



Preparation Guide
for paper-based assessments



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For more information contact:

Workforce Preparation, School of Foundational Learning
Bow Valley College
345 6 Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2G 4V1
(403) 410-3200
towes@bowvalleycollege.ca

www.towes.com

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www.bowvalleycollege.ca



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YOUR TEST SESSION DETAILS

Test Date	
Test Location	
Time	
Certified Administrator Contact Information	

ABOUT TOWES

TOWES (Test of Workplace Essential Skills) measures some of the basic foundational skills we use for working, learning, and living. The skills include:



Reading You will be asked to read selections from manuals, regulations, notices, memos, and brochures. Questions will ask you to find and interpret information from a document.



Document Use You will be asked to find information using documents such as maps, tables, diagrams, and work plans. Questions may ask you to highlight or enter information into a document.



Numeracy You will be asked to complete tasks that require calculations, such as counting money, budgeting, or measuring. Questions will ask you to calculate a response from a variety of documents.

These skills are important to be safe and productive in the workplace and allow you to adapt and learn new job-specific skills. This is why TOWES is designed to look and feel like work. All test questions are related to documents from real workplace situations. Each question allows you to demonstrate your skills by completing a task and using the document provided.

PREPARING FOR YOUR TOWES TEST

You cannot study for TOWES because the questions do not evaluate specific knowledge (such as dates in history or names of famous people). Instead, TOWES measures how well you are able to use your day-to-day foundational skills to find, locate, understand, and apply information. Everyone has some ability in these skill areas.

Here are a few ways to prepare for your test:

1. Review this guide and try the sample questions included.
2. Visit the [Test Taker Services](#) section of towes.com to access additional resources.
3. Talk to your Certified Administrator before the test and ask questions if you need more information.
4. Get a good sleep before your test and have something to eat before you begin. Remember, you can do your best when you feel your best!



Items to bring to your test session

- Valid government-issued photo identification
- Pen, pencil and eraser, highlighter
- Basic calculator (non-programmable)
- Reading glasses or magnifying glass, if needed. Some of the print may be small.



Items that are not permitted

- Dictionaries, thesauruses, language translators
- Programmable calculators
- Cell phones or any other electronic devices
- Additional resources, notebooks, backpacks

Before writing TOWES, you should know the answers to these questions:

- What is the purpose of the test?
- What types of questions will be asked?
- Where do I take the test?
- How will I get my results?
- Who will have access to my results?

TIPS FOR WRITING TOWES

- TOWES typically takes **2–3 hours** to write. If you can, choose a time to write your test when you feel you can concentrate best.
- Plan to arrive early. Before the test begins, listen to the instructions. Remember to ask questions if you do not understand.
- Before you begin, take a few minutes to look through the test. This will help you to plan your time.
- Questions can be completed in any order. Sometimes the first question may be more difficult than the others, so don't get discouraged as the next question may be easier.
- There is plenty of time to complete all the questions. Take time to read each question carefully and review the workplace documents provided.
- Imagine yourself as a worker who needs to solve the problem. What looks difficult at first may make sense if you take it one step at a time.
- Rephrase the questions in your own words. What is the question asking for? When, why, or how much?
- Try to answer all the questions. If too many questions are skipped, you may not receive a test score.
- Some questions and documents used may not be familiar to you, but all the information you need to answer the questions can be found in the documents provided.
- If you change an answer, erase, or cross out the previous answer. All tests are marked by hand, so make sure that your final answer is clear.
- All TOWES tests must be completed individually in one test session.
- Before handing in your test, make sure you answered all questions.
- TOWES evaluates the skills you already use every day. Be positive and confident about your abilities!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Adults continue to learn all throughout their lives and some may have gaps in their learning. For example, an individual may be familiar with most math functions but never have really understood fractions. Sometimes not using a skill very often makes us a bit “rusty.”

After writing TOWES, you may realize that you need to improve your skills in some areas.

There are many drop-in learning literacy centres and volunteer tutoring programs in most communities that may be able to help. There are also online resources.

If you prefer a more structured learning environment, you may want to enroll in a class to enhance your skills.

Reach out to your local community college, school board or other educational provider.

Seek out formal or informal learning opportunities in your community. The local library may be able to help with books, videos, and other learning resources.

Practice! Skills can improve with practice!

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

A series of sample questions can be found on the next two pages. These are examples of the types of questions found in TOWES.

Practice your skills before the test by completing each question and then comparing your responses to the answers provided.

Brewer Valve Problem

Brewer valves are found in automatic coffee machines. They open to allow hot water to mix with the coffee.

Look at the drawing and parts listing for the Eaton brewer valve on the page opposite.



Question What is the name of the part shown here?

1



Question What is the part number of the two “O” rings used in this valve?

2

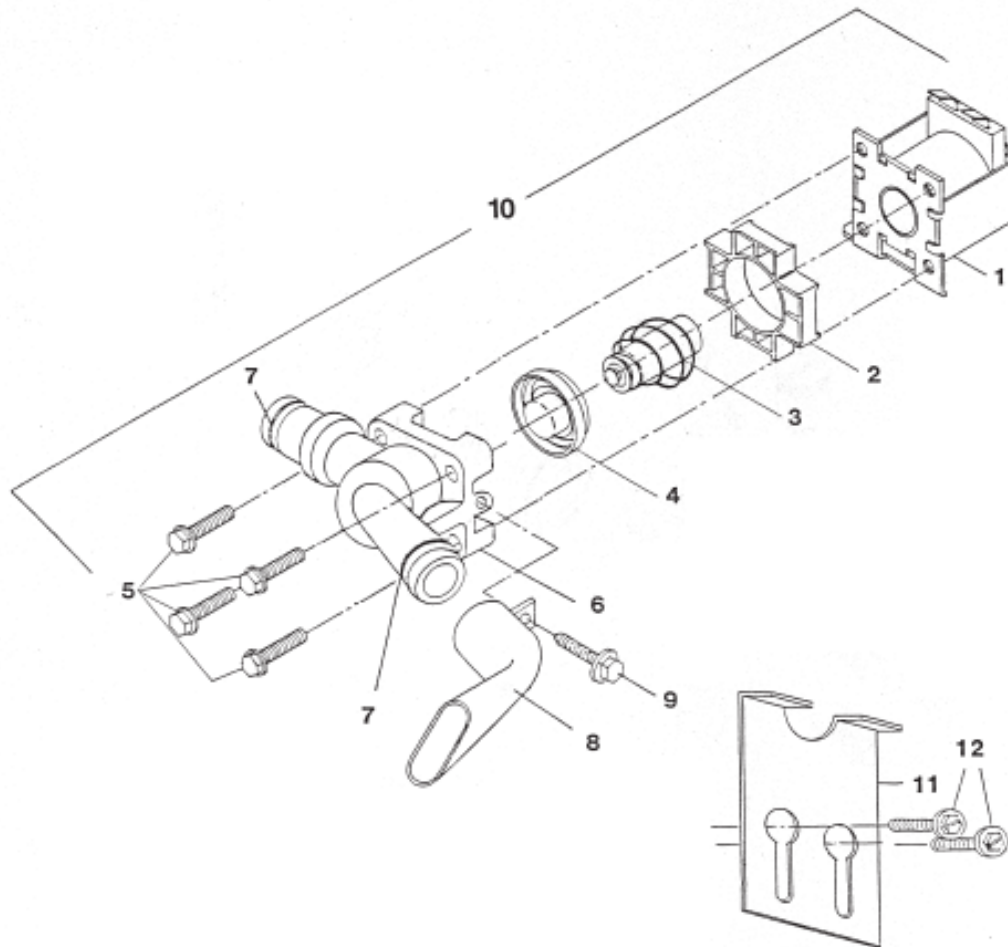
Question What part number would a repair person use to order the whole valve?

3

Question On the drawing, highlight or circle the picture of the parts that are not included when Item 10 is ordered.

4

Mark the brewer valve diagram



EATON BREWER VALVE ASSEMBLY

Items with Part Numbers are Stocked by RMI

1. Coil, Red	30596
2. Adapter	27787
3. Armature and Spring	30598
4. Diaphragm	27793
5. Screw, Valve Mounting	
6. Body, Brewer Valve, White	28732
7. "O" Ring, 1/2 x 5/8	14759
8. Spout, Brewer Valve, Black	28733
9. Screw, 6 x 5/16, PH, Type 25, SCP	28825
10. Valve Asm Brewer (Includes Items 1-9)	30854
11. Bracket, Brewer Valve Retainer	28814
12. Screw, 8-32 x 3/8, HH, SCP	14806

NOTE: Items 11 and 12 are Sold Separately from Valve Asm, Item 10

SAMPLE QUESTION ANSWERS

Compare your responses to the answers for the **Brewer Valve** questions.

Question What is the name of the part shown here?

1

Answer: **Armature and Spring**

This question tests your ability to use documents, including:

- locating information in an assembly drawing
- identifying the correct number in a table

To locate the information needed, you must correctly match the object to the one shown on the drawing. When you find the same part, you can see that it is labeled with the number 3. The next step is to find the row numbered 3 in the table below the drawing. Beside number 3 is the name of the part, **Armature and Spring**.

Question What is the part number of the two “O” rings used in this valve?

2

Answer: **14759**

This question tests your ability to use documents including:

- locating information in a drawing
- locating information in a table format
- locating information by matching a single word

This question also requires you to read carefully. The answer asks for a number not a name. To find the answer to this question, you could search the drawing if you happen to know what an “O” ring looks like. You could even eliminate all the parts that don’t look like a ring until you are able to select the correct answer, the part labeled 7 in the drawing. You will have to use the table with the title “**Eaton Brewer Valve Assembly**” and notice that it includes “**Items and Part Numbers.**” Scan the table to find the row starting with 7 or showing the words “**O” rings** in the second column. Look across the row to find the part number in the third column (far right).

Question 3 What part number would a repair person use to order the whole valve?

3

Answer: **30854**

This question tests your ability to use documents including:

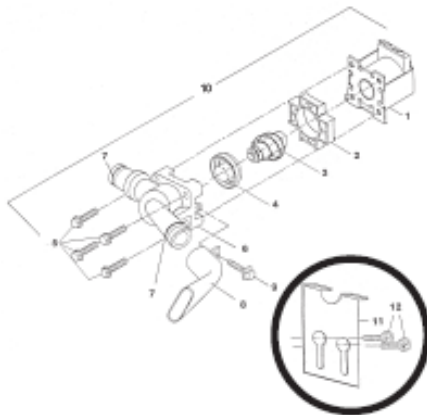
- locating information in a drawing and in a table
- interpreting a line to mean, includes multiple parts
- interpreting “(Includes Items 1-9)” as the “whole valve”
- identifying the column which shows order numbers

This question also tests your ability to read carefully. The word “**order**” tells you that a part number is required. In this question you can find the information in two ways. The first is to interpret the long line numbered 10 on the drawing as “**the whole valve**”. You could also scan the table and find the words “**(Includes Items 1-9)**”. Once you have decided that 10 is the part number, you must locate the correct order number in the column to the right and find **30854**.

Question 4 On the drawing, highlight or circle the picture of the parts that are not included when Item 10 is ordered.

4

Answer:



This question tests your ability to use documents including:

- locating information in a drawing
- identify that the line numbered 10 includes items 1-9
- infer that parts 11 and 12 are not included

This question also tests your ability to read carefully. It is important to notice that the word “**not**” is underlined. To answer the question, you must determine that **Item 10**

includes Items 1 to 9. Once those are eliminated, only 11 and 12 are left. Another way to figure that out is to look at the chart and read the NOTE which tells you that “**parts are sold separately**” which means they are not included. Once the parts not included are identified, you highlight or circle them.