



ASSESSMENT UPDATE

(2008-2009)

New Jersey's State Assessments

A Summary of Core Test Design and Administrative Features for Grades 3 – 8

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND PROGRAMS
OFFICE OF STATE ASSESSMENTS

December 19, 2008



New Jersey's State Assessments Goals

- To measure and promote student achievement of challenging state curriculum standards
- To provide accurate and meaningful information about student performance
- To meet state and federal accountability requirements



New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) Grades 3-8 2008-2009

What's New for 2009?

Starting in 2008-2009, the NJ ASK 3-4 assessments will reflect the new test design features implemented last year in grades 5 through 8. These include:

- More Language Arts Literacy (LAL) reading passages
- Shorter LAL reading passages
- Two LAL writing prompts in grades 3-8
- New types of LAL writing prompts
- Elimination of the LAL picture prompt
- Two days of mathematics testing in grades 3-7
- New math item type: the short constructed-response item
- Spanish versions of tests at grades 3-8, all content areas



NJ ASK 3-8

2009 Assessment Schedule

- **Grades 3 and 4**

May 4 – 8, 2009

Day 1 – Monday, May 4, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 2 – Tuesday, May 5, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 3 – Wednesday, May 6, 2009 – Mathematics

Day 4 – Thursday, May 7, 2009 – Mathematics

Day 5 – Friday, May 8, 2009 – Grade 4 Science

Make-Ups

May 11 – 15, 2009

(Flexible)

See DOE web site for full details:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/schedule.shtml>

Districts closed the week of April 27, 2009 have received approved alternate schedule.



NJ ASK 3-8

2009 Assessment Schedule

- **Grades 5 and 6**

May 11 – 14, 2009

Day 1 – Monday, May 11, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 2 – Tuesday, May 12, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 3 – Wednesday, May 13, 2009 – Mathematics

Day 4 – Thursday, May 14, 2009 – Mathematics

Make-Ups

May 18 – 21, 2009

(flexible)

See DOE web site for full details:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/schedule.shtml>

Districts closed the week of April 27, 2009 have received approved alternate schedule.



NJ ASK 3-8

2009 Assessment Schedule

- **Grades 7 and 8**

April 28 – May 1, 2009

Day 1 – Tuesday April 28, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 2 – Wednesday, April 29, 2009 – Language Arts Literacy

Day 3 – Thursday, April 30, 2009 - Mathematics

Day 4 – Friday, May 1, 2009 – Mathematics (Grade 7 only)
Science (Grade 8 only)

Make-Ups

May 4 - May 8, 2009

(flexible)

See DOE web site for full details:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/schedule.shtml>

Districts closed the week of April 27, 2009 have received approved alternate schedule.



NJ ASK 3-8 Language Arts Literacy Reading

- NJ ASK 3-5 operational tests will include three reading passages at each grade level;
- NJ ASK 6-8 will include four reading passages per grade level;
- Reading passages will include literature as well as informational or “everyday” reading selections from a wide array of sources and genres;
- Additional field-test passages and items will be included.



NJ ASK 3-8

Language Arts Literacy

Writing

- **LAL writing tasks will require students to respond in a variety of modes and forms (e.g., narrative, expository, persuasive, speculative) and for a variety of purposes, in keeping with standard 3.2 of the CCCS;**
- **These tasks may be labeled “Speculative” or “Explanatory” or “Persuasive”; some, like the poem or persuasive prompt, will be familiar; others will be newer types of tasks. All measure writing skills found in the CCCS and the standards clarification documents;**
- **These reflect the NAEP 2011 Writing Frameworks: <http://nagb.org/publications/frameworks.htm>;**
- **No picture prompt at any grade level in 2009.**

NJ ASK 3-5 Language Arts Literacy

Text types/Strand (additional field test content embedded throughout)	Reading Selections	MC (Number of Items)	OE (Number of Items)	Writing Tasks (Number of Items)	Time on Task(s) in Approximate Minutes	Total Points
Writing (Speculative or Explanatory)				2	30 minutes each	20 (10 points each)*
Reading Passages	3	18 (Grade 3) 27 (Grade 4) 31 (Grade 5)	3 (Grade 3) 3 (Grade 4) 3 (Grade 5)		30 minutes each	30** (Grade 3) 39** (Grade 4) 43** (Grade 5)
Total	3	18 (Grade 3) 27 (Grade 4) 31 (Grade 5)	3 (Grade 3) 3 (Grade 4) 3 (Grade 5)	2	150	50 (Grade 3) 59 (Grade 4) 63 (Grade 5)

*Grades 3 - 5 utilize a 5-point scoring rubric. **O/E items in the reading passages are scored on a 0 - 4 scoring rubric.

NJ ASK 6-8

Language Arts Literacy

Text types/Strand (additional field test content embedded throughout)	Reading Selections	MC (Number of Items)	OE (Number of Items)	Writing Tasks (Number of Items)	Time on Task(s) in Approximate Minutes	Total Points
Persuasive Prompt				1	45	12*
Explanatory Prompt				1	25	6*
Reading Passages	4	36	4		120	52**
Total	4	36	4	2	190	70

*Grades 6-8 utilize a 6-point rubric. **O/E items in the reading passages are scored on a 0 – 4 scoring rubric.

Speculative and Explanatory Writing Prompts (Grades 3-5)

- **The format of the speculative writing prompt has changed. The picture prompt has been replaced by a verbal speculative prompt presenting a brief scenario. Students will use that scenario as a springboard for writing a story, drawing on stories they have read as well as their own experiences to develop ideas for their stories.**
- **There are two formats for assessing explanatory/expository writing: one will introduce a topic in a brief verbal prompt and ask students to develop a composition about that topic; the second format begins with a poem that introduces a topic. That topic is elaborated further by a brief verbal prompt that students will use as a basis for writing their composition.**
- **The explanatory prompts are based on topics familiar to students and will ask them to describe, discuss, explain, or analyze some aspect of the topic. Students will be able to draw on their own experience and what they know to develop their ideas for their composition.**
- **For each writing task, students will have 30 minutes to plan and develop their story or composition.**

Speculative and Explanatory Writing Prompts (Grades 6-8)

- **The speculative prompt presents a brief scenario. Students will use that scenario as a springboard for writing a story, drawing on stories they have read as well as their own experiences to develop ideas for their own stories.**
- **Explanatory prompts will present students with an essay topic based on a quotation or adage, or based on a familiar topic. Each is a springboard for the student to write a composition. Explanatory writing is used to share knowledge and to convey ideas and experience.**
- **In responding to the topic or quotation presented, students will be asked to explain their point of view and to create an original work. Explanatory writing may be based on the writer's personal knowledge and experience or on information presented to the writer.**
- **Students are given 25 minutes (grades 6-8) to develop a composition based on the prompt.**



Explanatory Prompt: Sample (Grades 3-5)

Most people have a special activity or hobby that they enjoy. Some people collect things while others like to read or play games. What activity do you like to do?

Write a composition describing what you enjoy doing. Explain why that activity is special to you.




Explanatory Prompt: Sample (Grades 3-5)

(Students first listen to and read the Shel Silverstein poem "Moon-Catchin' Net")

Has there ever been something you wanted very much that you may or may not have been able to get? Write about what you wanted. Include the following:

- What did you want to have and why did you want this?
- If you got it, explain how it happened and why you were successful.
- If you didn't get it, explain why not.
- Explain how you might be successful in getting it in the future.



Speculative Prompt: Sample (Grades 3-5)

When the school bell rang, Katie and Pablo grabbed their books and raced out of the classroom. They had been looking forward to this afternoon all week long. Today they were going to go on an adventure.

Write a story about the adventure Katie and Pablo had after they left school.



Explanatory Prompt: Sample

(Grades 6-8)

Many students enjoy doing something special for their family and friends. For example, they may take care of their younger sibling or help to cook a favorite meal.

Write an essay that describes something special that you would like to do for your family or friends. Explain why this would be something special and how your family or friends might react. Be sure to include details and facts to support your explanation.



Explanatory Prompt: Sample

(Grades 6-8)

As part of a language arts class assignment, you have been asked to consider how the following quotation is related to you.

“If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn’t lead anywhere.”

--Anonymous

Write an essay explaining what this quotation means to you. Use details and examples in your essay.



Explanatory Prompt: Sample

(Grades 6-8)

Life can be full of pleasant surprises. Identify a time when you experienced a pleasant surprise.

Write an essay about a time when you experienced a pleasant surprise. Explain why this surprise was unexpected and how it affected your life in a positive way. Be sure to explain your choice by using details and examples.



Explanatory Prompt: Sample


(Grades 6-8)

Consider how the following quotation is related to you.

“It is not enough to have a good mind. The main thing is to use it well.”

René Descartes (1596 – 1650)

Write an essay explaining what this quotation means to you. Use details and examples in your essay.



NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics

2009 New Features

- Two days of testing for Grades 3-7
(One day for Grade 8)
- More items overall in grades 3-4
- Greater emphasis on number &
numerical operations in early grades
- Short constructed-response items (1
point each) in grades 3-4 as well as 5-8
- More score points overall in grades 3-4

NJ ASK 3-5

Mathematics

MC - multiple choice, 1 raw score point

SCR - short constructed-response, 1 raw score point

ECR – extended constructed-response, 3 raw score points

Calculator active except where noted

		Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Item Count by Type (does not include embedded field test content)	MC	35	35	35
	SCR	6 (non-calculator)	6 (non-calculator)	6 (non-calculator)
	ECR	3	3	3
Total raw score points possible		50	50	50
Approximate total testing time (including field test content)		114 min.	114 min.	114 min.

NJ ASK 6-8 Mathematics

MC - multiple choice, 1 raw score point

SCR - short constructed-response, 1 raw score point

ECR – extended constructed-response, 3 raw score points

Calculator active except where noted

		Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Item Count by Type (does not include embedded field test content)	MC	35	35	35
	SCR	6 (non-calculator)	8	8
	ECR	3	3	3
Total raw score points possible		50	52	52
Approximate total testing time (including field test content)		114 min.	118 min.	128 min.



NJ ASK 3-8

Mathematics: Points by Standard

Grades 3-4

- **Standard 1 – 20**
- **Standard 2 – 11**
- **Standard 3 – 11**
- **Standard 4 – 8**

Grade 5

- **Standard 1 – 14**
- **Standard 2 – 12**
- **Standard 3 – 12**
- **Standard 4 – 12**

Grades 6-8

- **12-13 points each**



NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items

Grade 3

Standard to be assessed 4.4.3 C.2 “Represent all possibilities for a simple counting situation in an organized way and draw conclusions from this representation.”

Item: A lunch menu has 3 beverage selections: water, juice, and milk. The menu also offers 2 sandwich selections: turkey and peanut butter. How many different meals of one beverage and one sandwich are possible? (answer: 6)

Without the distractor of “5” present, the item is a better assessor if a child can perform systematic listing to get the correct answer of “6”.



NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items

Grade 4

Standard to be assessed 4.1.4 B.4 “Use an efficient and accurate *paper-and-pencil* procedure for computation with whole numbers – addition of three digit numbers.”

**Item: Inez has a toy car collection. She has 55 red cars, 67 blue cars, and 123 orange cars. How many cars does she have in all?
(answer: 245)**

This standard cannot be assessed with a calculator active item because the standard requires the use of paper-and-pencil to perform the correct computation.




NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items

Grade 5

Standard to be assessed 4.1.5 B.3 “Use an efficient and accurate *paper-and pencil* procedure for division of a 3-digit number by a 2-digit number.”

Item: A gallon contains 128 ounces. Paul wants to divide 3 gallons of apple cider equally among the 2 dozen friends at his party. How many ounces of apple cider will each friend receive? (answer: 16)

This standard cannot be assessed with a calculator active item. Nor could this standard be assessed with a multiple-choice item as students could *multiply* the answer choices by 24 until they get 384.




NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items (cont'd)

Grade 6

Standard to be assessed 4.4.6 B.2 “Determine probability using intuitive, experimental, and theoretical methods (e.g., using model of picking items of different colors from a bag).”

Item: A bag contains 5 red marbles, 8 blue marbles, and 7 green marbles. Arturo reaches into the bag and removes one marble. What is the probability that marble is red? (correct answers: .25, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{5}{20}$, or 25%)

Note: SCR item allows students to express the probability in the form with which they are most familiar.




NJ ASK 3-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items (cont'd)

Grade 7

Standard to be assessed 4.3.7 D.2 "Solve simple linear equations informally and graphically. Multi-step, integer coefficients only (although answers may not be integers). Using *paper-and-pencil*, calculators, graphing calculators, spreadsheets, and other technology."

Item: What is the value of x , if $3x=x+7$. (Correct answer: 3.5)

Note: Correct solving procedures cannot be assessed using a multiple-choice format as the test taker can merely substitute the answer choices into the given equation until he/she creates a correct mathematical sentence.



NJ ASK 5-8 Mathematics Sample SCR Items (cont'd)

Grade 8

**Standard to be assessed 4.2.8B.1
"Understand and apply transformations.
Finding the image, given the pre-image and
vice-versa."**

**Item: Point P has the coordinates $(-1,2)$.
What are the coordinates of its image if it is
translated 4 units to the left and then
reflected over the x-axis? Correct answer:
 $(-5,-2)$.**

**Note: Without having answer choices from
which to choose, this item tests a higher
level of understanding and cognitive
development for this CPI.**

NJ ASK 4 and 8 Science 2009 Assessment

- Science assessment includes four parts –
- Each multiple choice item is worth one point; each open-ended item is worth up to three points.
- Each open-ended item is scored using an item-specific rubric
- Life Science – 40% of the test
- Physical Science – 30% of the test
- Earth Science – 30% of the test

		Grade 4	Grade 8
Item Count by Type (does not include field test content)	MC	33	48
	OE	2	2
Total raw score points possible		39	54
Approximate total testing time (includes field test content)		60 min.	120 min.



NJ ASK 3-8

2009 Spanish Versions for English Language Learners

- Spanish version of the NJ ASK 3-8 2008 will be available in all content areas – Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, and Science (Grade 4 and 8).
- Participation/Eligibility guidelines are currently on the DOE web site – review them carefully!
- Districts will decide who takes Spanish version, not NJDOE.
- Spanish versions will be ordered by districts through the usual Online Materials Survey process.



Stay tuned for more information about . . .

- Score reporting timelines
- Standard setting
- Professional development opportunities
- High school assessment initiatives



Suggested Web Sites

- **New Jersey Department of Education**
www.state.nj.us/education/
- **Office of State Assessments**
www.nj.gov/education/assessment/
- **Office of Academic Standards**
www.nj.gov/education/aps
- **New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards**
www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/
- **Measurement, Inc.**
www.measinc.com/njask
- **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Writing Frameworks**
<http://nagb.org/publications/frameworks.htm>

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