Test Preparation Databases

Mometrix, PrepSTEP, and Testing & Education Reference Center

Review Date: 18 January 2018

Interface — 25% (Usability, customization, mobile supported, lack of problems, print/download/email content, citation formatting)			
Cost — 15% (Value and terms of use)			
Accessibility — 15% (Compliance with standards)			
Support — 5% (For administrators and users)			

This is a comparison review of test preparation databases.

Method

Three reviewers explored the test preparation and other materials included in Mometrix, PrepSTEP, and Testing and Education Resource Center (TERC). They tried out the PrepSTEP Tutorials on workplace skills and information literacy and the TERC résumé builder. They explored the test

preparation materials available from each product. They downloaded and tested ebooks using the Premier Tools ereader. They used Axe Accessibility engine to identify barriers to accessibility.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Although the products under review all serve a need for testing materials, all products have marked shortcomings. Two of the products being reviewed, PrepSTEP and Testing and Education Resource Center (TERC), require that users create a login with the database before they can even view content. Mometrix does not require a separate account, but users are unable to download, print, or save any of the content and the vendor does not provide any MARC records, so books cannot be easily added to a library's catalog.

PrepSTEP and TERC are user-friendly when it comes to downloading e-books since they don't have Digital Rights Management that put barriers or restrictions in place. The majority of materials in these collections are e-books. Even the practice tests that are dynamic are really just the multiple choice questions from a test prep booklet that have been animated.

PrepSTEP does include tutorials that break down content to teach material along with assessments. TERC and PrepSTEP both have a résumé builder.

If you are looking for a replacement for an oft-stolen print collection, all three products meet that need. However, all three products have serious accessibility issues.

Reviewers recommend libraries think about the tests their students are likely to take, then purchase the cheapest product that meets that need. These products are really e-book collections, with some limited "enhanced" content. None of them can replace a properly-designed online tutoring product -- but none of these databases purport to serve that need.

CRITERIA Stars: Insert > Image > Search "4 stars" etc.	**Mometrix**	**PrepSTEP**	**Testing and Education Resource Center (with Careers Module*)**
Content Scope of collection, Subject areas/Programs supported, Types of materials. Is a certificate of completion available when students finish tests?	**Scope of Collection / Material Types** Collection called eLibrary Comprised of Study guides Interactive tests Add on option for "Flash cards" **Subjects Covered** Study guides (called "Exam Secrets") and practice test books for general standardized tests as well as professional exams. The database explains that these are "unofficial test preparation products." Does not include Mometrix Flashcard Study Systems, which are available for purchase through Mometrix's website. A link is provided from the Mometrix homepage to Mometrix Academy, which are free test preparation review videos. Practice tests are interactive. Study guides are ebooks. **Test Results** After students complete a practice test they receive their scores and can	**Scope of Collection / Material Types** Contains practice tests and ebooks for "academic skill building, college placement test preparation, soft skills training, career advancement resources, professional licensing and certification test prep, and basic computer skills training." Ebooks download as PDFs and can be saved or printed. Includes a résumé builder. **Subjects Covered** Overall, this content seems more focused on general academic and career skills as well as entry-level tests than the other two products we're reviewing. There's also Spanish-language content about reading, math, and GED prep. **Test Results** Practice tests are interactive and students' scores can be saved. Users can stop mid test then come back to it.	**Scope of Collection / Material Types** TERC provides online access to practice tests and test preparation resources and includes: •Over 300 practice tests and courses, including NCLEX, PRAXIS, Law Enforcement, and Real Estate; •Dozens of eBooks containing study material and practice tests • Information on over 4,000 accredited schools • Scholarship search help • résumé builder with brainstorming phrases **Subjects Covered** Career-oriented test prep includes online practice tests for information technology, law programs, nursing programs, Air Force officer qualifying, military flight aptitude, licensure exams, and more. Users will find high-school test prep for GED, AP, ISEE, COOP, SSAT and more. Those aiming toward

	see which questions they answered correctly or incorrectly. If a question is answered incorrectly, student are given feedback that tries to tell them how to understand the correct answer. Students can take the test again, but it looks like only one practice test is provided. No certificate is provided when students complete the tests.	For lessons like the one about having an appropriate attitude in the workplace, students receive feedback on their post-test results and are directed to the sections of the lesson they should review to strengthen areas of weakness.	college can find tests geared to CLEP, FCAT, SAT, ACT, PSAT, TAKS and more. Graduate school preps include GRE, LSAT, MCAT and MAT. Strength may lie in graduate/professional school standardized exams. There are even international tests covering TOEFL, TOEIC and U.S. citizenship. List of available tests available on vendor's site.

User Interface Can students create an account? Is an account required to view materials? Access points? Browsing or keyword searchable? Findability: MARC Records? Print or download?	Students do not have to sign in to view tests or guides. User can search by test title or browse by subject or profession. There is no option for creating an account. On the main screen the content clearly findable by clicking on either "Study Guides" or "Practice Tests." Larger navigation page allows users to locate study guides by category - which includes Counseling, Career, Nutrition, English Language, Graduate and Professional School, etc. Keyword search for exam/test also supported and is easy to execute, which is appropriate for a guide of this type. There is no way to print or download materials. There are no MARC records available.	Requires user to create an account and login before opening any books or tests. User can search or browse, but it is very difficult to see which tests are included among the preparation materials so it would be important that students know the test they need in order to search for it to avoid frustration. Content is organized into 'centers' of related content for navigation. Some tests and centers may be difficult for users to find as they are not intuitive or that logical - Example: the U.S. Citizenship Exam is in the "Build Workplace Skills" category in the Career and Workplace Preparation Module. Some of these interface problems that make it difficult to find the desired material may be addressed by updates that EBSCO announced will be launched in February 2018. Tests can be taken in practice mode which is untimed or simulation mode which is timed. Many of the lessons are too text-heavy for a tool that is intended to teach basic skills.	Requires user to create an account and login before opening any books or tests. User can search or browse for content. MARC records are available. Books are not restricted by DRM and can therefore be downloaded by users.

		MARC records are available.	

Customization Can you purchase the materials/modules most appropriate or is it a fixed collection?	eLibrary pricing is based on the number of users as well as the number of titles you choose, as shown in the chart below: Annual Subscription Rate: $ (Full Price) for the entire eLibrary resource (2000+ titles) $ (1/4 Price) for 1-10 tests $ (1/2 Price) for 11-50 tests $ (3/4 Price) for 51-100 tests This pricing includes: - Unlimited views and usage throughout the subscription period - Unlimited remote access - 24/7 availability for all students and staff - Unlimited customer service availability - Automatic additional tests and updates added on a regular basis"	Two different versions of this product are offered: 2-year college edition (with emphasis on basic skills and college prep) and the 4-year college edition (includes graduate school preparation) PrepSTEP can be purchased on its own or with the following modules: **Job and Career Accelerator** which includes modules for building résumés, assessing skills, and preparing for interviews; and **Computer Skills -** for - (includes Internet & Microsoft Office Basics). Contains practice tests and ebooks. Practice tests are interactive and score can be saved. Users can stop mid test then come back to it. Ebooks download as PDFs and can be saved or printed.	TERC can be purchased as a stand alone product or in conjunction with the Careers module. The **Career Module** supports students interested in exploring careers suited towards their interests and personality and includes: • Career assessment tool – Provides users with a list of occupations that suit their personality. Users can then delve further into each career to learn about the skills involved in that particular field, salaries by state, and much more. • Occupational database- Users can directly search and find key information on a specific occupation. The occupational list is from the Occupational Information Network (ONET), a database with more than 1,100 occupational types that was developed for the U.S. Department of Labor by the National O*NET consortium.
Mobile or Multimedia Options	The site is not optimized for mobile devices; the homepage does not resize to fit size of a phone. Ebook text takes a while to load so content resized to fit on phone.	Practice tests can be taken on phone. Most of it dynamically resizes, but not the score reports. Ebooks download and can be saved to IBooks or Dropbox or other apps.	Best mobile interface of all products. Practice tests can be taken on phone. Content dynamically resizes. Ebooks download and can be saved to IBooks or Dropbox or other apps.

	Practice tests resize immediately.		

Initialization and Administration Branding for library, links to other materials? Authentication? Usage statistics? IP or Password authentication? Canvas plugin available?	Usage statistics are available and archived indefinitely, according to the vendor.	Usage reports can be generated to show usage by .. Center, Category, Subcategory, Topic and Resource. detailed and extensive usage reports are available. (See diagram below) Reports show login by UserID - include session date/time; duration per session and total duration for user account. Accounts show user names and IDs. Usage reports available to librarian (site administrator) only. Does not appear to support access with a proxy server. There are difficulties in using this product with our proxy. Connection issues prevent us from using database with a proxy pre-pend. As a result any user can gain access to the product through our link. Aside from institution name on product banner, no other customization available. Links to “centers” and/or resources can be incorporated into LMS such as Canvas, but users will still need to login with username/password to access content; limited usefulness from instructor’s POV.	Product does not have an administrator’s module or interface. Plugins for CMS not found, but according to license terms subscribers can incorporate parts of the licensed content into electronic course packs and electronic reserves. Authentication: IP; Referring URL; Username and password Other: Cookies, IP filtering, Kerberos, LDAP, NCIP, OASIS SAML 2.0, proxy servers, referring URL, shibboleth, SIP/SIP2, username/password, and X.509 authentication certificates. Gale provides Remote Patron Authentication Services (RPAS)

		Administrators can create custom hyperlinks to “Centers” for direct access. The ‘My Center’ feature enables users to save their work in progress, test results, eBooks, and other resources, to revisit at a later time.	

Accessibility of Service (Close-captioned videos, WAVE, Alt tags, etc.)	In questionnaire vendor says N/A to ADA/508 question. No text-only version is available to work with screen readers. Using AXE on one page, 11 violations were found: Buttons didn't have discernable text Elements didn't have sufficient color contrast Frames didn't have title attributes Images didn't have alternative text. These issues are considered critical. On the homepage, the videos don't have captions and all of the same violations appear. Combined with n/a in answer in questionnaire I'm going to say this product isn't accessible and vendor has no interest in making it accessible.	Using AXE 45 violations were found on the homepage. 44 were considered critical: Buttons didn't have discernible text Elements didn't have sufficient color contrast 31 id attribute values weren't unique Images didn't have alternate text Form elements didn't have labels and didn't directly contain , <script> or <template> elements elements weren't contained in a or In a practice test 273 violations were found, 153 critical, the rest serious: Elements didn't have sufficient color contrast 111 id attribute values weren't unique 10 form elements didn't have labels 10 radio elements with the same name attribute weren't part of a group 120 elements had a tab index of greater than 0. Ebooks: Download as PDF and are readable with a screen reader such as Premier Tools.	Using AXE 21 violations were found on the homepage 1 serious violation - element didn't have language attribute. In a practice test 22 violations were found, 14 critical and 8 serious: 2 id attributes weren't unique 4 frames didn't have title attributes 8 elements didn't have language 6 form elements didn't have labels 1 timed refresh shouldn't exist Radio inputs with the same name attribute weren't part of a group. Ebooks download as PDF and are readable with a screen reader such as Premier Tools.

		Help videos are captioned. This product has serious accessibility issues. And it is not clear what plans the vendor has to fix them.	

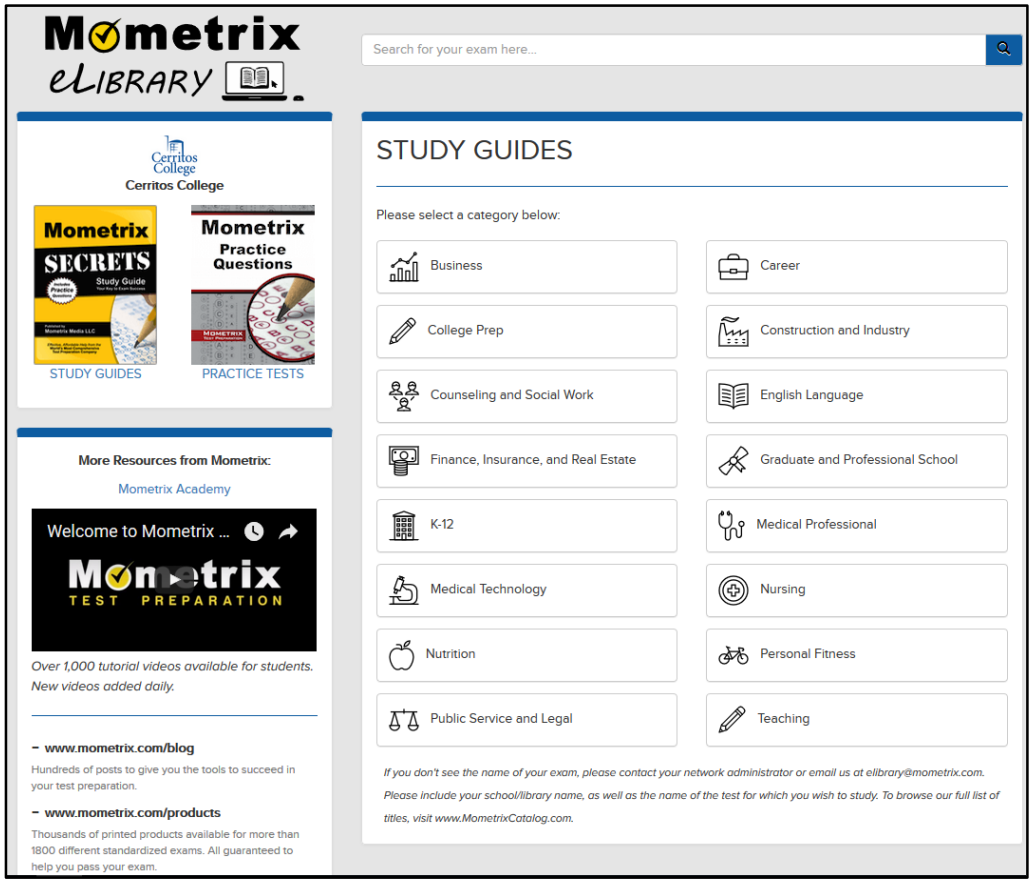
Customer Service and Technical Support What types of customer and technical support are available for end user and administrator?	Phone number and email address are clearly labeled on the database homepage. "If you don't see the name of your exam, please contact your network administrator or email us at elibrary@mometrix.com." According to Mometrix, their website is so easy to use that it does not require any training, but support is available if needed. Users can access support through email, phone, chat, and TeamViewer	Many videos about how to use PrepSTEP are available on the homepage of the database. There are product tutorials and user guides in product and recorded training webinars are available through help.ebsco.com. Support is available 24/7. Users have reported repeated misconfigurations that prevent students from accessing the tests and which only come to light when students contact the library to report a problem. Additionally, users recently lost access when links to PrepSTEP changed without notice.	On-demand tutorials, search tip sheets and other training materials are available for Testing & Education Reference Center. Those materials can be found here: http://solutions.cengage.com/gale-training/materials/ A product update blog is available to follow new developments across all of the Gale products: http://blog.gale.com/category/updates/
Cost If cost is available, does it seem reasonable in terms of comparable products?	Pricing is based on the number of users as well as the number of titles you choose. This is the lowest-cost option of the three test prep databases reviewed.	Base platform (learning centers for basic academic and workplace skills) can be purchased with or without additional modules for CTE or computer skills. This product with add-on modules is the costliest of the three products reviewed.	Cost is based on FTEs. The Career Builder module is an additional fee. TERC costs more than Mometrix and less than PrepSTEP.
The Competition	PrepSTEP (Ebsco) TERC (Gale)	Mometrix TERC (Gale)	Mometrix PrepSTEP (Ebsco)
Recommended Improvements	Accessibility needs to be made a priority.	Accessibility needs to be made a priority.	Allow authenticated users to view books without registering. Require registration when users wish to

		Allow authenticated users to view books without registering or only if they wish to save test scores. Freshened content in the lessons, whether they are just text-based or media enhanced. Improved search function to allow users to navigate to content.	complete a test.

Summary of Mometrix Content--1 star, Support--2 stars)

ntent — 40%	Interface — 25%	Cost — 15%	Accessibility — 15%	Support
★☆☆☆☆	★★☆☆☆	★☆☆☆☆	★☆☆☆☆	★★☆

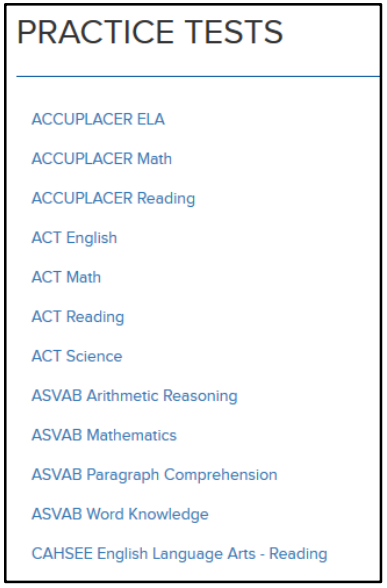
The Mometrix interface is straightforward. There are no bells or whistles. Of the three test preparation products we reviewed, it has the smallest amount of content of all three but is a strong choice for supporting career/technical programs.



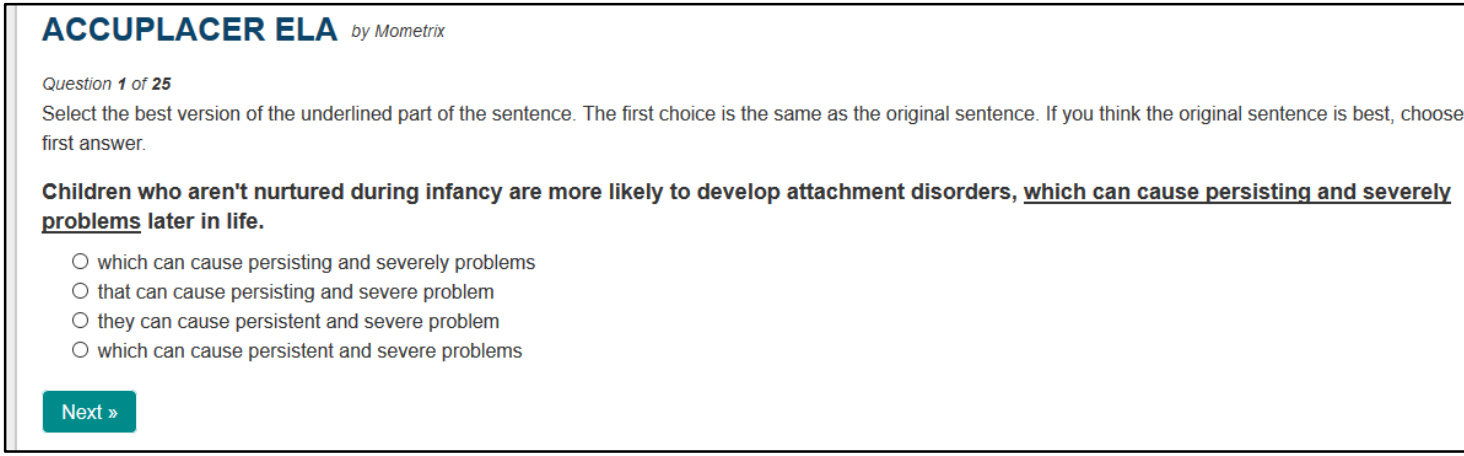
The homepage makes it easy to browse or search for study guides.

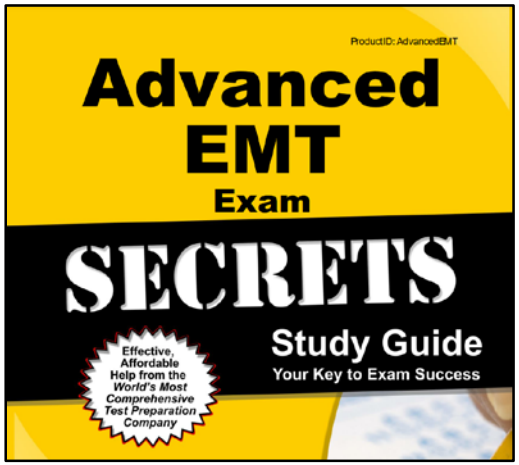
And the screenshot shows the topics covered.

This screenshot shows how the list of practice tests is displayed. Mometrix includes practice tests for Accuplacer, which is used at some colleges to inform placement recommendations for students entering English, math, and reading sequences.



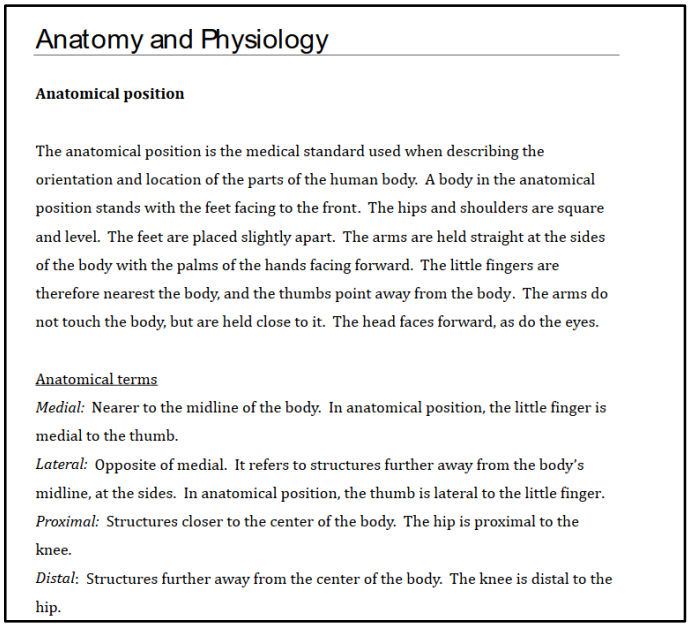
This screenshot is an example of a practice test. Because students cannot set up an account, their completion of practice tests will not be recorded as it is in the other two test preparation products we reviewed. This means that the tests are easy for students to access but that they cannot easily be assigned by faculty to students for credit in their courses.





The study guides in Mometrix are formatted as eBooks. That means they are not interactive but they can be downloaded. The screenshot is an example of a study guide.

The screenshot is an example of the study guide content, which is text heavy and does not offer interactivity.



Anatomy and Physiology

Anatomical position

The anatomical position is the medical standard used when describing the orientation and location of the parts of the human body. A body in the anatomical position stands with the feet facing to the front. The hips and shoulders are square and level. The feet are placed slightly apart. The arms are held straight at the sides of the body with the palms of the hands facing forward. The little fingers are therefore nearest the body, and the thumbs point away from the body. The arms do not touch the body, but are held close to it. The head faces forward, as do the eyes.

Anatomical terms

Medial: Nearer to the midline of the body. In anatomical position, the little finger is medial to the thumb.

Lateral: Opposite of medial. It refers to structures further away from the body's midline, at the sides. In anatomical position, the thumb is lateral to the little finger.

Proximal: Structures closer to the center of the body. The hip is proximal to the knee.

Distal: Structures further away from the center of the body. The knee is distal to the hip.

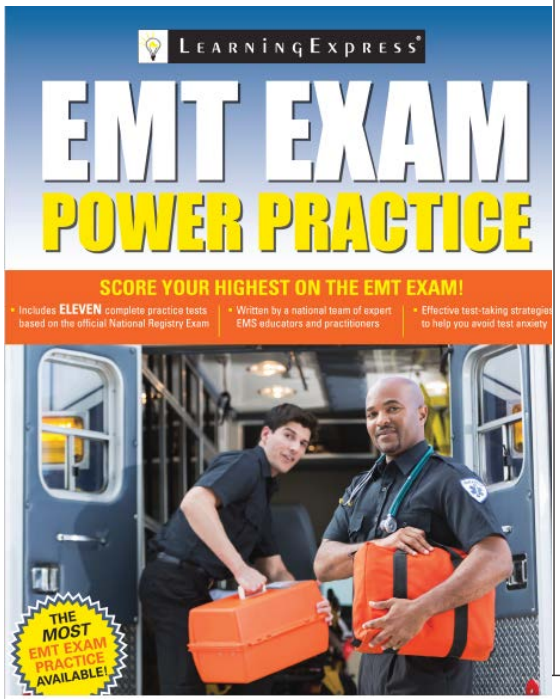
Summary of PrepSTEP Support--3 stars

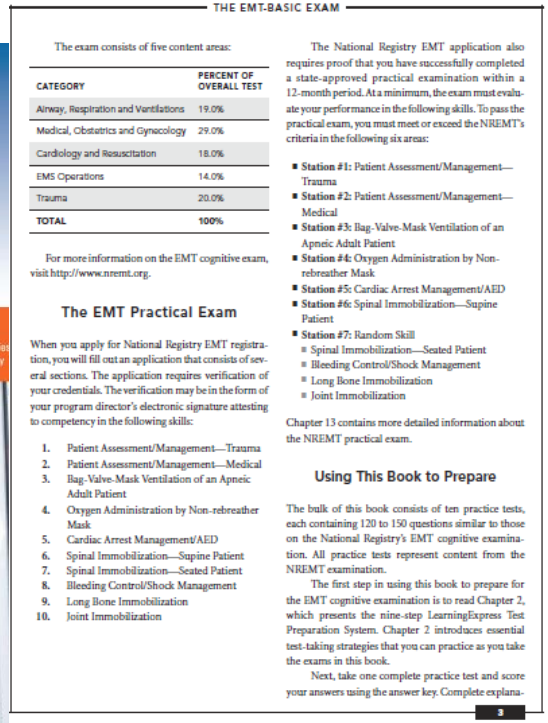
Content — 40%	Interface — 25%	Cost — 15%	Accessibility — 15%	Suppo
★★★☆	★★☆☆☆	★☆☆☆☆	★☆☆☆☆	★★

PrepSTEP is difficult to navigate. The screenshot of the homepage illustrates that it is hard to know everything that is included when first entering the tool and there is no easy way to browse the content. The “carousel” display of content is scheduled to be replaced by an easier-to-navigate frontpage design in February 2018.

PrepSTEP has the most content of all three of the test preparation tools that we reviewed, though that does depend on which modules your library chooses to subscribe to. The cost increases significantly as you add the career/technical and/or computer skills modules. The screenshot shows an example of content from PrepSTEP. It illustrates the multiple materials that are often available for each content area.

The test preparation guides are eBooks, which can be downloaded and printed. They do not offer any interactivity. The screenshots illustrate that the guides are text-based. Students cannot access the eBooks until they create a PrepSTEP account.





THE EMT-BASIC EXAM

The exam consists of five content areas:

CATEGORY	PERCENT OF OVERALL TEST
Airway, Respiration and Ventilations	19.0%
Medical, Obstetrics and Gynecology	29.0%
Cardiology and Resuscitation	18.0%
EMS Operations	14.0%
Trauma	20.0%
TOTAL	100%

For more information on the EMT cognitive exam, visit http://www.nremt.org.

The EMT Practical Exam

When you apply for National Registry EMT registration, you will fill out an application that consists of several sections. The application requires verification of your credentials. The verification may be in the form of your program director's electronic signature attesting to competency in the following skills:

1. Patient Assessment/Management—Trauma
2. Patient Assessment/Management—Medical
3. Bag-Valve-Mask Ventilation of an Apneic Adult Patient
4. Oxygen Administration by Non-rebreather Mask
5. Cardiac Arrest Management/AED
6. Spinal Immobilization—Supine Patient
7. Spinal Immobilization—Seated Patient
8. Bleeding Control/Shock Management
9. Long Bone Immobilization
10. Joint Immobilization

The National Registry EMT application also requires proof that you have successfully completed a state-approved practical examination within a 12-month period. At a minimum, the exam must evaluate your performance in the following skills. To pass the practical exam, you must meet or exceed the NREMT's criteria in the following six areas:

- **Station #1:** Patient Assessment/Management—Trauma
- **Station #2:** Patient Assessment/Management—Medical
- **Station #3:** Bag-Valve-Mask Ventilation of an Apneic Adult Patient
- **Station #4:** Oxygen Administration by Non-rebreather Mask
- **Station #5:** Cardiac Arrest Management/AED
- **Station #6:** Spinal Immobilization—Supine Patient
- **Station #7:** Random Skill
  - Spinal Immobilization—Seated Patient
  - Bleeding Control/Shock Management
  - Long Bone Immobilization
  - Joint Immobilization

Chapter 13 contains more detailed information about the NREMT practical exam.

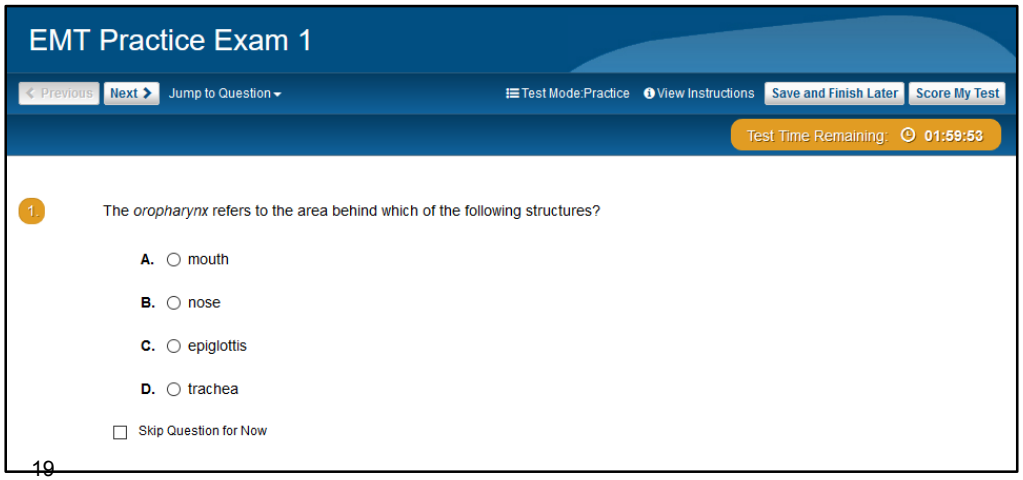
Using This Book to Prepare

The bulk of this book consists of ten practice tests, each containing 120 to 150 questions similar to those on the National Registry's EMT cognitive examination. All practice tests represent content from the NREMT examination.

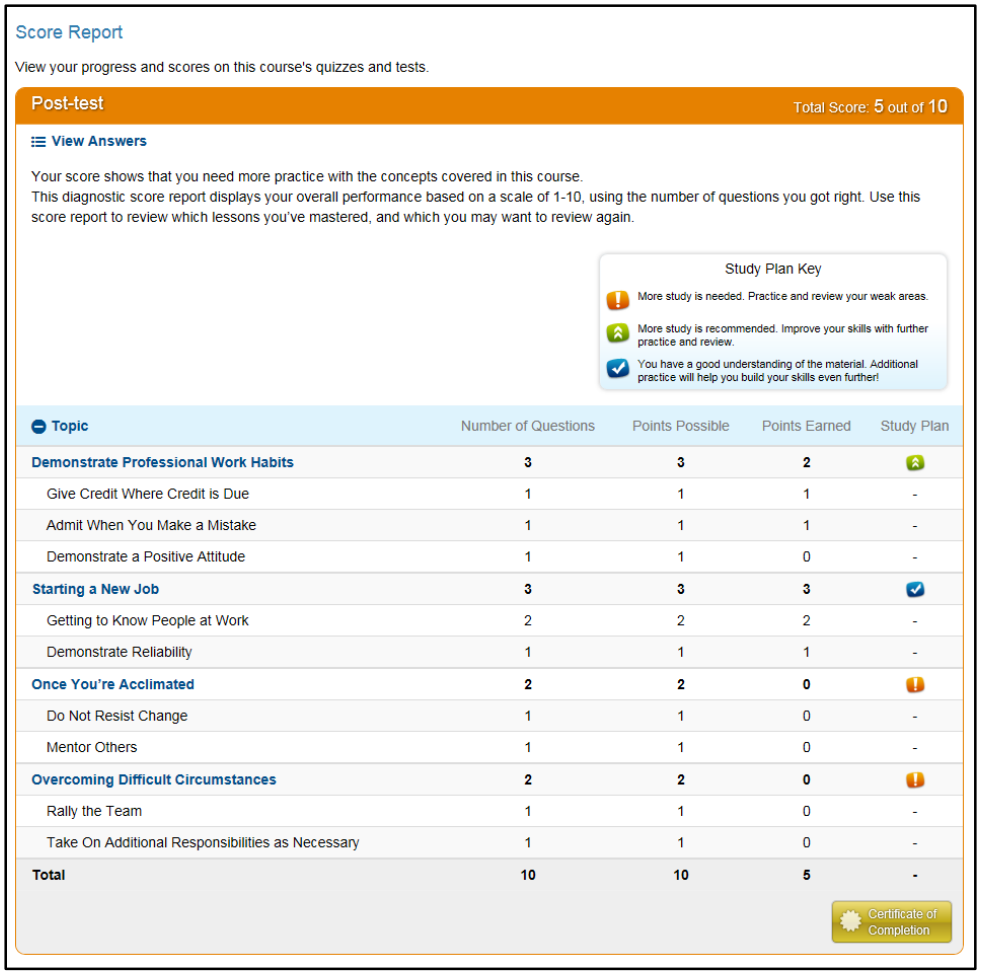
The first step in using this book to prepare for the EMT cognitive examination is to read Chapter 2, which presents the nine-step LearningExpress Test Preparation System. Chapter 2 introduces essential test-taking strategies that you can practice as you take the exams in this book.

Next, take one complete practice test and score your answers using the answer key. Complete explana-

3



Because users must log in to open eBooks and practice tests, students' responses to practice tests are automatically saved and students can return to complete tests later. The screenshot illustrates the practice test interface.



Score Report

View your progress and scores on this course's quizzes and tests.

Post-test Total Score: 5 out of 10

View Answers

Your score shows that you need more practice with the concepts covered in this course.
This diagnostic score report displays your overall performance based on a scale of 1-10, using the number of questions you got right. Use this score report to review which lessons you've mastered, and which you may want to review again.

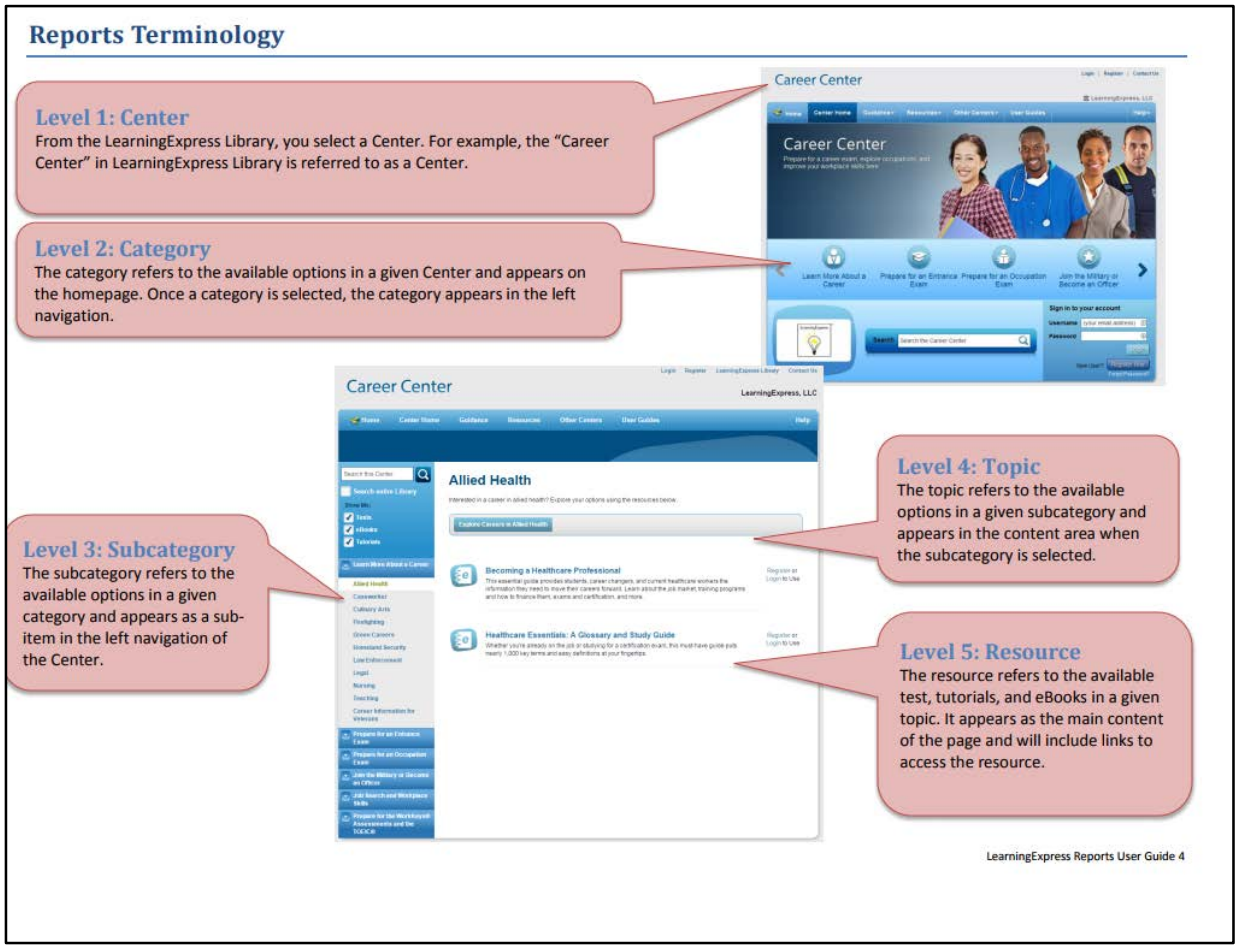
Study Plan Key

- More study is needed. Practice and review your weak areas.
- More study is recommended. Improve your skills with further practice and review.
- You have a good understanding of the material. Additional practice will help you build your skills even further!

Topic	Number of Questions	Points Possible	Points Earned	Study Plan
Demonstrate Professional Work Habits	**3**	**3**	**2**	
Give Credit Where Credit is Due	1	1	1	-
Admit When You Make a Mistake	1	1	1	-
Demonstrate a Positive Attitude	1	1	0	-
Starting a New Job	**3**	**3**	**3**	
Getting to Know People at Work	2	2	2	-
Demonstrate Reliability	1	1	1	-
Once You're Acclimated	**2**	**2**	**0**	
Do Not Resist Change	1	1	0	-
Mentor Others	1	1	0	-
Overcoming Difficult Circumstances	**2**	**2**	**0**	
Rally the Team	1	1	0	-
Take On Additional Responsibilities as Necessary	1	1	0	-
Total	**10**	**10**	**5**	**-**

Certificate of Completion

Students' practice test results are saved in their account. Test results include detailed feedback and suggestions for a study plan based on students' performance. Because students receive their results, they can share them with faculty who have assigned the practice tests for assignment credit. The screenshot illustrates the score report that students receive.



Usage Reports

Many types of reports are supported. Subscribing libraries are able to generate statistics for:

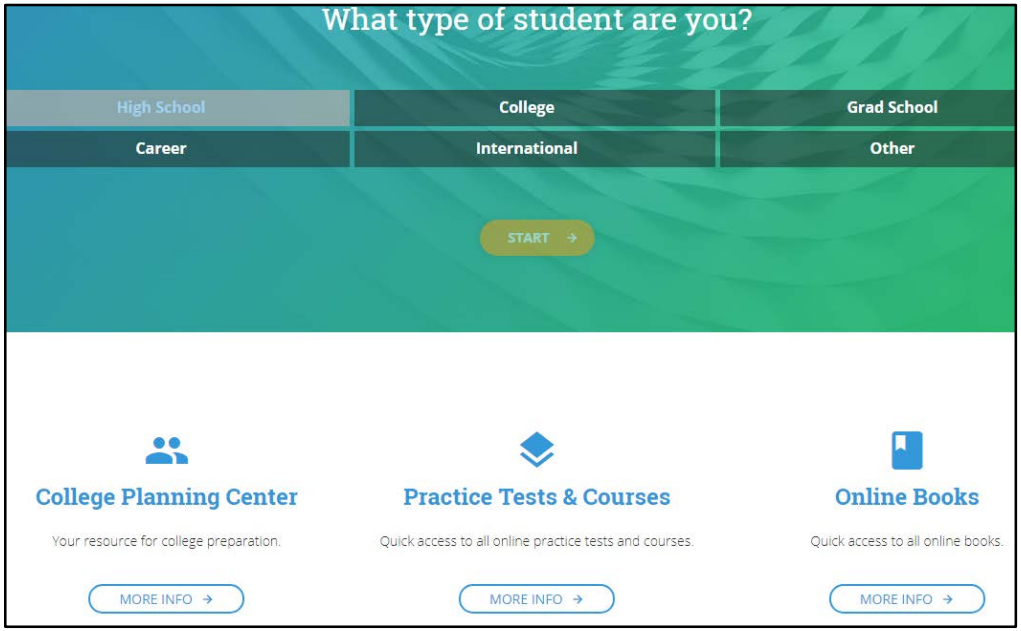
- Career Center requests
- Categories and subcategories within a career center
- Topics; and
- Resource type accessed (e.g. ebook; test)

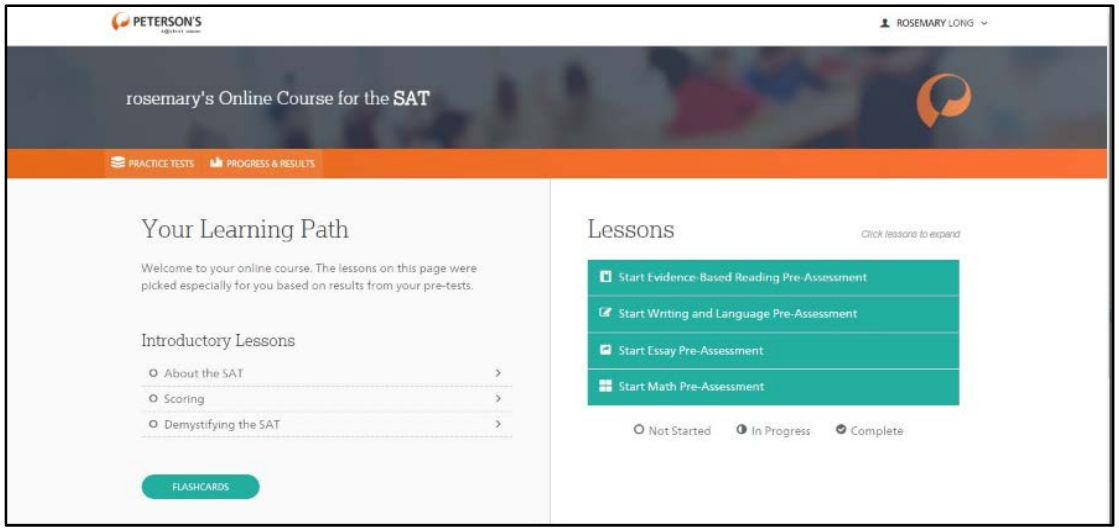
See diagram for key to report types.

Summary of TERC Support--3 stars

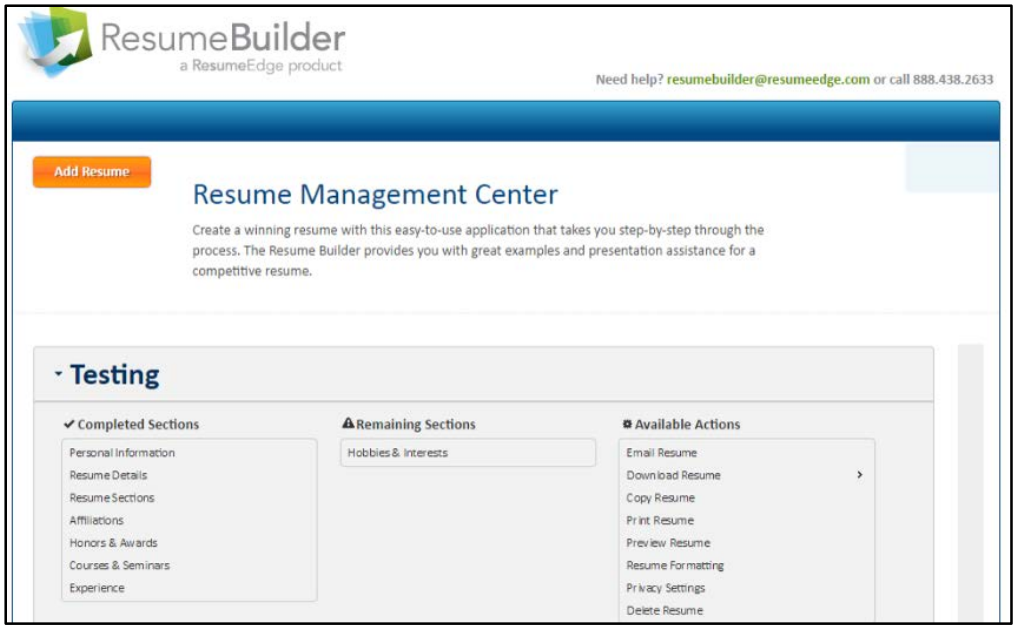
Content — 40%	Interface — 25%	Cost — 15%	Accessibility — 15%	Suppo
★★★½	★★★½	★★½	★½	★★

The default search page is pictured below. It requires users to select an appropriate learning path based on their educational goal or student type. Only after making a selection can the user conduct a search for testing materials or other content.





Screenshot shows customized learning path for college prep. Creation of user profiles (username/ID) allows for saving of test results. Content is customized for user based on results of pre-test.



The Career Module is available as an add-on to TERC and features a career assessment tool (a multiple-choice exam that determines users' Holland Type and maps to suitable job categories, industries, and occupations) a résumé and cover letter builder, and interviewing tips.

Other Reviews

EBSCO Introduces Online Learning Platform. (2015). *Worldwide Videotex Update, 34*(11) Retrieved from *Proquest*.

Golderman, G., & Connolly, B. (2016). Testing & Education Reference Center. *Library Journal*, 141(17), 116. Retrieved from *Academic Search Complete.*