NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments at Grades 3–8
North Carolina Assessment Specifications

Purpose of the Assessments

- The Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments measure students' proficiency on the North Carolina Extended Content Standards for English Language Arts adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2017.

- Assessment results will be used for school accountability under the accountability model and for federal reporting purposes.

Curriculum Cycle

- June 2017:   North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the North Carolina Extended Content Standards for English Language Arts

- 2017–2018:   Item development for the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments

- 2018–2019:   Administration of embedded field test items for the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments

- 2019–2020:   First operational administration of the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments (Edition 4)

Standards

- The North Carolina Extended Content Standards for English Language Arts are divided into 4 strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.

Developing Assessments

- North Carolina educators were recruited and trained to write new items. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current standards was addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the content validity of the items.

- For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see State Board Policy Multiple-Choice Test Development (TEST-013) or reference the Test Development Process: Item, Selection, and Form Development document.

Prioritization of Standards

- Members of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Test Development Section invited North Carolina educators to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for test design.

- Subsequently, curriculum and test development staff from the NCDPI met to review the recommendations from the teacher panels and to adopt final weight distributions across the domains for each grade level.

- *Tables 1, 2, and 3* describe the range of items by domain and Depth of Knowledge (DOK) that will appear on the NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments.

Table 1. NCEXTEND1 Reading Grades 3–5 Domain Distributions

Domain	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Reading for Literature	38–46%	38–46%	38–46%
Reading for Informational Text	46–54%	46–54%	46–54%
Language	4–12%	4–12%	4–12%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 2. NCEXTEND1 Reading Grades 6–8 Domain Distributions

Domain	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Reading for Literature	38–46%	38–46%	38–46%
Reading for Informational Text	42–50%	42–50%	42–50%
Language	8–16%	8–16%	8–16%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 3: NCEXTEND1 Reading Grades 3–8 Item by DOK Distribution

Grades	DOK1	DOK2
3–5	38–63%	38–63%
6–8	25–46%	54–75%

Cognitive Rigor and Item Complexity

- Items for the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments have been designed, developed, and classified to ensure that the cognitive rigor of the operational test forms align to the cognitive complexity and demands of the North Carolina Extended Content Standards for English Language Arts. These items will require students to not only recall information, but also apply concepts and skills and make decisions.

Testing Structure and Test Administration Time

- The NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments are teacher-facilitated online assessments that are administered individually to each student. The questions are presented online in two (2) sets. There is no formalized break between the sets. Students have two (2) trials each for the first and second set of test questions. If the student misses the answer in the first trial, the incorrect answer is removed from the choices for the second trial. The test will terminate at the end of set one for students who do not answer enough questions correctly. Students who answer enough questions correctly in set one will continue to set two. The assessment ends after the question in set two.

- The Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments will consist of thirty (30) performance-based, three-response-option multiple-choice items. There are twenty-four (24) operational items and six (6) field test items that will not be included in the score but will be used for purposes of developing future test forms.

- *Table 4* provides the item count details for Sets One and Two.

Table 4. NCEXTEND1 Reading Testing Structure

Domain	Operational		Field Test		Total	
	Selections	**Items**	**Selections**	**Items**	**Selections**	**Items**
NCEXTEND1 Reading	Set 1: 3	14	—	—	3	14
	Set 2: 2	10	Set 2: 1	6	3	16

- All selections from Set 1 are all read by the teacher. For Set 2, one operational and one embedded selection are read by the teacher, and one operational selection is read by the student.

- The NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments are administered individually to each student. The time required by a student to complete the assessment will be unique to each individual student, depending on the student's ability to maintain focus, medical condition, and/or fatigue factor(s).

- The NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments may be administered over several days or may be completed in one session.

Types of Items and Supplemental Materials
- The following checklists contain the required materials assessors will need for the test administration.
  - the Assessment Guide for the NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment
  - a device meeting all technical requirements (Use the Technical Requirements for NCTest located at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct.)
  - one grade-appropriate test card kit per student assessed
  - one selection booklet
  - a supply of scratch paper
  - sharpened pencils with erasers or other student-specific writing utensils
  - counters/objects (not required by the assessment, but may be used if they are included in the way in which a student is routinely taught)
- Before the test administration date, teachers must complete the online practice activity. The practice activity can help teachers in determining which administration option is most appropriate for their students.

- Released items for the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments are available on the [NCEXTEND1 webpage](). The released items for NCEXTEND1 Reading may not reflect the breadth of standards assessed and/or the range of item difficulty on the NCEXTEND1 assessment.
  - Released items and forms may be used by Public School Units to help acquaint students with items.
  - These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain.

Test Cycle and Delivery Mode
- The Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments must be administered during the last ten (10) days (traditional yearlong schedule) of the instructional period. All students in membership (according to PowerSchool) are expected to participate with

or without accommodations in the standard administration of the alternate assessment.

- The Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments are only provided in English. Native language translation versions are not available. North Carolina G.S.§115C-81.45(a) requires all teachers and principals to conduct classes except foreign language classes in English.

Additional Resources

- Score reports will be delayed due to Standard Setting.

- Achievement Level Descriptors will be finalized during Standard Setting in July 2020 and presented to the State Board in August 2020 and will be posted to the and NCEXTEND1 webpage upon board adoption.

- A sample Individual Student Report for NCEXTEND1 Reading alternate assessments will be available on the NCDPI Individual Student Report (ISRs) webpage after State Board approval of the Achievement Level Descriptors

NCEXTEND1 Reading Standards Assessed

Table 5 shows the standards that are assessed on the Grades 3–8 NCEXTEND1 Reading Alternate Assessments.

Table 5. NCEXTEND1 Reading Standards Assessed by Grade

Domain	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Reading for Literature						
RL.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RL.2		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RL.3	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
RL.4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RL.5	✓					
RL.6			✓	✓	✓	
RL.7	✓		✓			
Reading for Information						
RI.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.4	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
RI.5			✓		✓	✓
RI.6				✓	✓	✓
RI.7	✓	✓	✓			
RI.8			✓			
Language						
L.4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
L.5a			✓	✓	✓	✓