



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, your child was 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 is 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 you and your child's teachers 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 during the last three weeks of the school year. The pretest is not designed to make student placement or diagnostic decisions. 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.

North Carolina has been working to raise standards over time because students need to perform at higher levels so that they can graduate high school and be successful in their educational, work, and life pursuits. As part of this effort, for the 2008–09 school year, newly revised reading tests based on the 2004 English Language Arts curriculum were administered to students at grade 3. The revised tests required that a new vertical scale and new academic achievement levels be established. Therefore, the results for the reading assessment were delayed until January 2009. Because this year's reading comprehension tests have higher standards and are more rigorous than prior test editions, parents are cautioned against comparing results to previous years. With increased standards, it is likely that fewer students will earn passing scores on the state's tests in the initial year.

Pretest—Grade 3—Individual Student Report

The Individual Student Report for the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 provides information concerning your child's performance on the pretest—grade 3 in reading comprehension and mathematics. The information on the left side of the report describes your child's performance on the reading comprehension pretest. The right side of the report describes your child's performance on the mathematics pretest. A sample individual student report is provided on page four to accompany the following explanations of the items found on the student report:

- A. The number of questions your child answered correctly is called a raw score. The raw score is converted to a developmental **scale score**. The scale score depicts growth in reading comprehension and mathematics. You can use the scale scores on the pretest—grade 3, given within the first three weeks of school, and the end-of-grade test, given during the last three weeks of school, to determine your child's growth in reading comprehension and mathematics.
- B. **Achievement level** shows the level at which your child performed on the test. Achievement levels are predetermined performance standards that allow your child's performance to be compared to grade-level expectations. Four achievement levels (i.e., Levels I, II, III, and IV) are reported in reading comprehension and mathematics.
- C. **This student scored at or above** shows the percentile rank that compares your child'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 your child performed at a level equal to or better than the stated percentage of students who took the test during the norming year. For example, if a student scores as well or better than 83% of the students who took the test in the norming year, the student is in the 83rd percentile. The higher the percentile, the better your child performed compared to other students in his or her grade. Percentiles range from 1 to 99.

- D. Achievement levels** show the four achievement levels and their relation to the scale score.
- E. Student** shows your child's score in relation to the range of possible scores and the achievement levels. Your child's score is represented by a closed diamond (◆). The bar (□) across the closed diamond represents where your child'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, your child might have obtained a slightly different score, but the score should still lie within the bar, assuming no additional learning occurred.
- F-H.** Your child's scale score is compared to the average scale scores for the **school** (F), the school **system** (G), and the **state** (H). The average scale scores for F–H are represented as open diamonds (◇). The horizontal line (—) across each open diamond represents the range of scores achieved by about two-thirds of the students in the same grade as your child who were tested (one standard deviation). The average scale scores for the school and the school system are based on the spring 2008 test administration. The state average is based on the scores of all North Carolina students who took the test in the norming year.
- I.** The **description of the achievement level** is reported for your child's performance in reading comprehension and mathematics. A complete listing of the four achievement levels for reading comprehension and mathematics may be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/achievelevel/pretestg3>.
- J.** The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction conducted a linking study with MetaMetrics, Inc. to link the North Carolina reading comprehension scale to the *Lexile Framework for Reading* scale. The Lexile Framework measures both reader ability and text difficulty on the same scale, the Lexile scale. **Lexile scores** are reported from a low of BR (Beginning Reader) to a high of 2000L. Lexile scores do not translate specifically to grade levels. Using your child's Lexile score, you can match your child to books or other reading material that are similar to his or her reading ability. The lower a book's Lexile measure, the easier it will be to comprehend. For example, a text with a Lexile measure of 850L will most likely be easier for a reader to comprehend than a text at 950L. The Lexile score also allows you to track your child's progress over time. Additional information on Lexiles can be found at <http://www.lexile.com>, and a list of books and their Lexile measures can be found at www.lexile.com/booksearch.

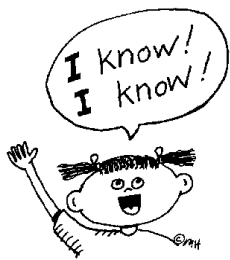
Key Features of the Reading Comprehension Test

- Reading and knowledge of vocabulary are assessed by having students read selections and then answer questions related to the selections.
- The reading comprehension test consists of 38 items. Some of the reading comprehension items are field test items. The field test items do not count toward or against the student's scores.
- The selections on the test are reading materials chosen to reflect the variety of actual reading done by students in and out of the classroom.
- Students read literary selections (i.e., fiction, nonfiction, and poetry) and informational selections (i.e., content and consumer).
- The variety of selections allows for the assessment of reading for various purposes: for literary experience, to gain information, and to perform a task.
- The estimated time to complete the reading comprehension test is 85 minutes. Students who are not finished at the end of the estimated time may be given additional time. However, no administration of the reading comprehension test may exceed three hours (180 minutes). The times stated do not include time for general instructions or breaks.



How Can I Help My Child with Reading?

- Establish time for your child to read.
- Provide your child with a variety of suitable reading materials.
- Read aloud to and with your child.
- Take time to discuss interesting books you and your child have read.
- Model reading by reading a variety of materials yourself, such as newspapers, magazines, schedules, etc.



- Discuss the purpose of different text types, such as fiction, letters, newspaper articles, journals, etc.
- Share and discuss articles, diagrams, charts, illustrations, and maps with your child.
- Ask your child open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a single word or a single phrase (e.g., Why? How do you know? Explain...Tell me about...Give me examples.)
- Ensure that your child reads independently each day at a comfortable reading level. Reading materials should not be too hard or too easy in terms of subject matter and content.

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.
- The mathematics tests are administered on two consecutive days.
- The estimated time to complete the mathematics—calculator active test is 80 minutes. Students who are not finished at the end of the estimated time may be given additional time. However, no administration of the mathematics—calculator active test may exceed three hours (180 minutes). The times stated do not include time for general instructions or breaks.
- The estimated time for students at grade 3 to complete the mathematics—calculator inactive test is 40 minutes. Students who are not finished at the end of the estimated time may be given additional time. However, no administration of the mathematics—calculator inactive test at grade 3 may exceed two hours (120 minutes). The times stated do not include time for general instructions or breaks.



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.



Additional Information

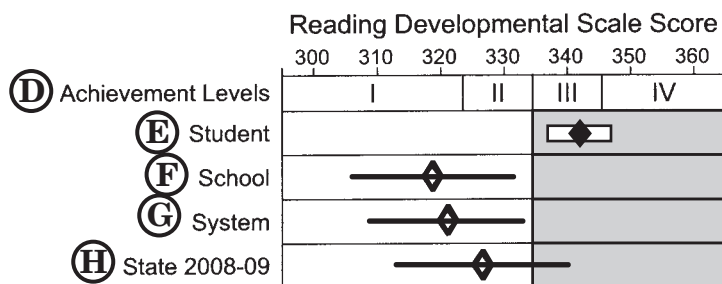
For additional information on the Pretest—Grade 3, visit the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program Web site at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.

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(A) Reading Scale Score **(B)** Achievement Level
 342 III

(C) This student scored at or above
 86
 percent of students who took the
 test during the norming year (2008-09).

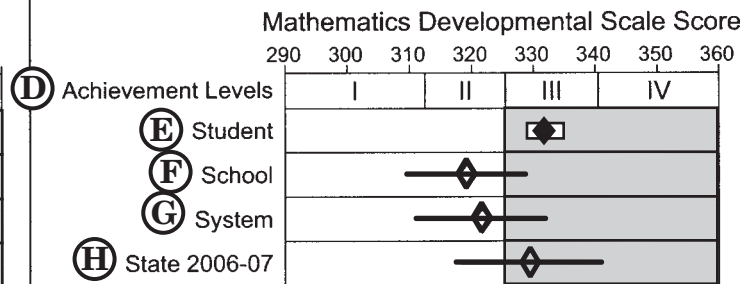


(I) Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of grade level subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next grade level.

Students performing at Level III demonstrate grade level reading comprehension skills as required in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* at grade two. Students are able to use text structure to identify fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama; and make explicit connections between texts and text to self. They can identify main idea, facts, details, and key vocabulary; and use phonics and structural analysis to decode and self-monitor. Students can recognize and use literary, informational, or practical text to answer how, why, and what if questions and can distinguish fact from opinion.

(A) Mathematics Scale Score **(B)** Achievement Level
 332 III

(C) This student scored at or above
 57
 percent of students who took the
 test during the norming year (2006-07).



(I) Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of grade-level subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next grade level.

Students performing at Level III generally show understanding, compute accurately. The students respond with appropriate answers or procedures. They use a variety of problem-solving strategies.

Upon entering third grade, students performing at Level III frequently read, write, estimate, model, and compute correctly with whole numbers through 999. They generally represent and compare fractions correctly. Students often recognize and use metric and customary measurement (e.g., length, temperature, time). Students regularly identify symmetrical and congruent figures. They show an understanding of data using Venn diagrams and pictographs. They conduct simple probability experiments, describe the results and make predictions. Level III students identify and describe patterns. They write addition and subtraction number sentences with symbols representing unknown quantities.

(J) Student's Reported Lexile Score **765**

Lexile Text Measures	Grade 2	Grade 3
300L–500L		
500L–700L		

"Lexile Text Measures" describe the range of Lexile measures found in a national sample of texts collected from grade 2 and 3 classrooms.

Information on Lexiles can be found at:
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/parents/lexiles/>

The North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 is a multiple-choice test administered within the first three weeks of school to all students in grade 3. The 2008 pretest—grade 3 measures the knowledge and skills specified for grade 2 from the reading and 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. Student information on the pretest—grade 3 can be found at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.