

# 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 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.

## *Pretest—Grade 3—Individual Student Report*

Fall 2008 is the first operational administration of the newly revised pretest—grade 3 reading assessment. Therefore, results from the revised North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 Reading Comprehension assessment will be delayed until January 2009 after the State Board of Education approves the new achievement standards. The fall 2008 *Individual Student Report* for the pretest—grade 3 provides information concerning your child's performance on the pretest of mathematics. A sample individual student report is provided on page four to accompany the following explanations of the items found on the 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 mathematics. You can use the scale score 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 your child's growth in 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 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 83<sup>rd</sup> 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 on the horizontal line, assuming no additional instruction was given.

- 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 ( $\diamond$ ). 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 (2006).
- I.** The **description of the achievement level** is reported for your child's performance in mathematics. A complete listing of the four achievement levels for mathematics by grade level may be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/achievelevel/matheog>.

### *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.

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 questions about 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.

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***Additional Information***

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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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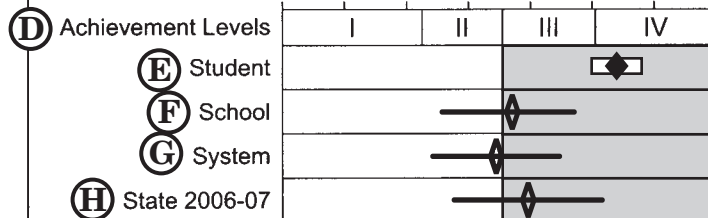
Assessment Status  
 Reading Taken

Fall 2008 is the first operational administration of the newly revised Pretest—Grade 3 reading assessment. Therefore, the reading scores from the fall 2008 administration will be delayed. Scores from the reading comprehension test will be released pending results of the scaling and standard-setting process and the adoption of the achievement standards by the State Board of Education.

**(A)** Mathematics Scale Score **(B)** Achievement Level  
 344 IV

**(C)** This student scored at or above  
 89  
 percent of students who took the  
 test during the norming year (2006-07).

Mathematics Developmental Scale Score  
 290 300 310 320 330 340 350 360



**(I)** 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.