



# ***New York State Testing Program***

## **Guide to the Grades 3–8 Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics**

**2008 Edition**

# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

## Regents of The University

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# Message to Teachers and Administrators



**THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT/ THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK/ALBANY, NY 12234**

David Abrams, Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Standards, Assessment and Reporting

March 2008

Dear Colleague:

The 2007–08 school year marks the third administration of the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests. Your cooperation during the 2006–07 school year ensured that the administration of these tests ran smoothly and efficiently. On behalf of the Department, I thank you for your efforts and look forward to our continued work together to ensure successful future administrations of this testing program.

New York State teachers have been actively involved in the test design and item selection for the expanded testing program, and we appreciate all their efforts. This updated guide is designed to provide you with further information regarding the NYS Testing Program in the 2007–08 school year.

This guide contains information for teachers and administrators on the administration and scoring of the operational tests, testing materials needed, and test misadministration. A chart is included that lists the testing times for each grade level; this chart also lists the preparation time for each test book. The guide also provides detailed information on testing accommodations for students with disabilities and limited-English-proficient (LEP) students.

For more information, please see the Department’s web site at

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/nyseslat/nclbmemo8-4-06.pdf>.

We look forward to our continued collaboration in meeting the challenges we face with this testing program. If you are interested in participating in test development and evaluation activities for the Department, please go to <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/recruitment.htm> and fill out the recruitment form; we welcome and encourage your participation. The Department is also interested in your comments regarding the materials found in this guide; please send them via e-mail to [emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:emscassessinfo@mail.nysed.gov).

Thank you for your help and for all the work that you do on behalf of the students in New York State.

Sincerely,

David Abrams



# General Information About the New York State Testing Program

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## Mission of the New York State Testing Program

The New York State Testing Program is designed to evaluate the implementation of the State’s Learning Standards at the student, school, district, and State levels. To meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), tests in English language arts and mathematics are administered annually at each grade level in Grades 3 through 8. The requirement under NCLB to administer standardized statewide tests of demonstrated technical quality at the high school level will be met by continuing the administration of Regents Examinations. All of the State tests serve as important measures of student progress. The Grades 3 through 8 tests provide information about students’ preparedness for study at the next grade level, while Regents Examinations verify that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for high school graduation.

The Grades 3–8 Tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics help schools to identify students for whom they need to provide additional academic assistance in these subject areas. However, the Department advises schools that decisions such as promotion or retention should be based on multiple measures of the student’s achievement and not solely on scores from the New York State Testing Program. This is essential to ensure that important decisions are made on the basis of a student’s overall achievement rather than on the student’s performance on a single measure.

State assessments are also designed to help schools measure the effectiveness of their instructional programs and to measure yearly student progress. The assessments are based on the State Learning Standards and the Core Curriculum; the content of the tests should mirror the instruction being provided in the classrooms. Students should not need extensive preparation to do well on the State assessments as long as the curriculum used by the school is aligned with the State’s Learning Standards and the teachers are effectively instructing students in accordance with the curriculum.

## The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

NCLB is a federal education initiative that was passed in 2001. Its purpose is “to close the achievement gap through accountability, research-based instruction, flexibility, and options for parents, so that no child is left behind.”

Under NCLB, all states that receive federal funding for education are required to test students in Grades 3 through 8 in reading and mathematics in order to measure yearly progress. High school students must be tested at least once in these subjects. The tests used to measure student progress must be aligned with the State’s Learning Standards. For the 2003–2004 school year, New York State received approximately \$1.8 billion from the federal government to distribute to local school districts.

The information gathered from the results of the tests are used to determine whether schools and districts are making adequate yearly progress toward the achievement goals determined by the State. Schools that meet or exceed the adequate yearly progress goals will be considered for State

achievement awards, while schools that fail to meet these goals will be targeted for improvement. Districts are required to develop assistance plans for schools that do not make adequate yearly progress.

For more information about NCLB, visit the U.S. Department of Education web site at <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>.

## **New York State Education Department**

With a mission to “raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York,” the Department has a distinguished history dating back to 1784, when the Board of Regents was established to oversee Kings College (now Columbia University). Almost a century ago, Governor Theodore Roosevelt proposed the creation of a department with the responsibility for all education in the State.

Today, the Board of Regents and the Department govern education in New York State from pre-kindergarten to graduate school. The Board of Regents and the Department are constitutionally responsible for setting education policies, standards, and rules and are legally required to ensure that these policies, standards, and rules are implemented.

More information about the Department can be found on its web site at <http://www.nysed.gov>.

## **CTB/McGraw-Hill**

CTB/McGraw-Hill, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies, was founded in 1926 by Ethel and Willis Clark. By providing thousands of school districts across the country with assessment and scoring services, CTB/McGraw-Hill continues to serve the Clarks’ original mission: to help the teacher help the child.

Since 1998, CTB/McGraw-Hill has collaborated with the Department and with New York State teachers in the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of the New York State Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics for Grades 4 and 8. As the testing program has expanded to include Grades 3, 5, 6, and 7, CTB/McGraw-Hill continues to collaborate with the Department and with the teachers of New York State to design and implement a testing program that helps to ensure that New York schools are providing—and New York students are receiving—instruction that will help them meet New York State’s Learning Standards.

## **How the Tests Are Developed**

New York State teachers and administrators serve as integral members of the test development team, participating in the test development process from the design stage through the review of the finished test questions and scoring rubrics.

The first step in test development is to create new specifications for test questions. Committees composed of New York State general and special education teachers, Department staff, and staff from CTB/McGraw-Hill meet to ensure that the test questions are aligned with the State’s Learning Standards and classroom instruction. Information from these committees also provides guidelines for writing the test questions by selecting standards and performance indicators that are most appropriate for Statewide testing and by identifying formats best suited to assessing those standards and performance indicators under the principles of Universal Design in Assessment. (For

the English Language Arts Tests, the committees also review the reading and listening passages to be used in the tests.) These New York-developed specifications are then used, along with the State’s Learning Standards and other materials, to train and guide experienced writers to develop appropriate test questions.

The test questions and rubrics are submitted to CTB/McGraw-Hill for a rigorous editing-and-review-cycle and are then reviewed by select committees of teachers and administrators from throughout New York State and by Department staff. The questions are reviewed from several perspectives, including alignment to the State’s Learning Standards; contexts that are appropriate in terms of both grade level and content; a range of the depths of knowledge needed to answer questions; clear and concise language; and content-specific issues, such as calculator use for the Grades 7 and 8 Mathematics Tests and appropriateness of genre of literary texts. Based on the recommendations of the review committees, the test questions are accepted, revised, or rejected. A final review with Department officials determines the finished questions that will be selected for field testing.

Multiple field test forms are created from the approved pool of questions. After the questions are field tested, range-finding meetings are held to establish guidelines for scoring each question. Committees of teachers from around the State, along with representatives from the Department and from CTB/McGraw-Hill, participate in selecting sample papers that exemplify each score point. These anchor papers form the basis of the scoring guide that will be used in scoring the operational tests. After the questions are field tested, only those proven by data analysis to be valid and reliable measurements of the State’s Learning Standards are selected for inclusion in the final operational test forms. Each year, Field Tests for the English Language Arts Tests and the Mathematics Tests are administered to students in selected schools, including students with disabilities.

The English Language Arts Tests are administered each year in January, and the Mathematics Tests are administered each year in March.

## How to Use This Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide information on the new Grades 3–8 Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The guide contains an introductory section with general information about the testing program, followed by six sample tests, one for each grade. Each sample test includes the following materials:

- *Sample Test 2005 Teacher’s Directions*
- Sample test books
- *Scoring Guide*, containing the following materials:
  - Standard and Performance Indicator Map with Answer Key
  - Holistic rubrics for short- and extended-response questions
  - Exemplary responses for short- and extended-response questions
  - Sample annotated student responses for short- and extended-response questions

Each sample test has been constructed based on the same test design used for the operational tests. Although not statistically parallel to the operational tests, the scope and content of the sample tests reflect the type of materials and questions that are found in the operational tests. In addition, the *Sample Test 2005 Teacher’s Directions* preceding each sample test are similar to the *Teacher’s Directions* that accompany the operational tests. The *Scoring Guide* that follows each sample test may be used to score student responses. **Please note, however, that no scale scores are available for these sample tests.**

# Administration of the Operational Tests

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The Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests are composed of two or three books per grade and are administered on two or three consecutive days, depending on the grade level.

The table below shows the approximate operational testing times for both content areas at all grade levels.

Grade	Book	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
		Test Time (in minutes)	Prep Time (in minutes)	Test Time (in minutes)	Prep Time (in minutes)
3	1	40	10	45	10
	2	35	15*	40	10
4	1	45	10	50	10
	2	45	15*	50	10
	3	60	10	50	10
5	1	40	10	45	10
	2	30	15*	50	10
6	1	45	10	45	10
	2	45	15*	60	10
	3	60	10	N/A	N/A
7	1	50	10	55	10
	2	30	15*	55	10
8	1**	45	10	50	10
	2**	45	15*	40	10
	3	60	10	70	10

\* Includes time allotted for reading aloud the Listening selection to the students.

\*\* Books 1 and 2 are to be administered on the same day.

The tests are to be administered under standard conditions, and directions are to be followed carefully. The same test administration procedures must be used with all students so that valid conclusions can be drawn from the test results.

Complete information about test administration is contained in the *School Administrator’s Manual for Public and Nonpublic Schools* and the *Teacher’s Directions*, which are part of the testing materials shipped to the schools each year.

## Testing Materials

Before starting the test, the test proctor distributes all testing materials to the students and gives them instructions according to the information in the *Teacher’s Directions*. For both the English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests, each student receives a test book, an answer sheet, and a No. 2 pencil. For the Mathematics Test, each student will also need a ruler. For Grades 5 and 7, each student will need a ruler and a protractor. In addition, for Grades 7 and 8 only, students use scientific calculators for certain parts of the Mathematics Test. (For more information on calculator use during testing, see page 22.)

## Test Books and Answer Sheets

Some test books contain multiple-choice questions only. Students record their answers to these questions on a separate answer sheet. Other test books contain only short- and extended-response questions. For these questions, students record their answers directly in their test books. For the English Language Arts Tests only, test books at some grades contain a combination of multiple-choice and short-response questions. For these tests, students record the answers to the multiple-choice questions on an answer sheet, but write their answers to the short-response questions directly in their test books.

## Manipulatives

For the Mathematics Test, each student in Grades 3 through 8 must have a ruler for his or her exclusive use during the test. For Grades 5 and 7, each student must also have a protractor for his or her exclusive use during the test.

## School Administrator Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the school administrator to check all testing materials, to distribute the materials to the teachers or test administrators, and to ensure the security of the tests. The school administrator must ensure that students with disabilities are provided the allowable testing accommodations as indicated on a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan). The school administrator must also make sure that teachers, aides, and assistants receive training to ensure the correct implementation of testing accommodations.

## Teacher Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of any teacher administering the test to organize the classroom, prepare students for the test, prepare and distribute testing materials, and help to ensure test security. The teacher must understand the test administration process and be familiar with the testing materials. The teacher must also understand what testing accommodations are permitted for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students and for students with IEPs or 504 Plans.

## Misadministration

Inappropriate administration of a test, or parts of a test, can occur in several ways. Examples of misadministration include the following:

- The student has used unauthorized or inappropriate testing accommodations or tools.
- The student cheats.

It is the responsibility of those administering the tests to ensure that students are monitored closely, that students do not start the test before being instructed to do so, and that students with disabilities are provided the allowable testing accommodations or tools indicated in their IEPs or 504 Plans. Immediately notify your principal or school administrator if any part of the test is administered improperly.

## Testing Accommodations

### Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

In general, students with disabilities must be provided with the testing accommodations specified in their IEPs or 504 Plans when taking these tests. However, testing accommodations that change what a test is measuring are not permitted on elementary- and intermediate-level State assessments. Testing accommodations that are not permitted on specific sections of the tests are described below.

### Accommodations Specific to the English Language Arts Test

**For Reading Sections:** Test directions may be read aloud to the students. Because the test measures a student’s reading skills (decoding and comprehension), no other parts of this section may be read aloud. Please note that the test directions are those instructions, usually in bold-faced type, that **precede** a passage or a test question number. They are not to be confused with any part of the actual student task, which follows the test question number.

**For Listening Sections:** Test directions and all questions (in this part of the test only) may be read aloud to students whose IEPs or 504 Plans include this testing accommodation. If indicated in a student’s IEP or 504 Plan, the listening selection may be read aloud more than the standard number of times.

**For the Editing Paragraph (Book 2, Grades 3, 5, and 7):** Both the editing paragraph and the sample editing paragraph that precede it may be read aloud to students whose IEPs or 504 Plans include this testing accommodation.

Because the test measures writing skills, students are **not** allowed to use spell-checking and/or grammar-checking devices during any part of the English Language Arts Test. Students may **not** have requirements for spelling, paragraphing, and/or punctuation (writing mechanics) waived for any part of the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests.

The use of scribes and the use of tape recorders are allowable accommodations for both the English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests. For the English Language Arts Tests, students using scribes or tape recorders must provide all information for the writing sections of the tests, including spelling of difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, and grammar.

Students may use a word processor (with spell-checking and grammar-checking devices *disabled*) instead of a scribe. Most students have some experience with a computer, and word processing

allows students more control over their environment, fosters independence, and is less labor-intensive than using a scribe.

### **Accommodations Specific to the Mathematics Test**

All parts of the test may be read aloud to the students whose IEPs or 504 Plans include this testing accommodation.

- **Grades 3–6:** Because the test assesses a student’s proficiencies involving calculations, the use of a calculator is **not** allowed.
- **Grades 7–8:** Because the multiple-choice test questions assess a student’s proficiencies involving calculations, the use of a calculator is **not** allowed when answering multiple-choice questions. A calculator is permitted for short- and extended-response questions. (A scientific calculator must be used. A graphing calculator is **not** permitted.)

More detailed information on testing accommodations for students with disabilities can be found on the Department’s web site at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guide.htm>.

### **LEP Students**

For LEP students, schools may provide the following testing accommodations:

- Time extension
- Separate location
- Third reading of *Listening Selection*
- Bilingual dictionaries and glossaries (direct translations only; no definitions or explanations permitted)
- Simultaneous use of English and alternative language editions (Mathematics Tests only)
- Oral translation for lower-incidence languages (Mathematics Tests only)

More detailed information on accommodations for LEP students can be found in the *School Administrator’s Manual for Public and Nonpublic Schools*.

### **Alternative Language Editions of the Tests**

The Grades 3 through 8 Mathematics Tests are available in Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. LEP students may be provided with an oral translation of the Mathematics Tests when a written translation is not available in the student’s first language.

### **Braille and Large-Type Editions of the Tests**

Schools may order braille and large-type editions of both the English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests. For more information, please contact your principal or school administrator.

For large-type or braille editions of the tests, test administrators should transcribe the students’ answers onto regular test answer sheets and test books, exactly as dictated or recorded by the students.

More detailed information on the New York State Testing Program can be found in the *School Administrator’s Manual for Public and Nonpublic Schools*. This manual is updated each year. A copy is mailed to the school principal. It is also available on the Department’s web site at [www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/sam](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/sam).

# The English Language Arts Tests

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Each of the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests is made up of two or three books (depending on the grade level) and assesses standards for reading, listening, and writing.

## Reading

In the Reading section of the English Language Arts Test, students read several passages representing a variety of genres. For each passage, students apply the skills and knowledge gained in the classroom by answering reading comprehension questions that demonstrate their understanding of the passages.

Tests at every grade level contain both literary and informational reading passages. Literary passages may include short stories, folk tales, poetry, or other forms of literary writing. Informational passages may include articles, excerpts from biographies or autobiographies, essays, or other forms of informational writing.

The reading passages that appear on the test are similar to the kinds of materials students read both in the classroom and for homework assignments. Reading passages are carefully selected for grade-level-appropriate vocabulary and content.

## Listening

For the Listening selections of the English Language Arts Test, students listen to a passage and apply skills and knowledge gained in the classroom to answer comprehension questions. The questions are designed to demonstrate students’ understanding of the passage.

Listening selections may represent a variety of genres. The Listening section of each test for Grades 3, 4, and 6 contains literary passages. The Listening section of each test for Grades 5, 7, and 8 contains informational passages. Literary passages may include short stories, folk tales, poetry, or other forms of literary writing. Informational passages may include articles, excerpts from biographies or autobiographies, essays, or other forms of informational writing.

The listening passages that appear on the test are similar to the kinds of materials students read and hear in the classroom. Listening passages are carefully selected for grade-level-appropriate vocabulary and content. Students will not see the questions prior to hearing the listening selection. They should be encouraged to take careful notes during the second reading of the listening selection to assist them in answering the questions that follow. (In Grades 6 through 8, students may also take notes during the first reading.)

## Writing

For the Writing section of the test for Grades 3, 5, and 7, students complete an editing task that consists of a paragraph containing errors in capitalization and punctuation (Grade 3) or in capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage (Grades 5 and 7). The student completes the task by identifying and correcting the errors. The student is asked to cross out the error and write the correction directly above the error. Using proofreading marks to correct errors is acceptable, provided the marks are made accurately and clearly correct the errors. The nature of the errors do not require the student to do any extensive rewriting of the paragraph. In each test, the teacher guides the students through a sample editing paragraph just prior to the students’ completing this task on their own. (See pages 17–19 for clarifications regarding scoring the editing task.)

Students in Grades 4, 6, and 8 answer two extended-response questions, one in the Reading section and one in the Listening section. In addition to contributing to the Listening and Reading cluster scores, the extended response for the Listening section and the extended response for the Reading section are scored together for writing mechanics.

Because the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English does not test students in independent writing, the New York State Testing Program, which has been created to align with the Regents Examination, has eliminated the independent writing prompt from the Writing section of the tests at all grade levels.

## English Language Arts Test Design

The following charts provide a description of the test design for each grade.

### Grade 3

Book 1	Book 2	Total
3–4 passages (literary and informational) 20 multiple-choice questions 1 short-response question	1 listening selection (literary) 4 multiple-choice questions 2 short-response questions 1 editing paragraph	4–5 passages 24 multiple-choice questions 3 short-response questions 1 editing paragraph
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3
40 minutes	35 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	75 minutes

## Grade 4

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Total
4–5 passages (literary and informational)  28 multiple-choice questions	1 listening selection (literary)  2 short-response questions 1 extended-response question	2 paired passages (literary and informational)  3 short-response questions 1 extended-response question	7–8 passages  28 multiple-choice questions 5 short-response questions 2 extended-response questions
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standard 2, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standard 3, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standards 1, 2, and 3
45 minutes	45 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	60 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes

## Grade 5

Book 1	Book 2	Total
3–4 passages (literary and informational)  20 multiple-choice questions 1 short-response question	1 listening selection (informational)  4 multiple-choice questions 1 short-response question 1 editing paragraph	4–5 passages  24 multiple-choice questions 2 short-response questions 1 editing paragraph
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3
40 minutes	30 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	70 minutes

## Grade 6

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Total
4–5 passages (literary and informational)  26 multiple-choice questions	1 listening selection (literary)  3 short-response questions  1 extended-response question	2 paired passages (literary and informational)  3 short-response questions  1 extended-response question	7–8 passages  26 multiple-choice questions  6 short-response questions  2 extended-response questions
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standard 2, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standard 3, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standards 1, 2, and 3
45 minutes	45 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	60 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes

## Grade 7

Book 1	Book 2	Total
4–5 passages (literary and informational)  26 multiple-choice questions  2 short-response questions	1 listening selection (informational)  4 multiple-choice questions  2 short-response questions  1 editing paragraph	5–6 passages  30 multiple-choice questions  4 short-response questions  1 editing paragraph
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standards 1, 2, and 3
50 minutes	30 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	80 minutes

## Grade 8

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Total
4–5 passages (literary and informational)  26 multiple-choice questions	1 listening selection (informational)  3 short-response questions  1 extended-response question	2 paired passages (literary and informational)  3 short-response questions  1 extended-response question	7–8 passages  26 multiple-choice questions  6 short-response questions  2 extended-response questions
Standards 1, 2, and 3	Standard 1, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standard 3, cluster score (The extended-response question also contributes to the writing mechanics score.)	Standards 1, 2, and 3
45 minutes	45 minutes (excluding reading listening selection aloud)	60 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes

## Approximate Percentage of Questions Assessing Each Standard

The following chart shows, for each grade, the approximate percentage of questions assessing each of the three English Language Arts Learning Standards.

Standard	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking for Information and Understanding	33%	36%	43%	36%	39%	39%
2. Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking for Literary Response and Expression	47%	44.5%	36%	44.5%	39%	39%
3. Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	20%	19.5%	21%	19.5%	22%	22%

**Note:** Writing mechanics is also scored, but it is not mapped to the standards.

## Question Formats

The English Language Arts Tests contain questions with a variety of formats, including multiple choice, short response, extended response, and editing tasks.

For multiple-choice questions, students select the correct response from four answer choices.

For short- and extended-response questions, students write an answer to an open-ended question. The extended responses are scored for writing as well as for reading comprehension.

For the editing task, students are required to make corrections and revisions to a short piece of writing. A sample editing paragraph is included in the test to help guide students in completing the editing task.

The following table shows the different formats used in the different test books at each grade.

Grade	Book	Contents
3	1	Reading (multiple-choice and short-response questions)
3	2	Listening/Writing (multiple-choice and short-response questions; editing task)
4	1	Reading (multiple-choice questions)
4	2	Listening/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)
4	3	Reading/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)
5	1	Reading (multiple-choice and short-response questions)
5	2	Listening/Writing (multiple-choice and short-response questions; editing task)
6	1	Reading (multiple-choice questions)
6	2	Listening/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)
6	3	Reading/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)
7	1	Reading (multiple-choice and short-response questions)
7	2	Listening/Writing (multiple-choice and short-response questions; editing task)
8	1	Reading (multiple-choice questions)
8	2	Listening/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)
8	3	Reading/Writing (short-response/extended-response cluster)

## Scoring

Scores on the English Language Arts Tests are based on the student’s ability to demonstrate evidence of the following qualities:

- **Meaning**—the extent to which the response exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task and text
- **Development**—the extent to which ideas are supported through the use of specific, accurate, and relevant evidence from the text

The scores of the extended responses, which are included in the tests at Grades 4, 6, and 8, are also based on the following qualities:

- **Organization**—the extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence
- **Language Use**—the extent to which the response exhibits clear and effective use of vocabulary and sentence structure
- **Conventions**—the extent to which the response exhibits correct spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, grammar, and usage

In Grades 4, 6, and 8, the short-response and extended-response questions in the Listening and Reading sections of the test are scored as clusters (i.e., one Listening cluster, one Reading cluster, and one Writing Mechanics cluster), rather than having a separate score assigned to each individual question. Cluster scoring enables the student to present a cohesive body of evidence that shows the extent of his or her understanding of the passage.

## Editing Paragraph Scoring Clarifications

Listed below are guidelines to follow while scoring the Editing Paragraphs in Grades 3, 5, and 7.

1. Students should not be told how many errors to look for. Otherwise, students might stop reviewing the rest of the paragraph because they believe they have found all the targeted errors when, in fact, they have misidentified one or more elements in the paragraph as being incorrect. It is best to encourage students to review the entire paragraph.
2. As indicated in the rubric, students receive credit for identifying the errors in mechanics or grammar that have been included in the editing paragraph. Conversely, points are deducted for errors introduced by students.
3. Introduced errors are errors made by students when they change correct elements in the paragraph to ones that are grammatically or mechanically incorrect. These may be errors in capitalization, word choice, verb tense, punctuation, sentence structure, etc. Students are **not** to be penalized for introduced spelling errors since spelling is not assessed via the editing paragraph.
4. A neutral revision is a revision made by the student to any part of the paragraph that does not result in a grammatical or mechanical error. The student is **not** penalized for such a revision. Examples of neutral revisions include the following:
  - If a student changes a word in a paragraph, but the word is grammatically correct and fits the sentence, then such a revision is acceptable, provided that the revision does not alter the meaning of the sentence to such a degree that it no longer fits the context of the paragraph. (Note: If the meaning of the sentence is significantly altered, then the change is considered an introduced error.)
  - Since the comma before “and” in a series is considered optional, crossing it out is acceptable.

5. If a verb tense correction is made but misspelled, the correction should be given credit, provided that the word clearly and accurately corrects the tense despite the misspelling.
6. In Grades 3, 5, and 7, students are held accountable for introducing grammar and/or usage errors.
7. Errors in homophones (words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings and different spellings) are considered to be usage errors. In Grades 5 and 7, students are held accountable for introducing such errors. Students in Grade 3 are **not** held accountable for introducing homophone errors since, according to the *Core Curriculum*, they are not expected to have mastery in this area. An example of a homophone error is confusing “to,” “two,” and “too.”
8. A student is **not** permitted to cross out an entire sentence to avoid making a correction. If a student crosses out a small portion of a sentence, but the sentence is still grammatically intact and the meaning of the sentence remains unchanged, such a revision is acceptable.
9. Proofreading marks are allowed, provided that the errors are clearly indicated and corrected by the proofreading marks. If a scorer is unfamiliar with proofreading marks, the scorer should contact the table facilitator or scoring leader for assistance.
10. A student who corrects an error by using means other than proofreading marks or the revision method described in the test directions may still receive full credit, provided the correction is made clearly and accurately. Some examples of acceptable correction methods include the following:
  - circling the error rather than crossing it out
  - crossing out the part of the word that is incorrect rather than crossing out and rewriting the entire word
  - crossing out a punctuation mark only rather than crossing out the word it is next to and rewriting the word without the mark above the revision
  - adding a punctuation mark only instead of crossing out the word it is next to and rewriting both above the revision

In each of these cases, as long as the correction made is accurate and clear to the scorer, the correction is acceptable.

11. If a student makes a correction but does not cross out the original error, then such a correction is acceptable, provided that the correction is completely clear without further interpretation being needed on the part of the scorer.
12. If a student makes more than one error of a particular type (e.g., failing to capitalize a proper noun), then additional scoring factors must be considered. In order to be considered a single error, the repeated error needs to be identical. For example, if a student repeatedly fails to capitalize a particular name, that is considered a single error, even though it occurs more than once. However, if the error occurs in two different names, then that is considered to be two separate errors.
13. Multiple capitalization errors within a unit are counted as one error. A unit is a group of words that are connected and part of a single concept, such as a book title, sports team, or a person’s job title.

**Additional examples of introduced errors:**

- If a sentence is divided incorrectly, creating a sentence and a fragment, then the fragment is considered to be one error. If two fragments are created, then the paper is assessed for two errors.
- An introduced change in tense is counted as an error.

**Additional examples of neutral revisions:**

- The comma is optional following a short introductory element such as a prepositional phrase (e.g., *For several days*).
- The comma before a conjunction that links two or more independent clauses is optional.
- It is acceptable to begin a sentence with “And” or “But.”
- It is acceptable to divide a compound sentence into two individual sentences, provided that each sentence is grammatically correct.

# The Mathematics Tests

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Each of the Mathematics Tests in Grades 3 through 8 is made up of two or three books (depending on the grade level) and assesses the new Mathematics Learning Standard. A complete description of the Mathematics Learning Standard can be accessed at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/home.html>.

For all grade levels, students apply the skills and knowledge gained in the classroom in order to answer three types of questions: multiple-choice, short-response, and extended-response. The first section of each test consists of multiple-choice questions only. The second section (and third section in grades containing an extra section) consists of short- and extended-response questions.

## Mathematics Test Design

The following charts provide a description of the test design for each grade.

### Grade 3

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1	25	0	0	25	45 minutes
2	0	4	2	6	40 minutes
Total	25	4	2	31	85 minutes

### Grade 4

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1	30	0	0	30	50 minutes
2	0	7	2	9	50 minutes
3	0	7	2	9	50 minutes
Total	30	14	4	48	150 minutes

### Grade 5

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1	26	0	0	26	45 minutes
2	0	4	4	8	50 minutes
Total	26	4	4	34	95 minutes

## Grade 6

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1	25	0	0	25	45 minutes
2	0	6	4	10	60 minutes
Total	25	6	4	35	105 minutes

## Grade 7

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1	30	0	0	30	55 minutes
2	0	4	4	8	55 minutes
Total	30	4	4	38	110 minutes

## Grade 8

Book	Number of Multiple-Choice Questions	Number of Short-Response Questions	Number of Extended-Response Questions	Total Number of Questions	Testing Time
1*	27	0	0	27	50 minutes
2*	0	4	2	6	40 minutes
3	0	8	4	12	70 minutes
Total	27	12	6	45	160 minutes

\*Books 1 and 2 are to be administered on the same day.

## Approximate Percentage of Questions Assessing Each Strand

The questions on the Grades 3–8 Mathematics Tests assess both the content and the process strands of New York State Mathematics Standard 3. Each question is aligned to one content performance indicator for reporting purposes, but is also aligned to one or more process performance indicators, as appropriate for the concepts embodied in the task. As a result of the alignment to both process and content strands, the tests assess students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem-solving abilities, rather than assessing their knowledge of isolated skills and facts.

Strand	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Number Sense and Operations	48%	45%	39%	37%	30%	11%
2. Algebra	13%	14%	11%	19%	12%	44%
3. Geometry	13%	12%	25%	17%	14%	35%
4. Measurement	13%	17%	14%	11%	14%	10%
5. Probability and Statistics	13%	12%	11%	16%	30%	0%

## Question Formats

The Mathematics Tests contain questions in a variety of formats, including multiple choice, short response, and extended response.

For multiple-choice questions, students select the correct response from four answer choices.

For short- and extended-response questions, students write an answer to an open-ended question and are required to show their work. In some cases, they will be required to explain, in words, how they arrived at their responses.

The following table shows the different formats used in the different test books at each grade.

Grade	Book	Contents
3	1	multiple-choice questions
3	2	short- and extended-response questions
4	1	multiple-choice questions
4	2	short- and extended-response questions
4	3	short- and extended-response questions
5	1	multiple-choice questions
5	2	short- and extended-response questions
6	1	multiple-choice questions
6	2	short- and extended-response questions
7	1	multiple-choice questions
7	2	short- and extended-response questions
8	1	multiple-choice questions
8	2	short- and extended-response questions
8	3	short- and extended-response questions

## Instructional Considerations: Use of Calculators and Value of Pi

### Use of Calculators

For the short-response and extended-response questions in Grades 7 and 8 only, students will need a scientific calculator. Graphing calculators are not permitted. Students are not permitted to use calculators for the multiple-choice questions in Grades 7 and 8 or for any questions on the tests in Grades 3 through 6. More specific information is available on the Department’s web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/3-8/7-8calculators.htm>.

### Value of Pi

Students should learn that  $\pi$  is an irrational number. For the short-response and extended-response questions in Grades 7 and 8, the  $\pi$  key and the full display of the calculator should be used in computations. The value for  $\pi$  is **not** equal to 3.1416, 3.14, or  $\frac{22}{7}$ .

Since calculator use is not permitted for the Grade 6 test, students at that grade should leave their answers in terms of  $\pi$  for greatest accuracy (i.e., students should leave the symbol  $\pi$  in their responses).

## Use of Reference Sheets

Book 2 of the Grades 7 and 8 test books contains a removable reference sheet that the students can use during testing. These reference sheets include the necessary formulas and reference information students need to assist them in answering certain mathematics questions. They are to be used **only** for short- and extended-response questions. Test books for Grades 3 through 6 do not have reference sheets; any necessary formulas are embedded in the test questions.

## Use of Manipulatives

Each student in Grades 3 through 8 will need to have a ruler for his or her exclusive use during the Mathematics Tests. Each student in Grades 5 and 7 will also need to have a protractor for his or her exclusive use during the test. A student with disabilities may use three-dimensional manipulatives that are comparable to the adapted rulers and protractors used in instruction if so indicated as a test accommodation on the student’s IEP or 504 Plan.

## Scoring the Mathematics Tests

Scores on the Mathematics Tests are based on how well the students can accomplish the following tasks:

- Know and apply facts and definitions.
- Select and apply appropriate procedures.
- Use reasoning in new settings.
- Read and interpret graphs and tables.
- Recognize, interpret, and apply the signs, symbols, and terms used to represent concepts.
- Explain and justify the methods used to solve problems.

## Mathematics Scoring Policies

Listed below are the policies to be followed while scoring the Mathematics Tests for all grades.

1. If the question does not specifically direct students to show their work, teachers may **not** score any work that the student shows.
2. If a student does the work in other than a designated “Show your work” area, that work may still be scored. (Additional paper is an allowable accommodation for a student with disabilities if indicated on the student’s IEP or 504 Plan.)
3. If the question requires students to show their work, and the student shows appropriate work and clearly identifies a correct answer but fails to write that answer in the answer blank, the student should still receive full credit.
4. If the question requires students to show their work, and the student shows appropriate work and arrives at the correct answer but writes an incorrect answer in the answer blank, the student may **not** receive full credit.
5. If the student provides one legible response (and one response only), teachers should score the response, even if it has been crossed out.

6. If the student has written more than one response but has crossed some out, teachers should score only the response that has **not** been crossed out.
7. Trial-and-error items are **not** subject to Scoring Policy #6 above, since crossing out is part of the trial-and-error process.
8. If a response shows repeated occurrences of the same conceptual error within a question, the student should **not** be penalized more than once.
9. In questions that provide ruled lines for students to write an explanation of their work, mathematical work shown elsewhere on the page may be considered and scored if, and only if, the student explicitly indicates the work as part of the answer.
10. Responses containing a conceptual error may **not** receive more than fifty percent of the maximum score.
11. In all questions that provide a response space for one numerical answer and require work to be shown, if the correct numerical answer is provided but no work is shown, the score is 1.
12. In all questions that provide response spaces for two numerical answers and require work to be shown for both parts, if one correct numerical answer is provided but no work is shown in either part, the score is 0. If two correct numerical answers are provided but no work is shown in either part, the score is 1.
13. In all 3-point questions that provide response spaces for two numerical answers and require work to be shown in one part, if two correct numerical answers are provided but no work is shown, the score is 2.
14. For work shown to be considered complete, the final step of the work (bridging the work to the answer) needs to be shown. Exceptions to the rule are
  - a simple subtraction procedure that results in an answer of 10 or less, involving whole numbers only
  - a simple addition procedure in which the value of 10 or less is added to an existing value, involving whole numbers only
  - the procedure for finding the absolute value of a number
  - the procedure for converting a decimal value to a percent

## Content-Specific Scoring Clarifications for Mathematics Tests

1. All necessary signs of operation should be present for work to be considered mathematically complete and correct. If signs of operation in the work shown are missing but it is absolutely clear and apparent in the student's work which operation is being used, and if all other work required is correct, the student should receive full credit.
2. In questions that require students to provide bar graphs,
  - in Grades 3 and 4 only, touching bars are acceptable
  - in Grades 3 and 4 only, intervals between bars do **not** need to be even
  - in all grades, widths of the bars must be consistent
  - in all grades, bars must be aligned with their labels
  - in all grades, scales must begin at 0, but the 0 does **not** need to be written

3. If the question asks the student to provide an expression and the student provides an equation, this is an acceptable response in Grades 3 and 4 only.
4. In questions requiring number sentences, the number sentences must be written horizontally.
5. Column subtraction of more than two numbers, while not a preferred procedure, is acceptable, provided that the complete process is shown in the student's work.
6. Column multiplication of more than two numbers is acceptable beginning in Grade 5, provided that any computation that is not shown falls within the  $12 \times 12$  multiplication table.
7. In pictographs, the student is permitted to use a symbol other than the one in the key, provided that the symbol is used consistently in the pictograph; the student does not need to change the symbol in the key. The student may **not**, however, use multiple symbols within the chart, nor may the student change the value of the symbol in the key.
8. In estimation items, the estimation must be performed at the beginning of the process; performing exact calculations and then rounding the result of the calculation is **not** acceptable.
9. The trial-and-error policy applies to Grades 7 and 8 only (and is particularly relevant to algebraic items which require a graphical procedure or in which a variable is to be found). In order for a response to receive full credit, evidence of three trials must be present. A correct answer accompanied by an incomplete trial-and-error procedure can receive only partial credit.

For additional clarification, more information can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/mst/instructrec.doc>.

