

**North Carolina  
Testing Program**

**A Preliminary Report**

**of**

**Student Performance**

**on the**

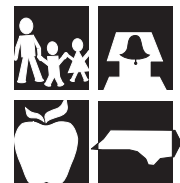
**North Carolina General Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4, 7, and 10**

**and**

**North Carolina *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4 and 7**

**2006-07**

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**A Preliminary Report of Student Performance on the  
North Carolina General Writing Assessment at Grades 4, 7, and 10  
and  
North Carolina *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grades 4 and 7**

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**North Carolina General Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4, 7, and 10  
and  
*NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4 and 7**

**Preliminary Report 2006-07  
Executive Summary**

June 1, 2007

**General Writing Assessment**

Of the students who were administered the general writing assessments during the 2006-07 school year, more fourth grade and seventh grade students were deemed proficient in writing compared to the previous school year, as evidenced by the data contained in this Preliminary Report of Student Performance. For the tenth grade, student performance dipped slightly from the 2005-06 school year.

Results for the North Carolina General Writing Assessment showed 52.7 percent of fourth grade students scored proficient in 2006-07, which is an improvement of almost 3 percent from last year (2005-06). Since 2002-03, the first year the revised scoring model, scale, and writing standard were implemented, there has been a steady increase in proficiency. Just 38.6 percent of students scored proficient in 2002-03, 49.3 percent in 2004-05, and 50.0 percent scored at this level in the 2005-06 school year.

Seventh grade results on the North Carolina General Writing Assessment also improved from the previous year. With an increase of more than 4.5 percent, this year (2006-07) 50.8 percent of students scored proficient. In comparison, a total of 46.2 percent of seventh graders scored proficient in 2005-06, down slightly from 2004-05 when the proficiency rate was 46.7 percent. In 2002-03, only 40.9 percent of the students scored proficient.

At the tenth grade level, the North Carolina General Writing Assessment results showed a small decrease of 1.8 percent in the proficiency rate. Still, 51.4 percent of students scored proficient. In 2005-06, 53.2 percent of the students scored proficient, an increase from 2004-05 when 47.8 percent scored at this level. In 2002-03, only 39.9 percent of the students scored proficient.

In order to be considered proficient on the North Carolina General Writing Assessment, students must earn a score of 12 or above on a scale that ranges from a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 20. Scores on the writing assessment are reported according to the following achievement levels: Level I, 4-7; Level II, 8-11; Level III, 12-16; Level IV, 17-20. More information on the general writing assessment program can be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/writing/>.

### **NCEXTEND2 Alternate Writing Assessment**

The North Carolina *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment is designed on a modified test format and measures student performance against modified grade level achievement standards. Students participating in *NCEXTEND2* are expected to receive instruction at grade level under the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Students must meet eligibility requirements in order to participate in the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment. More information on the alternate writing assessment program can be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/writing/>.

Among the students who were administered the *NCEXTEND2* alternate writing assessments during the 2006-07 school year, more seventh graders were proficient in writing compared with last school year, as evidenced by the data contained in this Preliminary Report of Student Performance. At the fourth grade level, student performance went down from the previous year (2005-06). Results will be delayed for tenth grade students who took the *NCEXTEND2 OCS* Writing Assessment until standards are set.

Results for fourth grade students on the *NCEXTEND2* showed 8.1 percent of those who participated in the alternate assessment scored proficient in 2006-07, which is down from last year (2005-06) when the proficiency rate was 15.0 percent. The *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grade 4 is a recent addition to the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program. It was implemented during the 2005-06 school year as an operational pilot administration.

During the 2006-07 school year, a total of 7.5 percent of seventh graders scored proficient on the alternate assessment. This is an increase of nearly 3 percent over the 2005-06 proficiency rate of 4.7 percent. The *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grade 7 is also a recent addition to the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program. It, too, was implemented as an operational pilot administration during the 2005-06 school year.

In order to be considered proficient on the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grades 4 and 7, students must earn a score of 14 or above on a scale that ranges from a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 20. Scores on the modified grade-level writing assessment are reported according to the following achievement levels: Level I, 4-7; Level II, 8-13; Level III, 14-17; Level IV, 18-20.

For the tenth grade, the *NCEXTEND2 OCS* Writing Assessment results will be delayed because it is an operational pilot administration for the 2006-07 school year. The *NCEXTEND2 OCS* Writing Assessment at Grade 10 results will be available following the setting of interim standards and State Board of Education (SBE) approval.

### **Final Report**

A final report for the 2006-07 school year will be published that will include exemplars (sample papers) used in the scoring process.

**North Carolina General Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4, 7, and 10  
and  
*NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment  
at Grades 4 and 7**

**Preliminary Results 2006-07  
Introduction**

**General Writing Assessment**

North Carolina, believing that an emphasis on writing instruction was needed and that the measurement of writing would enhance instruction, began a statewide writing assessment program in 1983-84. While changes have occurred in the statewide writing assessment program over the years, the basic commitment to the instruction and assessment of writing has remained a major component of the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) and Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

More recent changes in the writing assessment program began in September of 2001 when a process was initiated by the NCDPI staff that would result in the revision of the statewide writing assessment program including the rubrics and scoring procedures for grades 4, 7, and 10. Writing committees for each grade level were established that included general education teachers, English as Second Language (ESL) teachers, Exceptional Children (EC) teachers, curriculum specialists, principals, and university faculty. The North Carolina Writing Assessment Scoring Model was developed by NCDPI Testing and Development Section and NCSU-TOPS staff, refined by the writing assessment advisory committees, and approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) on January 9, 2003.

A pilot administration of the North Carolina Writing Assessment at grades 4, 7, and 10 was administered in March 2003 to all eligible students. The students in grades 4 and 7 received 75 minutes to respond to the prompt; students in grade 10 received 100 minutes. The writing assessments, the rubrics, the scoring model, and achievement level ranges were revised to reflect (1) the changes in the English/language arts curriculum emphasis and focus, and (2) the need to enhance the data analysis and reporting of student performance on the writing assessments. Changes to the North Carolina Writing Assessment at grades 4, 7, and 10 were implemented initially as an operational administration effective with the 2003-04 school year to reflect the revisions to the English/language arts curriculum adopted by the SBE (1999), the recommendations of the Writing Assessment Task Force (2001), and the recommendations of the SBE Ad Hoc Writing Committee (2002).

**Table 1. Type of Writing Assessed by Grade Level for General Assessment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Type of Writing</b>
4	Extended narrative response (personal or imaginative)
7	Extended argumentative response (problem/solution or evaluative)
10	Extended informational response (cause/effect or definition)

## **NCEXTEND2 Alternate Writing Assessment**

Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, the writing assessment expanded to include participation of students who may be unable to access the general writing assessment with or without accommodations. Due to federal regulations that prohibit the use of off-grade-level assessments, yet require that all students participate in state-wide assessment programs, the *NCEXTEND2* was developed.

The federal regulations also provide states with criteria for determining which students with disabilities may be assessed based on modified achievement standards (§200.1(e)(2)). The federal regulations do not set a federal definition of who may take a test based on modified achievement standards. Instead, the federal regulations require that states have in their guidelines for IEP teams certain key criteria in order to ensure that students with disabilities are not inappropriately held to modified achievement standards. The criteria are as follows:

1. The student's disability has precluded the student from achieving grade-level proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence such as-
  - State's Title I assessments; or
  - Other assessment data that can validly document academic achievement.
2. The student's progress in response to high-quality instruction, including special education and related services designed to meet the student's needs, is such that the student is not likely to achieve grade-level proficiency within a year. Progress must be measured by multiple indicators, over a period of time, and with valid assessments.
3. The student is receiving instruction in the grade-level curriculum for the subjects in which the student is being assessed.
4. Student eligibility for being assessed based on modified achievement standards is not limited to a particular disability category (§200.1(e)(3)).
5. A student may be assessed based on modified achievement standards in one or more subjects assessed as part of the state assessment system (§200.1(e)(4)).
6. A student's IEP team must review annually whether it is appropriate for the student to be assessed based on modified achievement standards (§200.1(e)(5)).

The basic requirements for the assessments are:

- Align to grade-level content standards;
- Yield results in reading/language arts and mathematics separately;
- Meet the requirements for high technical quality including validity and reliability; and
- Fit coherently in the state assessment system

It is the expectation that ALL students who participate in *NCEXTEND2 EOG* tests are receiving instruction in the grade level Standard Course of Study (SCOS) for the subject(s) in which the students are being assessed. To determine student participation in the *NCEXTEND2 EOG* (Grades 3-8 reading and mathematics, science grades 5 and 8, and writing at grades 4 and 7), the following eligibility requirements must be considered:

- The student must have a current IEP;
- The student **DOES NOT** have a current 504 plan;
- The student, if identified as limited English proficient (LEP), must also have a current IEP;
- The student **IS NOT** identified as having a significant cognitive disability;
- The student **IS NOT** receiving instruction in the SCOS through the Essences/Extensions;
- The student's progress in response to high-quality instruction is such that the student is not likely to achieve grade level proficiency within the school year covered by the IEP;

- The student’s disability has precluded the student from achieving grade level proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence, (e.g., results from standardized state tests, IQ tests, achievement tests, aptitude tests, and psychological evaluations. It is the expectation that more than one objective measure would be used to assist in the evaluation of a student’s assessment placement.); and
- The nature of the student’s disability may require assessments that are different in design.

A student may be assessed based on modified achievement standards in one or more subjects for which assessments are administered. Students eligible to take assessments based on modified achievement standards may be in any of the 13 disability categories listed in the IDEA. The decision to assess a student based on modified achievement standards must be reviewed annually as part of the IEP process. Based on Federal guidelines for AYP calculations, the number of students achieving level 3 or higher when assessed using modified achievement standards must not exceed 2% of all students in the grades assessed for Reading and Mathematics. The decision to place a student in an assessment based on modified achievement standards must not preclude a student from earning a regular high school diploma.

Parents of these students, as part of the IEP team and as participants in the IEP process, are to be informed that their child’s achievement will be measured (specific subjects) based on modified achievement standards.

A modified grade-level assessment can have a variety of elements. For example, on a multiple-choice assessment, there could be shorter passages, fewer answer choices, or fewer overall test items. For an extended response assessment, modification may occur in the level of depth and breadth of the grade-level content; for the writing assessment, this would apply to the composing features. Composing features such as focus, organization, support and elaboration, and style are evaluated for a Content score and grammatical structures such as sentence formation, mechanics, and usage are evaluated for a Conventions score.

It is important to recognize that although the rubrics and the features of the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment do not differ from the General Writing Assessment, it is in the application of those rubrics and criteria that a modified assessment is designed. To that end, it is critical that the annotated anchor papers and training papers be reviewed to understand the way in which the rubrics and the features are being defined for this population of students.

**Table 2. Type of Writing Assessed by Grade Level for *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Assessment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Type of Writing</b>
4	Extended narrative response (personal or imaginative)
7	Extended argumentative response (problem/solution or evaluative)
OCS 10	Extended expressive response (work skills, life skills, or personal skills)

## Scoring Procedure for the General Writing Assessment and *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment

Student responses are scored using the North Carolina Writing Assessment Scoring Model which consists of the following:

- Two scoring components:
  - Content component with a 1-4 score scale
  - Conventions component with a 0-2 score scale.
- All student responses are scored by two independent readers (R1 and R2).
- The Total Writing Score (TWS) for each student is computed by combining the Content and Conventions scores in the following manner:
  - $2(R1 \text{ Content} + R2 \text{ Content}) + (R1 \text{ Conventions} + R2 \text{ Conventions}) = \text{TWS}$
- The Total Writing Score may be a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 20
- A review procedure is incorporated into the scoring process for those students whose Total Writing Score falls one point below the cut line between Achievement Level II and III.
- Students receive the following information from the writing assessment: (a) Content score, (b) Conventions score, (c) Total Writing Score, (d) Achievement Level ranking, and (e) their imaged response are returned.

## Achievement Level Ranges for the General Writing Assessment and *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment

After carefully examining all data associated with the “Body of Work” standard-setting method, the operational/pilot administration data, and the North Carolina Writing Assessment Scoring Model, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Accountability Services, Exceptional Children’s Division, Curriculum and School Reform, and staff at NCSU-TOPS recommended the following Achievement Level Ranges for approval by the SBE. This recommendation was approved by the SBE in October 2003 for the General Assessment and October 2006 for the *NCEXTEND2*.

**Table 3. SBE Adopted Achievement Level Ranges for the General Writing Assessment at Grades 4, 7, and 10**

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Grades 4, 7, & 10	4-7	8-11	12-16	17-20

**Table 4. SBE Adopted Achievement Level Ranges for the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grades 4 and 7**

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Grades 4 & 7	4-7	8-13	14-17	18-20

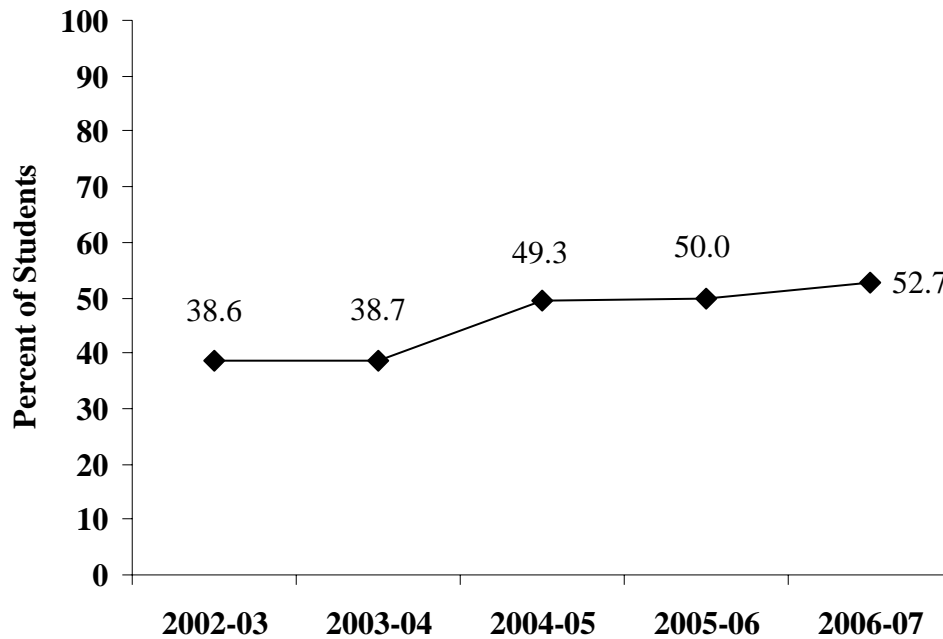
## Grade 4 Results

### Results of the General Writing Assessment at Grade 4

Students in the fourth grade who participated in the General Writing Assessment were asked to write an imaginative narrative response to the following prompt:

*Imagine a friend gave you a funny-looking watch. When you put the watch on, something very surprising happened. Write a story about what happened the time a friend gave you a funny-looking watch.*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 4 General Writing Assessments administered since a new scoring model was piloted in March 2003. The line graph indicates that little change occurred in the percentage of students scoring at or above Achievement Level III between the pilot year and the following year (0.1 percent increase between 2002-03 and 2003-04). A 10.6 percent increase occurred between 2003-04 and 2004-05 followed by a 0.7 percent increase in 2005-06. For the 2006-07 school year, there has been an improvement of 2.7 percent over the last school year.



Notes: <sup>1</sup> The writing standard, scale, and scoring model changed effective with the 2002-03 school year. The results from 2002-03 are reported from a pilot test administration.  
Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Sections.

North Carolina Testing Program  
 General Writing Assessment  
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores  
 March 2007  
 Grade 4

**STATE**

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	104,721	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	389	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	11.4	<u>2004 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	3.0	90	15
<u>VARIANCE</u>	8.8	75	12
		50 (MEDIAN)	10
		25	9
		10	8

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PERCENT</u>
20	894	104721	0.85	100.00
19	6	103827	0.01	99.15
18	2029	103821	1.94	99.14
17	149	101792	0.14	97.20
16	9075	101643	8.67	97.06
15	1356	92568	1.29	88.39
14	11172	91212	10.67	87.10
13	4560	80040	4.35	76.43
12	25901	75480	24.73	72.08
11	2088	49579	1.99	47.34
10	26457	47491	25.26	45.35
9	6140	21034	5.86	20.09
8	6035	14894	5.76	14.22
7	2346	8859	2.24	8.46
6	2715	6513	2.59	6.22
5	963	3798	0.92	3.63
4	2446	2835	2.34	2.71
NS	389	389	0.37	0.37

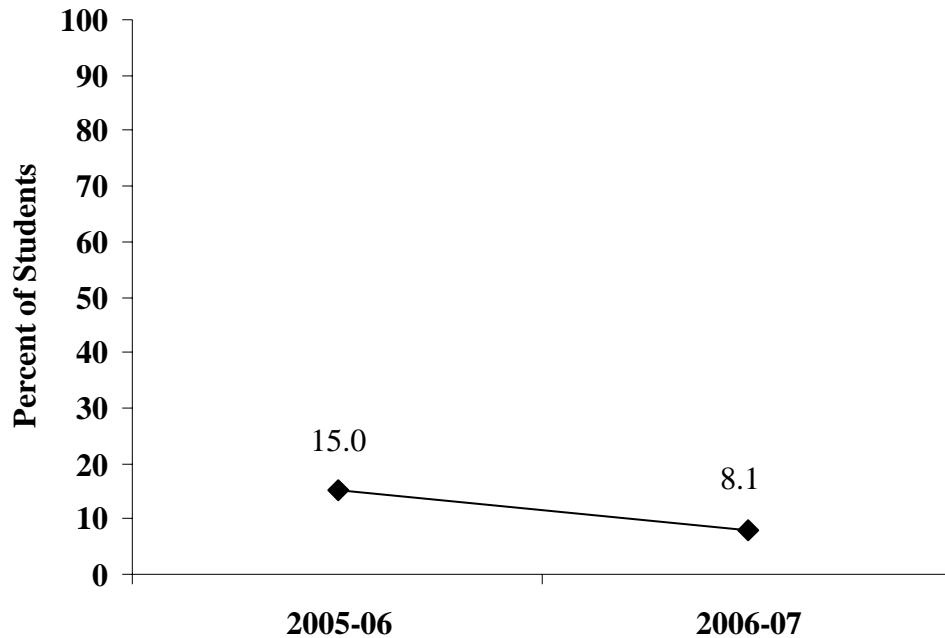
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**Results of the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grade 4**

Students in the fourth grade who participated in the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment received the same prompt as the Grade 4 General Writing Assessment. Students were asked to write an imaginative narrative response to the following prompt:

*Imagine a friend gave you a funny-looking watch. When you put the watch on, something very surprising happened. Write a story about what happened the time a friend gave you a funny-looking watch.*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 4 *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessments which have been recorded since this new assessment was implemented during the 2005-06 school year as an operational pilot administration. The line graph indicates that the percentage of students scoring at or above Achievement Level III is down 6.9 percent from the 2005-06 pilot year.



Notes: <sup>1</sup> The writing standard, scale, and scoring model changed effective with the 2002-03 school year. The results from 2005-06 are reported from a pilot test administration.  
Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Sections.

North Carolina Testing Program  
***NCEXTEND2*** Writing Assessment  
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores  
 March 2007  
 Grade 4

**STATE**

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	2,564	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	260	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	7.9	<u>2006 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	3.5	90	14
<u>VARIANCE</u>	12.5	75	11
		50 (MEDIAN)	8
		25	4
		10	4

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PERCENT</u>
20	181	97871	0.18	100.00
19	0	97690	0.00	99.82
18	554	97690	0.57	99.82
17	5	97136	0.01	99.25
16	4357	97131	4.45	99.24
15	102	92774	0.10	94.79
14	8476	92672	8.66	94.69
13	1053	84196	1.08	86.03
12	35531	83143	36.30	84.95
11	2340	47612	2.39	48.65
10	17194	45272	17.57	46.26
9	6105	28078	6.24	28.69
8	6303	21973	6.44	22.45
7	3176	15670	3.25	16.01
6	5118	12494	5.23	12.77
5	2524	7376	2.58	7.54
4	4385	4852	4.48	4.96
NS	467	467	0.48	0.48

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## Grade 4 Observations

### Observations for the General Writing Assessment and NCEXTEND2 Alternate Writing Assessment

The following observations were noted during the scoring process:

The prompt for the 2007 Grade 4 writing assessments asked students to write an imaginative response about receiving a funny-looking watch from a friend.

- The funny-looking watch provided an effective prompt to an imaginative story. The most common topics were dinosaurs, time travel, and invisibility. The students seemed to understand and respond well to this prompt.
- Responses tended to establish a topic and provide support for that topic, less successful responses introduced a series of loosely-connected events and ideas, thus weakening the focus.
- While responses often provided support, many unsuccessful responses consisted of details presented in a list-like fashion. Often there were major weaknesses in elaboration supporting the events in the story and insufficiency of detail characterized by redundancy or repetitious paraphrasing of the same point or language.
- Many responses provided a great deal of descriptive detail, but lacked elaboration of the action and events presented in the story.
- The most common conventions problems appeared in sentence formation errors as run-ons.
- The most common usage error was clearly incorrect use of verbs (both tense and agreement errors).
- For mechanics, spelling constituted the most errors. Dialogue punctuation was often handled correctly by the students.

## Grade 7 Results

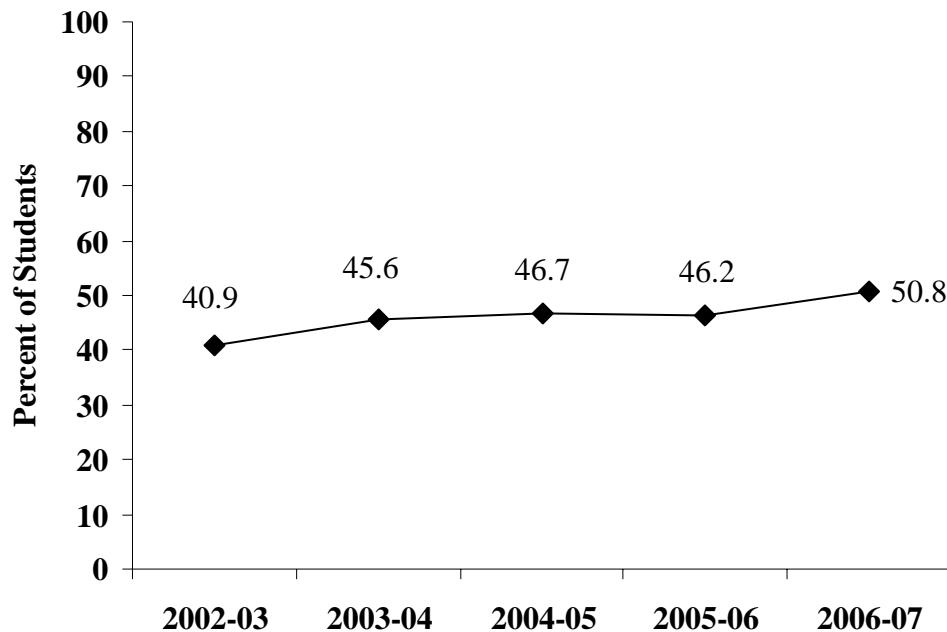
### Results of the General Writing Assessment at Grade 7

Students in the seventh grade who participated in the General Writing Assessment were asked to write a problem/solution response to the following argumentative prompt:

*Your local newspaper is sponsoring a contest titled “Making a Difference.” Students have been encouraged to write an essay on how they can “make a difference” by improving their school or local community. The winning essay will be published in the education section of the newspaper.*

*Write an essay for the newspaper editor in which you propose a solution to make your school or community a better place.*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 7 General Writing Assessments administered since a new scoring model was piloted in March 2003. The line graph shows a 4.7 percent increase between 2002-03 and 2003-04, and a 1.1 percent increase the following year. A small decrease of 0.5 percent occurred between 2004-05 and 2005-06. For the 2006-07 school year, there has been an improvement of 4.6 percent over the last school year.



Notes: <sup>1</sup> The writing standard, scale, and scoring model changed effective with the 2002-03 school year. The results from 2002-03 are reported from a pilot test administration.  
Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Sections.

North Carolina Testing Program  
 General Writing Assessment  
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores  
 March 2007  
 Grade 7

**STATE**

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	106,502	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	225	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	11.1	<u>2004 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	2.3	90	14
<u>VARIANCE</u>	5.1	75	12
		50 (MEDIAN)	11
		25	10

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PERCENT</u>
20	51	106502	0.05	100.00
19	1	106451	0.00	99.95
18	134	106450	0.13	99.96
17	5	106316	0.00	99.83
16	3768	106311	3.54	99.82
15	461	102543	0.43	96.28
14	9646	102082	9.06	95.85
13	2945	92436	2.77	86.79
12	37081	89491	34.82	84.03
11	4569	52410	4.29	49.21
10	33779	47841	31.72	44.92
9	3664	14062	3.44	13.20
8	3726	10398	3.50	9.76
7	1667	6672	1.57	6.26
6	1717	5005	1.61	4.70
5	696	3288	0.65	3.09
4	2367	2592	2.22	2.43
NS	225	225	0.21	0.21

Run date: 05112007-TWSREPTG-0000002

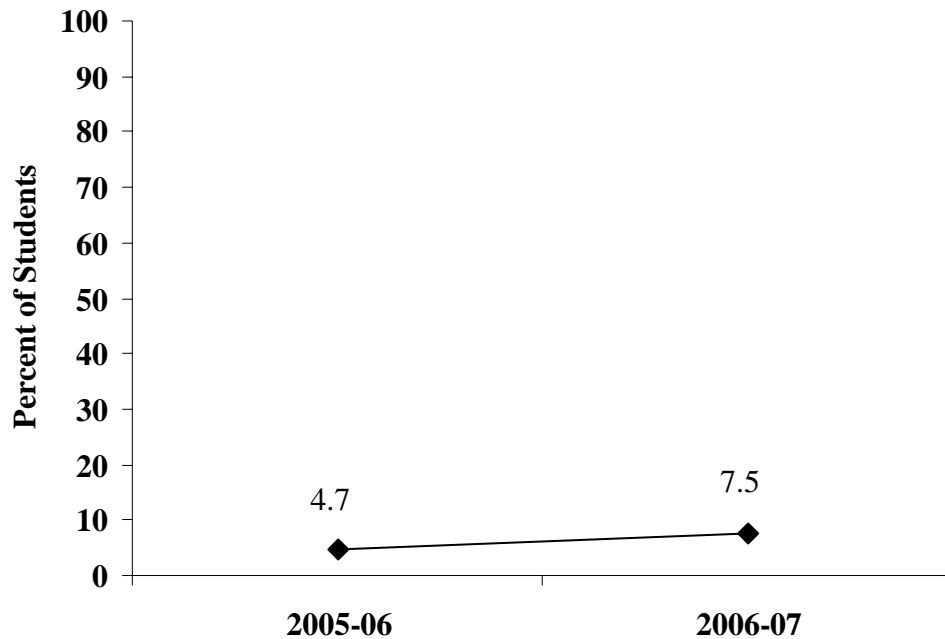
### **Results of the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment at Grade 7**

Students in the seventh grade who participated in the *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessment received the same prompt as the Grade 7 General Writing Assessment. Students were asked to write a problem/solution response to the following argumentative prompt:

*Your local newspaper is sponsoring a contest titled “Making a Difference.” Students have been encouraged to write an essay on how they can “make a difference” by improving their school or local community. The winning essay will be published in the education section of the newspaper.*

*Write an essay for the newspaper editor in which you propose a solution to make your school or community a better place.*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 7 *NCEXTEND2* Alternate Writing Assessments which have been recorded since this new assessment was implemented during the 2005-06 school year as an operational pilot administration. The line graph indicates that the percentage of students scoring at or above Achievement Level III has increased by 2.8 percent since the 2005-06 pilot year.



Notes: <sup>1</sup> The writing standard, scale, and scoring model changed effective with the 2002-03 school year. The results from 2005-06 are reported from a pilot test administration. Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Sections.

North Carolina Testing Program  
**NCEXTEND2** Writing Assessment  
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores  
 March 2007  
 Grade 7

**STATE**

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	2,435	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	130	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	7.5	<u>2006 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	3.7	90	12
<u>VARIANCE</u>	13.5	75	8
		50 (MEDIAN)	6
		25	4
		10	4

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PERCENT</u>
20	7	2435	0.29	100.00
19	0	2428	0.00	99.71
18	9	2428	0.37	99.71
17	3	2419	0.12	99.34
16	83	2416	3.41	99.22
15	10	2333	0.41	95.81
14	70	2323	2.87	95.40
13	0	2253	0.00	92.53
12	254	2253	10.43	92.53
11	68	1999	2.79	82.09
10	260	1931	10.68	79.30
9	70	1671	2.87	68.62
8	190	1601	7.80	65.75
7	75	1411	3.08	57.95
6	260	1336	10.68	54.87
5	130	1076	5.34	44.19
4	816	946	33.51	38.85
NS	130	130	5.34	5.34

Run date: 05112007-TWSREPTA-0000002

## Grade7 Observations

### Observations for the General Writing Assessment and NCEXTEND2 Alternate Writing Assessment

The following observations were noted during the scoring process:

The prompt for the 2007 Grade 7 writing assessments asked students to justify how they could make a difference by improving their school or local community. The task was to be written in the form of an essay addressed to the local newspaper editor.

- Many students seemed to understand and respond well to this prompt. They effectively addressed both parts of the prompt: problem and solution.
- Often responses attempted to address the subject of the prompt too broadly. Usually these responses failed to elaborate on the ideas or justifications for their identified projects for the school or community, relying on general, undeveloped support or list-like support. Many responses took the form of the five-paragraph essay, in which several ideas or projects were identified but never sufficiently developed or supported.
- Many responses introduced an idea and then seemed to have little to say about it. Usually these responses had difficulty identifying both the problem and the solution. The support in these responses remained general and sparse or general and repetitive.
- The type of conventions issues in responses varied considerably. The most common sentence formation errors were run-ons and comma-splices, though fragments, even if less common, were in evidence in many responses.
- The most common usage error was probably the failure to use a word according to standard meaning, such as *there* for *their* or *to* for *too*. Also common were agreement errors, both subject-verb agreement errors and pronoun agreement errors.
- For mechanics, spelling errors and comma usage errors (both missing and unnecessary commas) were common, and these errors were clearly the most persistent of all conventions errors.

## Grade 10 Results

### Results of the General Writing Assessment at Grade 10

Students in the tenth grade who participated in the General Writing Assessment were asked to write a definition response to the following informational prompt:

*Write an article for a school newspaper about the meaning of human rights (rights that should be given to all people simply because they are human). You may use the following information, your own experiences, observations, and/or readings.*

*Right: That which is just, legal, morally good, or appropriate.*

*Source: Webster's II New College Dictionary*

#### *Article 1*

*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*

#### *Article 2*

*Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*

#### *Article 3*

*Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.*

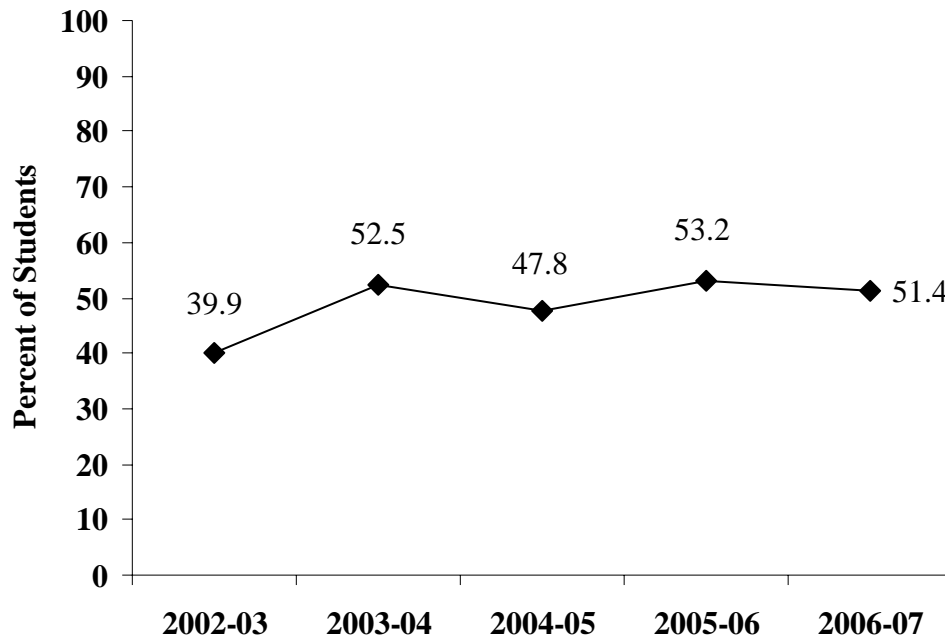
*Source: Universal Declaration of Human Rights: The First Three Articles*

*This must be a world of democracy and respect for human rights, a world freed from the horrors of poverty, hunger, deprivation and ignorance, relieved of the threat and the scourge of civil wars and external aggression and unburdened of the great tragedy of millions forced to become refugees.*

*...The normal condition for human existence is democracy, justice, peace, non-racism, non-sexism, prosperity for everybody, a healthy environment and quality and solidarity among the peoples.*

*Source: Nelson Mandela, Nobel Peace Prize Address*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 10 General Writing Assessments administered since a new scoring model was piloted in March 2003. The line graph shows a 12.6 percent increase in student scoring at Achievement Level III or above between 2002-03 and 2003-04 and a 4.7 decrease the following year. Most recently, the chart presents a 5.4 percent increase between 2004-05 and 2005-06. For the 2006-07 school year, the proficiency rate decreased slightly by 1.8 percent.



Notes: <sup>1</sup> The writing standard, scale, and scoring model changed effective with the 2002-03 school year. The results from 2005-06 are reported from a pilot test administration. Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Sections.

North Carolina Testing Program  
 General Writing Assessment  
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores  
 March 2007  
 Grade 10

**STATE**

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	97,871	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	467	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	10.6	<u>2004 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	2.9	90	14
<u>VARIANCE</u>	8.6	75	13
		50 (MEDIAN)	12
		25	10
		10	8

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PERCENT</u>
20	181	97871	0.18	100.00
19	0	97690	0.00	99.82
18	554	97690	0.57	99.82
17	5	97136	0.01	99.25
16	4357	97131	4.45	99.24
15	102	92774	0.10	94.79
14	8476	92672	8.66	94.69
13	1053	84196	1.08	86.03
12	35531	83143	36.30	84.95
11	2340	47612	2.39	48.65
10	17194	45272	17.57	46.26
9	6105	28078	6.24	28.69
8	6303	21973	6.44	22.45
7	3176	15670	3.25	16.01
6	5118	12494	5.23	12.77
5	2524	7376	2.58	7.54
4	4385	4852	4.48	4.96
NS	467	467	0.48	0.48

Run date: 05112007-TWSREPTG-0000003

## Grade 10 Observations

### Observations for the General Writing Assessment

The following observations were noted during the scoring process:

The prompt for the 2007 Grade 10 writing assessment asked students to define the meaning of human rights (rights that should be given to all people simply because they are human).

- Most students understood the prompt well enough and were able to sufficiently focus their discussion on effects. Responses took on many different forms, including very general and under-developed responses, responses with list-like details, and responses which were inconsistent in their level of development and/or logical progression of ideas.
- A number of students were confused by the prompt, failing to define the meaning of human rights. Some students duplicated the supplemental information and quotes provided in the prompt. A vast majority of students focused their responses on what it means to be without human rights. Others suggested ways to obtain human rights and mentioned human rights activist role models to follow.
- Most students experienced some degree of difficulty in knowing how to utilize the information provided in the prompt effectively. While some students made little or no direct reference to the supplemental information cited in the prompt, the majority seemed to feel compelled to make use of as much of the material provided as possible. A common format employed by many students was to include portions of each of the quotes in their responses, following each citation with a cursory summary or evaluation based on their own reactions to each quote. These responses were often disjointed and poorly developed, as students dealt briefly in turn with each perspective on human rights, thus limiting the logical progression of ideas and unity of their responses. Thus most students seemed not to see the quotes as auxiliary pieces of information to be used selectively to support a narrowly-defined position. Rather, students mainly appeared to feel that they needed to include some portion of each quote in their responses.
- Common errors in conventions included problems with internal punctuation (most often missing or misplaced commas and apostrophes), spelling errors, sentence formation errors (comma-splices were the most frequent, followed by fragments and then direct run-ons), and problems with basic grammar and word usage (most often subject-verb agreement problems and incorrect use of homonyms such as there/their).