# Read to Achieve Test North Carolina Test Specifications

## Purpose of the Test

The North Carolina Read to Achieve Test is linked to the Read to Achieve Program and is aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) for English Language Arts, adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2017.

North Carolina General Statute §115C-83.7(a) states that the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) "shall require that a student be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for a third grade student, as demonstrated on a State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students" (i.e., end-of-grade [EOG] test). "The test may be re-administered once prior to the end of the school year." Students may, however, be exempt from mandatory retention in third grade for good cause by demonstrating reading proficiency appropriate for third-grade students on an alternative assessment approved by the SBE. The Read to Achieve Test is a valid and reliable standardized alternative assessment of reading comprehension that has been approved for good cause by the SBE.

Students who score Achievement Level 3 or higher on the Read to Achieve Test demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third-grade students, which satisfies the requirements of the Read to Achieve legislation.

## Curriculum Cycle

April 2017: North Carolina Board of Education adoption of the NCSCOS for English Language Arts
2017–18: Item development for the EOG Reading Tests
2018–19: Administration of embedded field tests items for the EOG Reading Tests
2021–22: First operational administration of the BOG 3 Reading Test (Edition 5)

## Developing Tests

North Carolina educators were recruited and trained to write new items. The diversity among 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 assessment.

For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see North

Carolina 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 (NCDPI)'s 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, Academic Standards 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.

Table 1 describes the range of total items by domain that will appear on the test. The Read to Achieve Test only assesses reading standards, as seen in Table 2.

**Table 1. Read to Achieve domain weight distributions.**

| Domain | Range of Total Items |
|---|---|
| Reading for Literature | 38–42% |
| Reading for Informational Text | 46–50% |
| Language | 13–15% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

**Table 2. Read to Achieve standards assessed.**

| Domain | Grade 3 |
|---|---|
| Reading for Literature | |
| RL.1 | ✓ |
| RL.2 | ✓ |
| RL.3 | ✓ |
| RL.4 | ✓ |
| RL.5 | |
| RL.6 | |
| RL.7 | |
| RL.8 | |
| RL.9 | |
| RL.10 | |
| Reading for Information | |
| RI.1 | ✓ |
| RI.2 | ✓ |
| RI.3 | ✓ |
| RI.4 | ✓ |
| RI.5 | |
| RI.6 | |
| RI.7 | |
| RI.8 | ✓ |
| RI.9 | |
| RI.10 | |
| Language | |
| L.4 | ✓ |
| L.5 | ✓ |

**Cognitive Rigor and Item Complexity**

Test items have been designed, developed, and classified to ensure that the cognitive rigor of the test form aligns to the cognitive complexity and demands Webb's Depth of Knowledge and of the NCSCOS for English Language Arts reading standards. Items on the assessment cover the full breadth and depth of grade-level cognitive expectation that can be assessed using the current test format.

**Testing Structure and Test Administration Time**

Table 3 provides the number of selections and items by selection, and total number items for the Read to Achieve Test. The test contains forty total items. The test does not have embedded field test items. The test will consist of four-response-option multiple-choice items. Each item is worth one point.

To balance between complexity and the reading load for grade 3 students, each selection within the Read to Achieve Test is divided into two separate parts. Items within each selection have also been divided and presented at the end of each subsequent part.

**Table 3. Read to Achieve total number of selections and items.**

|  | Number of Selections | Items per Selection | Total Number of Items |
|---|---|---|---|
| Read to Achieve | 5 | 8 | 40 |

The Read to Achieve Test may be administered to students at grade 3 who failed to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for a third-grade student on the regular administration (i.e., first administration) of the End-of-Grade Reading Test at Grade 3.

Students who have satisfied the requirements of the Read to Achieve law through one of the following options do not participate in the Read to Achieve Test:
- The student scored Achievement Level 3 or higher on the Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) Reading Test.
- The student scored Achievement Level 3 or higher on the regular administration (i.e., first administration) of the End-of-Grade Reading Test at Grade 3.
- The student passed the retest of the End-of-Grade Reading Test at Grade 3.
- The student passed the locally determined alternative assessment. The local alternative assessment and proficient achievement level must be approved by the SBE according to North Carolina State Board Policy Read to Achieve Program (KNEC-003).
- The student successfully completed a Grade 3 Student Reading Portfolio.

Based on analysis of item-completion timing data, the NCDPI estimates it will take 2 hours (120 minutes) for most students to complete the Read to Achieve Test. The NCDPI requires all students be allowed ample opportunity to complete the test. The maximum amount of time allowed is 3 hours (180 minutes) except for students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*. Refer to the *North Carolina Test Coordinators' Policies and Procedures Handbook* on the Testing Policy and Operations webpage for additional information.

**Test Cycle and Delivery Mode**

There are three testing windows available for the administration of the Read to Achieve Test. It may be administered to eligible students (1) following the regular (i.e., first) administration of the End-of-Grade Reading Test at Grade 3 during the last ten days of the school year, (2) at the end of reading camp on a day designated by the Public School Unit, and (3) before the November 1 midyear promotion of students placed in a 3/4 transitional class or a Grade 4 accelerated class.

The Read to Achieve Test is provided only in English. Native language translation versions are not available. North Carolina G.S.§115C-81.45(a) requires all teachers and principals to conduct all classes other than foreign language classes in English.

The Grade 3 Read to Achieve Test is available for paper and online administrations.

Online tests are provided through NCTest, the NCDPI's online testing platform. Schools must ensure every student participating in an online test for the North Carolina Testing Program completes the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated test at least once at the school before test day. The tutorial provides students the opportunity to practice the mechanics of navigating through the testing platform, to become familiar with the tools, and to respond to the sample items. Refer to the *North Carolina Test Coordinators' Policies and Procedures Handbook* on the Testing Policy and Operations webpage for additional information.

Students participating in paper administrations must complete the Read to Achieve Practice Activity before test day. The Read to Achieve Practice Activity is not a test. It provides students with an opportunity to become familiar with the standardized testing format before the administration of the Read to Achieve Reading Test.

**Supplemental Materials and Additional Resources**

All students must be provided scratch paper and a writing utensil.

A released sample set is available on the Read to Achieve webpage. This released sample set is built using the same operational test specifications. A single released sample set may not reflect the full breadth and depth of grade-level assessed standards, but it reflects the range of difficulty found on any Read to Achieve operational test form. At this time, the released forms for the Read to Achieve Tests may not include all reading selections for print due to copyright permissions. The NCDPI has obtained copyright

permissions only of web viewing for some selections.

The released sample set may be used by public school units to help acquaint students with items. These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain, are copyrighted to the NCDPI, and cannot be uploaded into third party applications.

Achievement level information is available on the Read to Achieve webpage. Parents and schools may reference the Grade 3 Reading Achievement Level Descriptors when reviewing a student's BOG3 Reading Test results.

A sample Read to Achieve Individual Student Report is available on the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) webpage.

Additional information and resources for districts and parents about the Read to Achieve program are available at the NCDPI K–3 Literacy webpage.