

Understanding the Individual Student Report for the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3

Third grade is an important year for elementary school students. It is a year of increasing academic demands and more rigorous tasks, and it is the first year that students are expected to take standardized tests. Within the first three weeks of the school year, third-grade students are given the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3. The pretest measures a sample of grade 2 reading and mathematics goals and objectives as defined in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* that are necessary for students to be successful in reading and mathematics at grade 3. The pretest is the only pretest that North Carolina administers; it allows parents and educators to see how much learning occurs between the beginning and the end of the third grade. Growth is determined by comparing student performance on the pretest—grade 3 with student performance on the grade 3 end-of-grade test that is administered the last three weeks of the school year. The pretest is not designed to make student placement or diagnostic decisions in isolation. Test scores should always be considered along with all other available information provided about your child. Scores on the pretest are only one of the many indicators of how well your child is achieving.

The fall 2007 North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 consists of mathematics items only. In order for a new reading comprehension pretest to be developed that matches the 2004 *North Carolina English Language Arts Standard Course of Study*, all grade 3 students participated in a statewide reading comprehension field test during the same testing window as the operational pretest of mathematics. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction does not return to the school or school system score reports and student scores from statewide field tests.

— North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3—Individual Student Report —

The 2007 Individual Student Report for the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 provides information concerning an individual student's performance on the Pretest—Grade 3 in mathematics. A sample individual student report is provided on page four.

- A. For mathematics, the number of **questions** shows the number of items that were used to calculate the mathematics score.
- B. The **scale score** shows the student's developmental scale score in mathematics. The number of questions the student answered correctly is called a raw score. The raw score is converted to a developmental scale score.
- C. The **developmental scale score** depicts growth in mathematics achievement from year to year. Parents may use the developmental scale scores on the pretest—grade 3, given the first three weeks of school, and the end-of-grade test, given during the last three weeks of school, to determine their child's growth in mathematics.
- D. **Achievement levels** show the four achievement levels and their relation to the developmental scale. Achievement levels are predetermined performance standards that allow the student's performance to be compared to grade-level expectations. Four achievement levels (i.e., levels I, II, III, and IV) are reported in mathematics.
- E. The **description of the achievement level** is reported for the student's performance in mathematics. A complete listing of achievement levels I–IV for mathematics by grade level may be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/achievelevel/pretestg3>.
- F. **Student** shows the individual student's score in relation to the developmental scale and the achievement levels. The student's score is represented by an open diamond. The horizontal line across the diamond

represents where the student's true score should be about two-thirds of the time (standard error of measurement). On another day or with a different set of test questions, the student may obtain a slightly different score but still score on the horizontal line.

G–I. Individual student performance may be compared to the average scale scores for the **school** (G), the **school system** (H), and the **state** (I). The average scale score for G–H is represented as an open diamond. The horizontal line across each diamond represents the range of scores achieved by about two-thirds of the students in the same grade as the student who was tested (one standard deviation). The average scale scores for the school and the school system are based on this year's test administration. The state average is based on the scores of all North Carolina students who took the test in the norming year.

J. **This student scored at or above** shows the percentile rank. The percentile rank compares the student's performance on the test this year to that of all North Carolina students who took the test in the norming year. The norming year for a test is generally the first year the test was administered. The percentile shows that the student performed at a level equal to or better than the stated percentage of students who took the test during the norming year. The higher the percentile, the better a student performed compared to other students in his or her grade. Percentiles range from 1 to 99.

Key Features of the Mathematics Test

- The mathematics test assesses student achievement in the five strands of the mathematics curriculum: (1) Number and Operations, (2) Measurement, (3) Geometry, (4) Data Analysis and Probability, and (5) Algebra.
- Some of the mathematics items in the pretest—grade 3 are field test items. The field test items do not count toward or against the student's score.
- The 62-item test (including field test items) is administered in two parts: Calculator Active (42 questions) and Calculator Inactive (20 questions).
- Students are allowed to use calculators during the Calculator Active part of the test. Students are not allowed to use calculators during the Calculator Inactive part of the test.
- The minimum ("at least") calculator requirement for grade 3 is a four-function calculator with memory key.
- For both parts of the mathematics test, students at grade 3 are given blank paper and graph paper.
- The mathematics tests are administered on two consecutive school days.
- The mathematics tests are not timed. Students are to be allowed ample opportunity to complete the tests. The estimated time for 95% of students at grade 3 to complete the mathematics calculator active test is 80 minutes. The estimated time for students to complete the mathematics calculator inactive test is 40 minutes.



How Can I Help My Child with Mathematics?

- "Do math" with your child at home as problem-solving partners. Use word problems. Have your child explain how he or she is solving the problems.
- Make a list of all the ways your family uses mathematics at home:
 - Newspapers and weather reports include charts, graphs, data, and statistics.
 - Sporting events provide data and statistics.
 - The grocery store affords an opportunity for practicing measurement and estimation.
 - Recipes can be modified.
 - The changing seasons give an opportunity to examine temperature.
 - Road trips encourage map reading and distance, time, and gasoline mileage problems.
- By "doing math" together, you will demonstrate that learning mathematics is fun.



Meeting with your child's teacher on a regular basis provides you with the opportunity to discuss your child's progress. This includes discussions about instructional activities, homework assignments, and test scores. The teacher can also provide you with ideas for supporting instruction in the home. It may be appropriate for your child to attend the conference(s) so that he or she can participate in the discussions and understand the expectations.

To prepare for a conference, you may wish to make a list of questions before the meeting. These may include test scores, classroom performance, homework, aptitude, and attitude. Just before the conference ends, review with the teacher what you can do to help your child.

Additional Information

For additional information on the Pretest—Grade 3, visit the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program Web site at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.

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Mathematics (38 questions) **(A)**

(B) Scale Score

348

(J) This student scored at or above
95
percent of students who took the
test during the norming year (2006-07).

(D) Achievement Levels

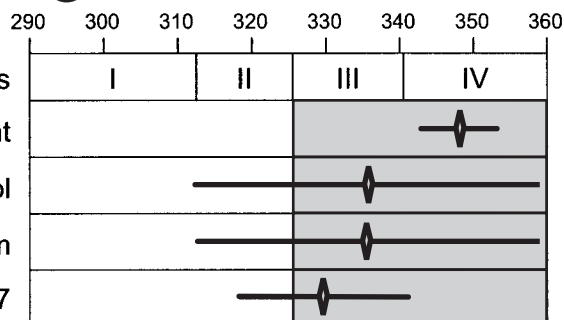
(F) Student

(G) School

(H) System

(I) State 2006-07

(C) Developmental Scale Score



(E) Students performing at this level consistently perform in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient at grade level work.

Students performing at Level IV commonly show a high level of understanding, compute accurately, and respond consistently with appropriate answers or procedures. They demonstrate flexibility by using a variety of problem-solving strategies.

Upon entering third grade, students performing at Level IV demonstrate flexibility as they read, write, estimate, model, and compute using whole numbers through 999. They accurately represent and compare fractions and also combine fractions to describe parts of a whole. Students recognize, use and apply metric and customary measurement (e.g., length, temperature, time). Students consistently identify symmetrical and congruent figures. They show an advanced understanding of data using Venn diagrams and pictographs. They conduct simple probability experiments, accurately describe the results and make predictions. Level IV students identify, describe and extend patterns. They write and apply addition and subtraction number sentences with symbols representing unknown quantities.

Teacher Comments

The North Carolina Grade 3 Pretest is a multiple-choice test administered within the first three weeks of school to all students in grade 3. The 2007 grade 3 pretest measures the knowledge and skills specified for grade 2 from the mathematics goals and objectives of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The shaded areas indicate performance at Achievement Levels III and IV. Performance at Achievement Level III or IV demonstrates mastery of subject matter and skills that indicates the student is prepared to do third grade work.

NOTE: For the 2007 administration of the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3, students will be administered the mathematics part of the pretest only. Reading Comprehension will be field tested statewide in 2007.

Student Information on the grade 3 pretest can be found at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.