



Essential Standards for Elementary and Middle Grade Science Courses

North Carolina Assessment Specifications Summary

NC Final Exams for 4th, 6th, and 7th Grade Science

Purpose of the Assessments

NC Final Exams for Elementary and Middle Grades Science courses will measure students' academic progress in the *Essential Standards*, adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2010.

NC Final Exam scores (along with any other relevant end-of-course or end-of-grade assessment scores) will be used in the Educational Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) to produce student growth measures to satisfy Standards 6 and 8 of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System.

For more information on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System go to www.ncpublicschools.org/effectiveness-model/.

NC Final Exams were developed to replace locally developed assessments, providing teachers and principals with a NC Final Exams measure for all students state-wide during a given testing window.

NC Final Exams will NOT be used for school and district accountability under the READY Accountability Model or for Federal reporting purposes.

Curriculum Cycle

2010: North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the *Essential Standards*.

2011–2012: Item development for the NC Final Exams.

Spring 2013: First year the NC Final Exams will be administered operationally.

Standards

The *Essential Standards* are posted at: www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/new-standards.

Prioritization of Standards

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction invited teachers 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 multiple-choice and constructed response item formats. Subsequently, curriculum and test development staff from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction met to review the results from the teacher panels and to develop weight distributions across the domains for each grade level.

Tables 1 through 3 describe the range of percentage of test items that will appear on a given form of the NC Final Exams in Elementary and Middle Grades science courses (grades 4, 6, and 7). All NC Final Exams in Science grades 4, 6, and 7 will only contain multiple-choice (MC) items.

Table 1. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exams for 4th Grade Science

Standards	Category Percent
Physical Science	
4.P.1	8% to 12%
4.P.2	10% to 14%
4.P.3	7% to 11%
Earth Science	
4.E.1	8% to 12%
4.E.2	10% to 14%
Life Science	
4.L.1	22 % to 26%
4.L.2	14% to 18%
<i>Total Score Points</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 2. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exams for 6th Grade Science

Standards	Category Percent
Physical Science	
6.P.1	13% to 17%
6.P.2	16 % to 22%
6.P.3	7% to 11%
Earth Science	
6.E.1	9% to 14%
6.E.2	16 % to 20%
Life Science	
6.L.1	2% to 8%
6.L.2	10% to 16%
<i>Total Score Points</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 3. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exams for 7th Grade Science

Standards	Category Percent
Physical Science	
7.P.1	13% to 17%
7.P.2	18% to 24%
Earth Science	
7.E.1	20% to 28%
Life Science	
7.L.1	16% to 22%
7.L.2	8% to 14%
<i>Total Score Points</i>	<i>100%</i>

Cognitive Rigor

NC Final Exams items in Elementary and Middle Grade Science were aligned to the Essential Standards using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (RBT). To learn more about RBT go to: www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/.

Types of Items

All NC Final Exams in Elementary and Middle Grade Science contains four-response-option multiple-choice (MC) items.

Testing Structure and Time

NC Final Exams in 4th, 6th, and 7th Grade Science contains a total of 40 MC items.

The total time allocated to the test is 120 minutes unless students have documented accommodations (i.e., Multiple Testing Sessions, Extended Time). Students should monitor the clock to ensure they allow themselves adequate time to respond to all items.

Delivery Mode

The NC Final Exams are designed for paper/pencil mode only.