

Assessment Brief



Public Schools of North Carolina • State Board of Education • Howard Lee, Chairman • North Carolina Department of Public Instruction • June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., Superintendent

Scoring and Reporting North Carolina Writing Assessments

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This brief is available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Testing Section Web site, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/> and the Writing Assessment Web page, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/writing/>.

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North Carolina Writing Assessments

Currently North Carolina public school students are administered writing assessments at grades 4, 7, and 10. According to State Board of Education policy HSP-C-018 and HSP-C-027, the standard for proficiency is a test score of Achievement Level III or above. The achievement level rankings and total writing scores are as follows:

Assessment	Grades	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
General	4, 7, 10	4-7	8-11	12-16	17-20
NCEXTEND2	4, 7	4-7	8-13	14-17	18-20
NCEXTEND2 OCS	10	4-6	7-11	12-16	17-20

The Scoring Model

For the North Carolina General Writing Assessment at Grades 4, 7, and 10; the **NCEXTEND2** Writing Assessment at Grades 4 and 7; and the **NCEXTEND2 OCS** Writing Assessment at Grade 10, the scoring model is comprised of a content component with a 1-4 score scale and a conventions component with a 0-2 score scale. All student responses are individually read and scored by two independent readers. The scores are summed, whereby, each student response can receive 8 possible score points for content and 4 possible score points for conventions. A total writing score is calculated by multiplying the total content score by 2 and then adding the total convention score.

The Total Writing Score = (2 x the total content score) + the total conventions score. A review procedure is incorporated into the scoring process for those students whose Total Writing Score falls within one point of the cut line at Achievement Level III.

Scorers

Individuals who score the North Carolina General Writing Assessment and the **NCEXTEND2** Writing Assessments must successfully complete a variety of activities prior to scoring student responses. First, a potential scorer must have the necessary qualifications. A post-secondary degree is required of all applicants. Scorers must have documented experience in the field of English, writing, or education. Scorers must also pass a preliminary grammatical and written exam. Many who score the North Carolina Writing Assessments at Grades 4, 7, and 10 have prior scoring experience and exceed the minimum requirements. When initial employment is granted, scorers receive training from the contractor under NCDPI Test Development supervision regarding reader bias and large scale assessment. Reader bias refers to personal factors that may affect a reader's perception of a student's response, but have no basis in a scoring guide. Examples of reader bias are reviewed with the scorers.

Potential scorers must then successfully complete the training and qualifying phase specific to the

North Carolina project. Training and qualifying of potential scorers takes approximately one week. Scorers who have had extensive experience scoring the North Carolina project are trained as scoring supervisors. These scoring supervisors monitor scorers and serve as an initial resource when scorers have questions.

Those individuals trained as scorers are given the scoring rubrics, narrative composing features, and application sets. They are not supplied with additional materials such as the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* as this leads to individual interpretation of the curriculum and would impact the validity and reliability of scoring. Readers are trained using student responses that were scored by the North Carolina Writing Advisory Committee to understand how the rubric is to be applied to student responses.

After readers are trained, they must qualify to score. Qualification involves applying the rubrics and guide set to selected student responses. Potential scorers have three opportunities to accurately assign both content and conventions scores to at least seventy percent of the student responses. Readers must go through all three opportunities regardless of when in the process they qualify.

Next, those readers who have passed the qualification requirements are provided with student responses that they score with another qualified scorer. This “partner score” allows scorers to ease into the scoring process and permits scoring supervisors and scoring directors to monitor and retrain when necessary.

Scorers are monitored by both the scoring contractor and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on a daily basis during the project. Any scorer that begins to drift from the 70 percent reliability requirement is retrained or dismissed. Any responses scored by readers who are dismissed are sent back into the pool of responses to be scored, and any assigned scores are removed from those students’ records.

Data is collected throughout the course of the scoring process and is reviewed each day by staff members from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Accountability Services Test Development Section and North Carolina State

University Technical Outreach for Public Schools staff. This data is compiled and analyzed for several purposes, including but not limited to, validity, reliability, and frequency (score point and Total Writing Score) distributions. Lastly, score reports are then disseminated to schools and students.

Distributed Scoring

North Carolina educators now have the opportunity to be scorers for the writing assessments. Due to technological advancements, distributed scoring allows educators to access the secure network from home and to score at their convenience. All interested educators must submit the required documentation and meet the seventy percent qualification rate. To apply for a scoring position or to learn more about distributed scoring, please go to Pearson’s Web site for North Carolina at <http://www.flexiblescoring-nc.pearson.com>.

State Data

Data is reported at the state level. Results are disaggregated by subgroups (e.g., gender, disability or ability [AIG], Title I, and free-reduced lunch). A writing report is generated each year compiling a summary of all writing assessment results, including general scoring observations.

School and Student Data

Each school is provided with rosters listing student results by class. The information is provided by the scoring contractor to local education agencies (LEAs) on CD. Each CD contains class rosters with individual student results, as well as, the imaged student responses by class.

School CDs are shipped to each LEA test coordinator along with two copies of the Individual Student Report (ISR). The ISR is a paper report of the individual student’s results. The report lists the total content score, the total conventions score, the total writing score, and the corresponding achievement level for each student. The ISR also provides an explanation of the composing features, information about scoring procedures, and definitions of the four achievement levels specific to the grade level and particular assessment.

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