

Additionally, the KTEA-II offers an **Academic Skills Battery** (core subtests for quick screening) and an **Academic Fluency Battery**(timed tasks measuring speed and accuracy). The full battery provides a

comprehensive view of overall achievement through the Comprehensive Achievement Composite (CAC), which mirrors the concept of an IQ score but for academic performance.

The expanded edition includes 16 subtests, many of which can be used individually or in combination. For instance, the Phonological Awareness subtest helps identify early reading risks, while the Nonsense Word Decoding subtest (included in later derivations) assesses decoding skills. The test also includes an Error Analysis feature for math and reading, enabling clinicians to pinpoint specific skill deficits.

Administration and Scoring

Administration time varies: the core battery takes about 40–50 minutes for most examinees, while the comprehensive battery can take up to 1.5 hours. The KTEA-II is designed for professionals with training in standardized testing, such as school psychologists, educational diagnosticians, and licensed clinical psychologists. The manual includes clear instructions for administration and scoring, with age-based start points and discontinue rules to reduce testing fatigue.

Scoring is done via hand-scoring tables or computer software. Results are reported as standard scores (mean = 100, SD = 15), percentile ranks, age and grade equivalents, and growth scale values. The normative sample included over 6,000 individuals stratified by age, grade, sex, race/ethnicity, geographic region, and parent education, making it highly representative of the U.S. population.

Uses in Educational Assessment

The primary applications of the **Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Second Edition KTEA-II** fall into several categories:

- Learning Disability Identification – The pattern of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) approach often relies on KTEA-II results combined with cognitive assessments like the KABC-II or the WISC-V. Its strong reliability for reading and math subtests supports identification of specific learning disorders.
- Gifted and Talented Programs – The KTEA-II provides evidence of advanced academic achievement, which is often required alongside cognitive ability scores for gifted placement.
- Progress Monitoring – With two parallel forms, educators can use the KTEA-II to measure academic growth over time, though it is not typically used for frequent monitoring due to its length.
- Re-evaluation and Special Education Eligibility – Many school districts incorporate the KTEA-II into triennial evaluations to determine continued eligibility for services.
- Clinical and Research Settings – Psychologists in private practice and hospitals use the test to assess academic functioning for treatment planning or neuropsychological evaluations.

Strengths of the KTEA-II

One of the greatest strengths of the KTEA-II is its **comprehensive coverage** of academic domains, including oral language, which is not always present in other achievement tests. The **error analysis** feature allows examiners to go beyond scores and understand the types of mistakes a student makes, informing targeted instruction. Furthermore, the **parallel forms** reduce practice effects when testing is repeated.

The test's **normative sample** is robust, and its **reliability coefficients** for composites exceed 0.90, with most subtests in the 0.80s and 0.90s. Validity studies show high correlations with other achievement measures (e.g., the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement), confirming its usefulness.

Limitations to Consider

Despite its merits, the KTEA-II has some limitations. The test is relatively **time-intensive** for the full battery, which can be challenging for younger children or those with attention difficulties. The **oral language subtests** are only normed up to age 12, limiting their utility for older students. Additionally, the **written expression subtest** has been critiqued for being less comprehensive than separate writing assessments. The KTEA-II also

lacks a direct measure of reading fluency at the passage level (though it includes word reading fluency), which may be a gap for some evaluations.

Another point is that the second edition was published in 2004, and while norms remain valid, some practitioners prefer more recent instruments like the KTEA-3 (the third edition). However, the KTEA-II is still widely used and accepted, especially when paired with updated ancillary materials.

Comparing the KTEA-II to Other Achievement Tests

When choosing an achievement assessment, clinicians often compare the KTEA-II with the **Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ IV ACH)** and the **Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT-III)**. The table below summarizes key differences:

Feature	KTEA-II	WJ IV ACH	WIAT-III
Age range	4:6 – 25:0	2 – 90+	4:0 – 50:11
Oral language	Included (up to age 12)	Separate battery	Included
Parallel forms	Form A & B	No parallel forms	No parallel forms
Error analysis	Yes (math, reading)	Limited	Yes (some subtests)
Fluency subtests	Yes (timed tasks)	Yes (many fluency measures)	Yes (several)
Norms update	2004	2014 (WJ IV)	2009 (WIAT-III)

Each test has its strengths. The WJ IV ACH offers broader age coverage and more fluency tasks. The WIAT-III provides a well-rounded assessment with strong reading comprehension and writing subtests. The KTEA-II stands out for its oral language component for younger children and its error analysis, making it especially useful for diagnosing early reading difficulties.

Interpreting KTEA-II Results

To make meaningful use of the KTEA-II, professionals must interpret scores in context. Standard scores between 85 and 115 are considered average. A pattern of significantly low scores in reading or math subtests may indicate a specific learning disorder, especially when combined with a cognitive ability score that is higher. The **Comprehensive Achievement Composite**(CAC) is the overall measure of academic ability and is often compared to the Full Scale IQ (FSIQ) to identify discrepancies.

Age and grade equivalents are provided but should be interpreted with caution, as they can be misleading; standard scores and percentiles are more reliable for decision-making. The manual includes tables for statistical significance and base rates, which are essential for determining if a score difference is uncommon and educationally relevant.

Clinicians also use the KTEA-II to assess **growth scale values (GSVs)**, which track academic progress independently of age or grade. This metric is particularly helpful for evaluating interventions over time.

Conclusion

The **Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Second Edition (KTEA-II)** remains a valuable tool for assessing academic achievement in children and young adults. Its comprehensive coverage, parallel forms, and error analysis features set it apart from many other measures. While newer editions and alternative instruments exist, the KTEA-II continues to be widely used in schools and clinical practices for identifying learning disabilities, guiding instruction, and informing eligibility decisions. When administered and interpreted by trained professionals, it offers deep insights into a student's academic profile, supporting the ultimate goal of helping every learner succeed.

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