

Assessment Brief



Public Schools of North Carolina • State Board of Education • Howard Lee, Chairman

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North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3

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North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3

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 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 pretest is not designed to make student placement or diagnostic decisions.

This pretest is the only pretest that the North Carolina Testing Program administers. It allows parents and educators to see how much learning takes place 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 within the last three weeks of the school year. In addition, a comparison of the results from the pretest and the results from the grade 3 end-of-grade administrations allows schools to measure growth in achievement in reading comprehension and mathematics at the third-grade level for the ABCs accountability program.

During the 2007–2008 school year, the pretest—grade 3 reading test will not be operational. However, students will be required to participate in a statewide reading field test. A new reading comprehension test that measures the 2004 *North Carolina English Language Arts Standard Course of Study* will be administered in the 2008–2009

school year.

Mathematics

The North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 Mathematics Test measures the goals and objectives in the 2003 *North Carolina Mathematics Standard Course of Study*. The competency goals and objectives of the 2003 mathematics curriculum adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education for each grade are organized into five strands, or goals: (1) number and operations, (2) measurement, (3) geometry, (4) data analysis and probability, and (5) algebra. Some of the mathematics items on the test are field test items. Field test items do not count toward or against the student's score.

The mathematics pretest—grade 3 is administered on two days and consists of two parts: calculator active and calculator inactive. The calculator active part of the test must be administered before the calculator inactive part of the test.

Students are allowed to use calculators for the calculator active part of the test. The minimum (“at least”) calculator requirement for grade 3 is a four-function calculator with memory key. Additional features (e.g., graphing features) that are not restricted are allowed but are not required. Students are not allowed to use calculators for the calculator inactive part of the test.

The administration time and number of items for the pretest—grade 3 mathematics test are found in the following chart:

Grade 3	Items	Minutes
Calculator Active	42	80
Calculator Inactive	20	40

Grade 3 Practice Activity

Prior to taking the pretest—grade 3 (mathematics or reading comprehension field test), students should participate in the grade 3 practice activity. The purpose of the North Carolina Grade 3 Practice Activity is to provide students with an opportunity to become familiar with the standardized multiple-choice testing format prior to the administration of the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3. The practice

activity is designed to match the test administration of the pretest—grade 3. Teachers may choose to use with students only the sections (i.e., mathematics calculator active, mathematics calculator inactive, reading comprehension) that they feel best meet the needs of the students.

The grade 3 practice activity is not a test. It allows students the opportunity to practice (1) answering multiple-choice questions, (2) transferring answers from a test book to a separate answer sheet, and (3) coding responses on an answer sheet.

The practice activity is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.

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