

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, third-grade students are 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 parents and educators 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 grade 3 pretest 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.

For the 2006–07 school year, newly revised mathematics tests that are based on the 2003 mathematics 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 mathematics assessment were delayed until January 2007.

— North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3—Individual Student Report —

The 2006 Individual Student Report for the North Carolina Pretest—Grade 3 provides information concerning an individual student's performance on the Pretest—Grade 3 in reading comprehension and mathematics. A sample individual student report is provided on page four. The information provided on the left-hand side of the report describes the student's performance on the reading comprehension test. The right-hand side of the report describes the student's performance on the mathematics test.

- A. The **scale score** shows the student's developmental scale score in reading or mathematics. The number of questions the student answered correctly is called a raw score. The raw score is converted to a developmental scale score.
- B. The **developmental scale score** depicts growth in reading or mathematics achievement from year to year. Parents may use the developmental scale scores on the grade 3 pretest, given the first three weeks of school, and the end-of-grade test, given during the last three weeks of school, to determine their child's growth in reading or mathematics. Parents/teachers should note that the range of reading scores differs from the range of mathematics scores. *Because the ranges differ, the scale score for reading cannot be compared to the scale score for mathematics.*
- C. **Achievement levels** show the four achievement levels and their relation to the developmental scale. Achievement levels are predetermined performance standards that allow the student'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.
- D. The **description of the achievement level** is reported for the student's performance in reading comprehension and mathematics. A complete listing of achievement levels I–IV for reading comprehension and mathematics by grade level may be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eog>.
- E. **Student** shows the individual student's score in relation to the developmental scale and the achievement levels. The student's score is represented by an open diamond. On another day or with a different set of

test questions, the student may obtain a slightly different score but still score on the horizontal line. The horizontal line across the diamond represents where the student's true score should be about two-thirds of the time (standard error of measurement).

- F–H.** Individual student performance may be compared to the average scale scores for the **school** (F), the **school system** (G), and the **state** (H). The average scale score for F–H is represented as an open diamond. The horizontal line across each diamond represents the range of scores achieved by about two-thirds of the students in the same grade as the student who was tested (one standard deviation). The average scale scores for the school and the school system are based on this year's test administration. The state average is based on the scores of all North Carolina students who took the test in the norming year.
- I.** **This student scored at or above** shows the percentile rank. The percentile rank compares the student's performance on the test this year to 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 the student performed at a level equal to or better than the stated percentage of students who took the test during the norming year. The higher the percentile, the better a student performed compared to other students in his or her grade. Percentiles range from 1 to 99.
- J.** A **student's lexile score** is based on the *Lexile Framework for Reading*. The student's lexile score can be used to describe the difficulty of the texts (readability) and the reading level of the student (reading ability). The *Lexile Framework* matches readers with texts at whatever level the reader is reading. The lexile score allows parents to track their child's progress over time. Lexile levels do not translate specifically to grade levels. Additional information on Lexiles can be found at <http://www.lexile.com>.
- K.** For reading, the number of **questions** shows the number of test questions on the pretest that measure reading. For mathematics, the number of **questions** shows the number of items that were used to calculate the mathematics score.

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 selections on the test are reading materials chosen to reflect the variety of actual reading done by students in and out of the classroom.
- Selections include both literary and informational texts. Literary texts include fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction such as biographies, letters, journals, and essays. Informational texts include content areas (art, science, mathematics, social studies, etc.) and consumer/practical selections (pamphlets, reviews, recipes, how-to, etc.).
- There are 32 questions on the reading comprehension test.
- Four types of items (organized into categories) are on the reading test. The categories include cognition, interpretation, critical stance, and connections.
 - Cognition requires the reader to apply strategies such as using context clues to determine meaning, summarize to include main points, and identify the purpose of text features. The average number of questions on the reading comprehension test that measures cognition is 13.
 - Interpretation requires the reader to make inferences and generalizations. It may ask students to clarify, to explain the significance of, to extend, and/or to adapt ideas/concepts. The average number of questions on the reading comprehension test that measures interpretation is 12.
 - Critical stance requires the reader to apply processes such as comparing/contrasting and understanding the impact of literary elements. The average number of questions on the reading comprehension test that measures critical stance is 6.
 - Connections require the reader to connect knowledge from the selection with other information and experiences beyond/outside the selection. The average number of questions on the reading comprehension test that measures connections is 1.

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 simple word, a single phrase, or a sentence. (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 grade 3 pretest 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 not allowed to use calculators during the Calculator Inactive part of the test. Students are allowed to use calculators during the Calculator Active part of the test.
- The minimum ("at least") calculator requirement for grade 3 is a four-function calculator with memory key.
- For both parts of the mathematics test, students at grade 3 are given blank paper and graph paper. Rulers and protractors are not distributed to students.
- The mathematics tests may be administered on one school day or two consecutive school days.
- The mathematics tests are not timed. Students are to be allowed ample time to complete the tests. The estimated time for 95% of students at grade 3 to complete the mathematics calculator active test is 80 minutes. The estimated time for students to complete the mathematics calculator inactive test is 40 minutes.

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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Reading (32 questions) **(K)**

(A) Scale Score
 248

(I) This student scored at or above
 81
 percent of students who took the
 test during the norming year (2002-03).

(B) Developmental Scale Score
 210 220 230 240 250 260

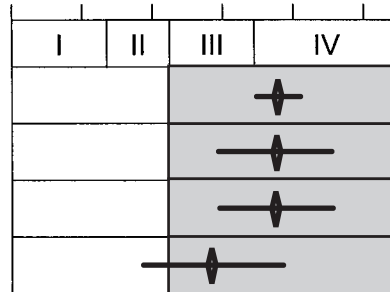
(C) Level

(E) Student

(F) School

(G) System

(H) State 2002-03



(J)

Student's Lexile Score ¹	Typical class materials ¹	Grade 2	Grade 3
700L		140-500L	330 ¹ 700L

(D) 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 Achievement Level IV demonstrate an advanced application of the reading comprehension skills required in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study at Grade 2. Students comprehend with depth of understanding a variety of second grade level texts, such as fiction, literary and informational nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Students interpret information and ideas, comprehend texts that use figurative language, and understand author's decisions and word choice.

Mathematics (38 questions) **(K)** **(B)** Developmental Scale Score

(A) Scale Score
 342

(I) This student scored at or above
 85
 percent of students who took the
 test during the norming year (2006-07).

290 300 310 320 330 340 350 360

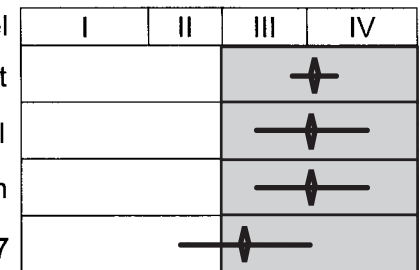
(C) Level

(E) Student

(F) School

(G) System

(H) State 2006-07



(D) Students performing at this level consistently perform in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient at grade level work.

The North Carolina Grade 3 Pretest is a multiple-choice test administered within the first three weeks of school to all students in grade 3. The 2006 grade 3 pretest measures the knowledge and skills specified for grade 2 from the reading and math 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.

¹ Information on Lexiles can be found at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/parents/lexiles/>. "Typical class materials" indicates the range of typical instructional materials for that grade.

Student Information on the grade 3 pretest test can be found at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3pretest/>.