

# Released Tests

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Released Tests

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1. [Why did the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction release tests this year?](#)
2. [What tests will be released in 2009?](#)
3. [Are the released tests the actual tests that were administered to students?](#)
4. [How will the tests be released?](#)
5. [Why is the download or use of some of the test selections restricted?](#)
6. [What information accompanies each released test?](#)
7. [What scores are needed to pass the tests?](#)
8. [What are Achievement Levels I–IV? What is an acceptable achievement level?](#)
9. [Why aren't individual students' tests and answer sheets released?](#)
10. [Why aren't all tests at all grade levels released?](#)
11. [Can individuals or groups request the opportunity to view secure test materials or test data that has not been released?](#)
12. [What are the Department of Public Instruction's plans for releasing future tests?](#)

### Using the Released Tests

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1. [How should the released tests be used?](#)
2. [Are there improper uses of the released tests?](#)

### Information about North Carolina Tests

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1. [What other information is available about North Carolina tests?](#)

## Released Tests

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### **1. Why did the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction release tests this year?**

Per the [\*Framework for Change: The Next Generation of Assessments and Accountability\*](#), the State Board of Education directed the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to release one form of each test in an effort to increase public awareness about what is tested. It has been the Department's desire for some time to provide more transparency to the tests and provide more examples of actual questions that are on the tests.

### **2. What tests will be released in 2009?**

One form of the following tests will be released in August 2009:

- Pretest—Grade 3
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 3
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 4
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 5
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 6
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 7
- End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grade 8
- End-of-Grade Science Grade 5
- End-of-Grade Science Grade 8
- Online Test of Computer Skills
- End-of-Course Algebra I
- End-of-Course Geometry
- End-of-Course Algebra II
- End-of-Course English I
- End-of-Course Physical Science
- End-of-Course Biology
- End-of-Course Chemistry
- End-of-Course Physics
- End-of-Course Civics and Economics
- End-of-Course U.S. History

### **3. Are the released tests the actual tests that were administered to the students?**

The released tests include all of the “scored” questions used to determine a student’s score. The released tests do not look exactly the same as the tests students took. The tests actually taken by students were formatted differently because they contained experimental items called field-test questions. The field-test questions are not included in a released test because they will be used again in future tests.

#### **4. How will the tests be released?**

The released tests are available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/releasedforms>. Copies of these materials may be downloaded and printed using a computer with Internet access.

#### **5. Why is the download or use of some of the test selections restricted?**

The North Carolina End-of-Course Test of English I and the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests of Reading Comprehension contain copyrighted reading selections. Due to budget constraints and the reluctance of copyright holders to grant printing rights via a Web site, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has obtained permissions **only** for Web viewing of these selections. The download or use of these copyrighted materials is restricted by applicable license agreements obtained by the NCDPI and copyright law (Title 17, United States Code). Permission to use any copyrighted material must be obtained directly from the respective copyright holders. To contact the copyright holder, please see the Acknowledgments for each test form.

To honor our commitment to the copyright holders, there are two versions of these tests: (1) a pdf version of the entire form (selections and items) that **is not** printable and (2) a pdf only of the items that **is** printable.

#### **6. What information accompanies each released test?**

(1) An answer key is provided for each released test. (2) A table equating the raw score to scale score is available. (3) Goal-level information is also provided for the released test items.

#### **7. What scores are needed to pass the tests?**

Scores for the [end-of-grade](#) and [end-of-course](#) tests are reported in terms of Achievement Levels. (See the questions: [What are the Achievement Levels I–IV?](#) and [What is an acceptable achievement level?](#) ) Students scoring Achievement Level III or Level IV meet the state’s standard of proficiency.

For the Online Test of Computer Skills, students must achieve a scale score of 150 or above.

**8. What are Achievement Levels I–IV? What is an acceptable achievement level?**

All students at grades 3 through 12 are scored within four achievement levels for the [end-of-grade](#) and [end-of course](#) assessments. The four achievement levels are as follows:

Proficient:	Level IV Level III	Students scoring in Level III and Level IV are achieving at or above grade level
Not Proficient:	Level II Level I	Students scoring in Level I or Level II are achieving below grade level and are in need of additional assistance

**9. Why aren't individual students' tests and answer sheets released?**

Individual students' tests and answer sheets are not being released in order to maintain student confidentiality and test security. Identifiable scores of individual students on tests must not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

**10. Why aren't all tests at all grade levels released?**

A test form will not be released for the **NCEXTEND1** and **NCEXTEND2** Alternate Assessments. The NCCLAS does not have a test form. Although a test form is not released, information and/or sample items (when available) regarding each alternate assessment may be found at the following Web addresses:

**NCEXTEND1:** <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/ncextend1>

**NCEXTEND2** for EOG: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/ncextend2>

**NCEXTEND2** for OCS:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/ncextend2ocs>

NCCLAS: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/ncclas>

The test forms and administration information for the W-APT: WIDA ACCESS Placement Test are password protected for this test by the test publisher, the WIDA Consortium. Although full forms of the W-APT are not released, information regarding the test can be found at the following Web address:

<http://www.wida.us/assessment/w-apt/index.aspx>

Although full forms of the ACCESS for ELLs are not released by the test publisher, the WIDA Consortium, information and sample items for the ACCESS for ELLs can be found at the following Web addresses:

<http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/index.aspx>

[http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/ACCESS\\_Sample\\_Items.pdf](http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/ACCESS_Sample_Items.pdf)

**11. Can individuals or groups request the opportunity to view secure test materials or test data that has not been released?**

Because test materials in North Carolina are often reused and because test materials are costly to generate, every precaution is taken to ensure that test materials that are to be reused remain secure at all times. In special circumstances exceptions to this policy can be made for certain stakeholders such as legislators, parents/guardians, or researchers. Any of these individuals or groups who request the opportunity to view secure test materials or test data are to send a letter of request to the director of Accountability Operations. For individuals or groups who are granted permission to view secure test materials, the review must occur at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in Raleigh under secure conditions. Individuals or groups may not view secure test materials at the district or school sites. Reproducing or copying secure test items is not permitted.

**12. What are the Department of Public Instruction's plans for releasing future tests?**

In summer 2012, a sample of test items similar to items students will see on the 2012–13 assessments will be released. At the end of the 2012–13 school year, the NCDPI will release one operational form of each test.

## Using the Released Tests

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### **1. How should the released tests be used?**

While the release of a test form will increase transparency of testing, the state strongly cautions local school systems against using the forms to “teach to the test.” While the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests summarize student achievement and serve as an important indicator of aggregate student performance for state and federal reporting, they are not the sole measure of student performance. Scores on these tests are only one of the many indicators of how well a student is achieving. The use of released test forms should be part of an overall plan in school systems for implementing the new comprehensive balanced assessment system that includes formative, benchmark, and summative assessments. Released test forms may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with valuable test taking strategies in summative assessment situations. These strategies may include teaching time management, following directions, understanding reading selections, and thinking through how to select the correct answer. Released test forms may be used by parents and the general public in gaining a greater understanding of how the state’s academic content standards are measured. The state’s standardized achievement tests (developed to measure skills and knowledge learned through instruction), have not been designed for diagnostic purposes.

### **2. Are there improper uses of the released tests?**

Yes. The released tests should *not* be used to drill students for future tests. Students should be provided sound instruction rather than repetitive exercises on specific questions. Because the released passages and questions will never again be used on the state assessments, the use of these questions for test preparation would be misleading. The released tests should be used only as examples.

## Information about North Carolina Tests

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### **1. What other information is available about North Carolina tests?**

A selection of the information available about the North Carolina tests is provided below. Other information (not listed below) can be accessed at

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/>.

- End-of-Grade Tests <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eog/>
- End-of-Course Tests <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eoc/>
- Tests of Computer Skills  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/computerskills/>
- Alternate Assessments  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/alternateassess/>
- Understanding the Individual Student Reports  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/>
- Assessment Briefs and Other Publications  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/abriefs/>