

**North Carolina
Testing Program**

**Preliminary Results
of
Student Performance
on the
North Carolina Writing Assessment
at Grade 10**

**2010-2011
(June 1, 2011)**

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction
Accountability Services/
Test Development Section
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825
www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is that every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century.

WILLIAM C. HARRISON Chairman :: Fayetteville	REGINALD KENAN Rose Hill	JOHN A. TATE III Charlotte
WAYNE MCDEVITT Vice Chair :: Asheville	KEVIN D. HOWELL Raleigh	ROBERT "TOM" SPEED Boone
WALTER DALTON Lieutenant Governor :: Rutherfordton	SHIRLEY E. HARRIS Troy	MELISSA E. BARTLETT Roxboro
JANET COWELL State Treasurer :: Raleigh	CHRISTINE J. GREENE High Point	PATRICIA N. WILLOUGHBY Raleigh

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., State Superintendent
301 N. Wilmington Street :: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

In compliance with federal law, NC Public Schools administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to:

Dr. Rebecca Garland, Chief Academic Officer :: Academic Services and Instructional Support
6368 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6368 :: Telephone: (919) 807-3200 :: Fax: (919) 807-4065

Visit us on the Web:: www.ncpublicschools.org

**North Carolina Writing Assessment
at Grade 10
Preliminary Results 2010-2011¹
June 1, 2011**

Writing Assessment Summary

Preliminary results of the North Carolina Writing Assessment show that 103,955 tenth grade students were tested and nearly 70 percent scored proficient in 2010-11. The informational mode of writing was assessed with a definition prompt. Tenth grade students continued to demonstrate the high level of proficiency established since the 2007-08 school year.

The 69.9 percent proficiency rate this year is slightly lower than the results last year when 70.2 percent of tenth grade students scored proficient during the 2009-10 school year. In 2008-09, 71.0 percent of students scored proficient at Achievement Level III or above. In 2007-08, 72.3 percent of students scored proficient, which was an increase of 21.3 percentage points from the previous year. In 2006-07, 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, 39.9 percent of the students scored proficient at Achievement Level III or above.

In order to be considered proficient on the North Carolina Writing Assessment at Grade 10, 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 writing assessment program can be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/writing/>.

NCEXTEND2 OCS Writing Alternate Assessment

At the directive of the United States Department of Education, the *NCEXTEND2 OCS* Alternate Assessments for all subject areas were removed from the testing program effective with the 2010-2011 school year.

How the Writing Assessment Results are Used for Accountability

Since the 2004-05 school year, the results from the North Carolina Writing Assessment at Grade 10 have been used in combination with the English I EOC (end-of-course) Assessment results from the same students in order to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) determinations for high schools under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Additionally, the Grade 10 Writing Assessment results are included in the calculations of the state ABCs performance composite.

Final Report for the North Carolina Writing Assessments

A final report for the 2010-11 school year will be published at a later date. The report will include the student exemplars (sample papers) and scoring annotations (explanations) used in the scoring process for each assessment.

¹ All preliminary data contained in this report provided by Pearson Educational Measurement.

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

Grade Level	Type of Writing
10	Extended informational response (cause/effect or definition)

Scoring Procedure for the North Carolina Writing Assessments

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, and (d) Achievement Level ranking.
- Imaged student responses are returned on CD to LEAs and schools.

Achievement Level Ranges for the North Carolina Writing Assessments

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.

Table 2. SBE Adopted Achievement Level Ranges for the North Carolina Writing Assessments at Grade 10

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Writing Grade 10	4-7	8-11	12-16	17-20

Grade 10 Results

Results of the North Carolina Writing Assessment at Grade 10

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

Write the text of a speech to be presented to the incoming freshman class on the meaning of success in high school. You may use the following information, your own experiences, observations, and/or readings.

Success: The gaining of something desired, planned or attempted.

Source: *Webster's II New College Dictionary*

If you do something you love, you can't help but be successful.

Source: *Elizabeth Kubler-Ross*

Success is a twinkle in the eye, a generosity of spirit, a palpable [easily perceived, obvious] energy projected from a loving heart, and a caring soul.

Source: *Unknown*

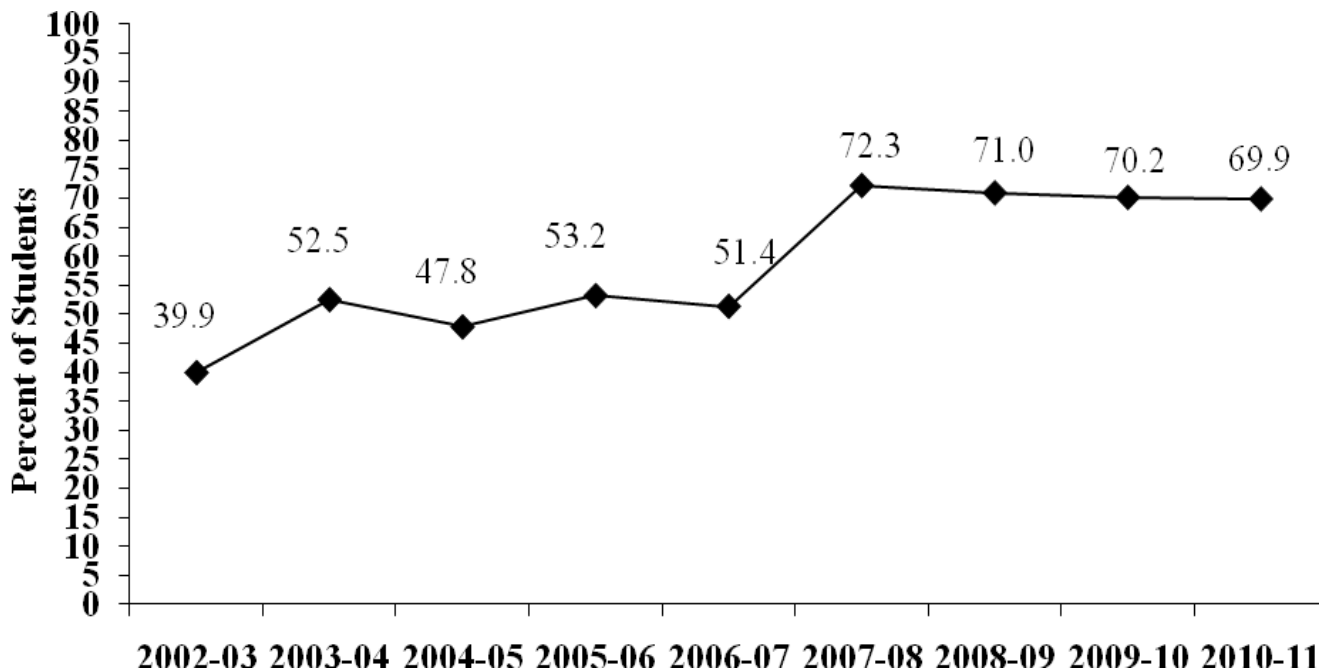
Success, then, is not about the accumulation of toys, goods or paper money. Success is about service, character, integrity, honesty, loyalty, commitment, truthfulness, being trustworthy, ... doing your best for yourself, your family, friends, community, state, province, nation and world.

You can believe me or you can believe a lot of people trying to sell you something. All I am trying to sell you on is yourself, on being and doing your best. Listen to your own drummer; hear your own voice.

Please do not become a shallow reflection of values that are not your own. Take responsibility for your chapter of the world. Write your section of the book of life with dignity and integrity. Take the high road, the road to success. Ultimately, and finally, you will be the only person who knows if you did your best anyway.

Source: *Will Keim, "The Meaning of Success"*

The following graph presents results for the Grade 10 Writing Assessment administered since the current scoring model was piloted in March 2003. The line graph shows an increase of 12.6 percentage points for students scoring at Achievement Level III or above between 2002-03 and 2003-04 and a 4.7 percentage point decrease the following year. In 2005-06, the chart presents a 5.4 percentage points increase over the previous school year. For the 2006-07 school year, the proficiency rate decreased slightly by 1.8 percentage points. In 2007-08, student proficiency increased significantly over the previous school year by 20.9 percentage points. For 2008-09, the student proficiency rate dipped by 1.3 percentage points from the previous school year. In 2009-10, the the proficiency rate decreased slightly by .8 percentage points. In 2010-11, there was a slight decline of 0.3 percentage points from the previous school year; nevertheless, the student proficiency rate continued to demonstrate the high level of student performance established since the 2007-08 school year.



Notes: 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/Test Development Section

North Carolina Testing Program
 Writing Assessment
 Distribution of Total Writing Scores
 March 2011
 Grade 10

STATE

<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>	103,955	<u>High Score</u>	20
<u>NUMBER OF NON-SCORABLE (NS) RESPONSES</u>	468	<u>Low Score</u>	4
<u>MEAN</u>	11.8	<u>2004 STATE PERCENTILES</u>	<u>TOTAL WRITING SCORE</u>
<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>	3.2	90	14
<u>VARIANCE</u>	10.1	75	13
		50 (MEDIAN)	12
		25	10
		10	8

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

TOTAL WRITING SCORE	FREQUENCY	CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
20	662	103955	0.64	100.00
19	1	103293	0.00	99.36
18	1680	103292	1.62	99.36
17	45	101612	0.04	97.75
16	14140	101567	13.60	97.70
15	736	87427	0.71	84.10
14	14143	86691	13.60	83.39
13	2994	72548	2.88	69.79
12	38298	69554	36.84	66.91
11	1745	31256	1.68	30.07
10	8885	29511	8.55	28.39
9	5366	20626	5.16	19.84
8	3534	15260	3.40	14.68
7	2289	11726	2.20	11.28
6	3278	9437	3.15	9.08
5	1996	6159	1.92	5.92
4	3695	4163	3.55	4.00
NS	468	468	0.45	0.45

Run date: 05202011-ZTWS0520-0000001

Note: Non-scorable is only used when the whole response is completely illegible, totally blank, written in a foreign language, entirely off-topic, or an exact restatement of the prompt.

Scoring the North Carolina Writing Assessments

Since receiving recommendations from the Writing Assessment Task Force in 2001, the NCDPI has worked toward the goal of involving North Carolina educators in the scoring process for the Writing Assessment. The advancement of modern technology has enabled NCDPI to transition from a regional-based scoring model to a distributed scoring model (remote web-based secure access system) for the North Carolina Writing Assessment at Grade 10. Using a distributed scoring model, trained North Carolina educators, who met the qualifications, were given the opportunity to score the Writing Assessment along with qualified professional scorers.

Distributed Scoring utilizes the process of scanning the handwritten student responses into the vendor's computerized database system, which distributes them securely to scorers using the web-based password-protected system. Computer technology enabled scorers to securely download the necessary computer applications and score student responses without being present in a regional scoring center.

Pearson, the vendor for the project, maintained a central headquarters to supervise the distributed scoring operation. In addition, NCDPI personnel monitored the scorers and the scoring process through secure online web access. The NCDPI generated real-time scoring reports and daily data statistics to ensure that the industry quality control standards of 70 percent (or higher) for validity and inter-rater reliability were achieved.

Table 3. Quality Control Standards

	Validity	IRR (Inter-rater reliability)
Content	85%	72%
Conventions	81.3%	74.6%