

Q & A GRADE 4 – 2005

For help with questions not addressed below, please call the Toll Free Helpline 877-516-2403, available weekdays May 16-27 from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Schools that have difficulty accessing the 877 area code should fax questions to the Helpline fax number, 919-425-7733.

Q: Item 32 – Is it OK for students to express their answers as percents?

A: Yes.

Q: If students use percents, what would be acceptable answers? Can they round? For example, in Part A, $16.66\% = 16.7\%$?, 17% ? Also, if students do not include “%”, after a correct numerical value, would the response be eligible for the highest score?

A: Yes, a correctly rounded answer is acceptable, and no, if the percent sign is missing, the response would not be eligible for the highest score.

Q: Item 35, Practice Set, page 10. By drawing different lines, aren’t the arrangements different?

A: No, because the orientation is toward the “front” of the room which is not supposed to change. The student may choose any side of the room to be the “front”, but it must be consistent in both drawings.

Q: 37c – Doesn’t the equation show a correct beginning?

A: Although the equation is correct, it is not a “first step” in terms of demonstrating a correct process. No values substituted in, and there is no evidence that the student could solve the problem.

Q: - If the student had done one more step, would the response then receive a score point 1?

A: It would depend on whether or not the “one more step” is correct. Please fax any examples of responses that are ‘stronger’ than 37c, but not as ‘strong’ as 37d or 37e to the Helpline for a specific response. Also, remember that Part A must be considered as well as Part B, in determining the overall holistic score of the response.

Note: Since scorers score holistically within the context of each individual student’s work, scorers must be careful when comparing different students’ work.

Q: 38e – What if the number “10” had not been written in the answer blank, and instead the answer blank were empty. In that case, is it OK to look at the chart?

A: In an item where the student is requested to “show your work”, the correct answer can appear anywhere on the page. However, the work/chart must be clear and complete, and it must be obvious which number in the work/chart is the correct answer. If there is any doubt, please fax the student response to the Helpline for assistance.

Q: In Item 39, is it OK if the 0 is missing at the beginning of the scale?

A: Yes, as long as there is a space for it. In other words, it is not OK to put a 1 or other number where the 0 should be.

Q: In Item 39, is it OK if the scale numbers the squares rather than the lines?

A: Yes, but in that case the first number should be 1, and the intervals of the scale still must be consistent.

Q: 39f – Is it OK that the bars are of varying widths?

A: Yes, as long as the data is graphed accurately, i.e. the height of the bars is correct.

Q: 48e – What if the student had not written any explanation? Would the response still receive a score of 2?

A: No, the word “added” in the explanation shows some understanding of a correct process, but the explanation is incomplete.

Q: Item 48, if the table is completely correct, but the explanation is blank, do those responses receive a score of 1?

A: Yes.

Q: Where do the student responses that appear in the training materials come from?

A: They are actual New York State student responses to the field tests that are given in New York State classrooms on a periodic basis.

Q: How are the scores determined for these responses?

A: After students have participated in the field test, the booklets are returned by the schools to NYSED or its contractor. At that point, representative responses for each item are selected and put in packets of approximately 20 responses. These packets are sent to a rangefinding committee meeting, which is comprised of New York State teachers. Attempts are made to have a representative group of teachers (geographical, urban/rural, etc), but all teachers must be certified in relevant subject/grade being examined. After an initial examination of the item (the teachers themselves solve the item, then discuss their responses and concerns/predictions of unique cases and most common student work), teachers independently score the student responses that have been selected as representative of student work. Each response is discussed independently after teachers share their scores. After discussion, a score is resolved for each response. Notes are taken by NYSED and/or its contractor, recording both the score decided upon and the rationale behind the decision.

These responses/scores are then used:

1. As anchors or models on training papers to score the remainder of the field test responses and
2. As training papers for the Scoring Guide and Practice Sets, which are sent out across the state for the scoring of the Operational Test.

For further information regarding assessment issues please consult the **Grade 4 and 8 School Administrator’s Manual** at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/testing/elintgen.html>.

Updates on mathematics education in NYS are posted on the Office of Curriculum and Instruction’s mathematics web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/mst/math.html>.

