

NCEXTENDI Reading Assessment—Grade 8

What are the purposes of the NC Testing Program?

The North Carolina Annual Testing Program is a requirement of General Statute 115C-174.10. As stated, the purposes of North Carolina state-mandated tests are “(i) to assure that all high school graduates possess those minimum skills and that knowledge thought necessary to function as a member of society; (ii) to provide a means of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education process in order to improve instructional delivery; and (iii) to establish additional means for making the education system at the State, local, and school levels accountable to the public for results.”

The North Carolina Testing Program, effective with the 2000–2001 school year, was expanded in response to the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to include a system of alternate assessments for students with disabilities. Based on the guidance and requirements from the U. S. Department of Education (USED), the *NCEXTENDI* was developed to assess students with significant cognitive disabilities on the grade-level North Carolina Extended Content Standards in reading and mathematics at grades 3–8 and 10, and in science at grades 5, 8, and 10. The *NCEXTENDI* also assesses students in writing at grades 4, 7, and 10. The *NCEXTENDI* replaced the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio effective with the 2006–2007 school year.

What is measured by the test?

The *NCEXTENDI* Reading Assessment—Grade 8 assesses the reading components of the grade-eight Extended Content Standards of the English/Language Arts North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* (NCSCS) adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) in 2004. The test consists of four reading selections with a total of fifteen associated performance items. Each student is individually administered the four reading selections (three fiction and one informational) and the fifteen performance items.

A description of each of the Extended Content Standard goals that are assessed and the percent range of items for each goal are shown in the table below. Each item is also aligned to a thinking-skill level from the cognitive taxonomy described by Marzano et al.

Goal	Description of Goal	Percent Range
1	<p>The learner will use language to express individual perspectives through analysis of personal, social, cultural and/or historical issues (me in the world).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate an event orally and in writing showing connections between self and others • Interact with and comprehend expressive materials and make connections between events and feelings 	17—23
2	<p>The learner will explore, organize and use information from a variety of sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore, interact with, and/or demonstrate comprehension of informational materials that are read, heard or viewed • Make connections between and/or determine importance/relevance of sources of information • Use information from multiple sources to communicate or create an informational product. 	17—23

3	The learner will explore, identify, support and/or evaluate a preference, opinion or argument. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore, interact with, and/or demonstrate comprehension of and/or evaluate sources containing preference, opinion or argument • Express and support preference, opinion or argument. 	17—23
4	Develop and/or use criteria (rubric, visual structure, etc.) to make judgments about print and non-print materials. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore, interact with, demonstrate understanding of, develop and/or evaluate criteria • Make distinctions based on criteria • Explore and evaluate connections between author’s craft and purpose, look for bias, emotional factors, hidden messages, propaganda 	2—8
5	The learner will explore and respond to a variety of print and non-print texts (functional and literary). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore, analyze and/or evaluate relationships of characters, ideas, concepts (including literary devices) and/or experiences • Extend understanding by creating products that exemplify specific types of text. 	12—18
6	The learner will demonstrate an understanding of and/or apply conventions of grammar and language usage in written and spoken expression. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use appropriate conventions (including sentence formation, usage and mechanics) for purpose, audience and context • Use standard English for clarity, technical language for specificity and informal usage for effect • Extend vocabulary knowledge by learning and using new words 	17—23

How is the test administered?

The *NCEXTENDI* Reading Assessment—Grade 8 is individually administered to eligible students during the last six weeks of the school year. The assessors use professional judgment to determine an appropriate length of time for each student’s test administration. The *NCEXTENDI* Reading Assessment—Grade 8 may be administered in one session or in multiple sessions over several days.

Each item has a script that is read by the assessor when presenting the item to the students. For the *NCEXTENDI* Reading Assessment—Grade 8, the assessment selection and its items may be read as many times as necessary, unless otherwise noted in the test directions.

How was the test developed?

The reading selections were created by NCDPI/Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) English/Language Arts content specialists. The chosen selections represent what students generally read and are interested in. The selections contain content appropriate for a reading test at this grade level.

The items for each selection were written by NCDPI/TOPS English/Language Arts content and test development staff. The items were reviewed and revised by trained, practicing North Carolina teachers and educators specializing in the areas of exceptional children, general education, and limited English proficiency during the 2007–2008 school year.

<i>What kinds of scores do students receive on the test?</i>	Students receive an individual student report (ISR) containing a scale score, achievement level ranking (I, II, III, or IV), and descriptions of student performance associated with each achievement level.
<i>How does Edition 2 differ from previous editions of the test?</i>	This edition of the <i>NCEXTENDI</i> Reading Assessment—Grade 8 contains fifteen on-demand performance items with all items administered to all eligible students. This edition of the <i>NCEXTENDI</i> Reading Assessment—Grade 8 also contains presentation scripts.
<i>When will reports be available for spring 2008?</i>	The score reports for the spring 2008 administration of the <i>NCEXTENDI</i> Reading Assessment—Grade 8 will be delayed until early fall 2008. Analysis of the data and subsequent standard setting must be completed before scale scores and achievement levels can be determined. As soon as these processes are completed, score reports will be produced at the student, school, LEA, and state levels.

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