

North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) Science Assessments Grades 5 and 8
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated January 16, 2009

Note: This FAQ will be updated as the need to address additional questions is presented. Please send questions to Mike Jones at mike.jones@ncsu.edu or Nadine McBride at nmcbride@dpi.state.nc.us .

1. What types of items are included on the North Carolina EOG science assessments?

The EOG Science test consists of multiple choice items. Visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eog/sampleitems/science> to view sample items.

2. Are items weighted differently? Do items contribute more or less to a student's score based on their difficulty?

No. All scored items on the EOG science tests are weighted equally and therefore, contribute equally to a student's score.

3. Are there items on the tests that do not count toward a student's score?

Yes. The EOG science tests utilize embedding for field testing new items. On the EOG science test at grade 5 and at grade 8 there is one section of experimental items. The embedded items do not count toward a student's score.

4. How was the number of items by goal decided?

Early in the test development process, a committee was convened to recommend the goal emphasis for each grade level of the test. This committee included teachers, LEA curriculum specialists, NCDPI curriculum staff, test development staff, parents, and community stakeholders from across the state. The recommendations resulting from committee meetings were used to design the blueprint (goal breakdown) for the EOG science tests. The committee's recommendations for goal emphasis are grounded in (1) the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study*, (2) classroom instructional practices, and (3) the ability of measurement in a multiple-choice format.

5. Were results from the spring EOG science 2007 pilot administration released?

The EOG science results from the spring 2007 spring pilot administration were released at the school, district, and state levels. The data for the number participating in the tests and the percent proficient for each reporting level are available at:

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/accountability/testing/reports/grade5and8sciencepilot200607.pdf>.

6. Why was the number of items on the test administered in spring 2007 different from the number of items administered on future tests?

The spring 2007 pilot administration of the EOG science tests at grades 5 and 8 contained 92 items. Analyses based on the pilot administration of the EOG science tests showed that the tests far surpassed expectations on the technical properties, such as test reliability. Based on further analyses, it was determined that the tests could be shortened to 80 items and still retain an industry-accepted level of reliability and meet technical quality guidelines.

7. Why did the cut scores change between the spring 2007 and spring 2008 administration?

For the purpose of releasing districtwide results on the spring 2007 pilot test administration of the EOG science tests, interim cut scores were set using the contrasting groups methodology. However, best practices in the testing industry recommend utilizing data of operational administrations, where the test results “count” for the students, in the final standard setting process to reduce potential motivational effects. Therefore, the Department of Public Instruction held a formal standard setting meeting in the summer of 2008 for purposes of finalizing cut scores on the EOG science tests. For this standard setting meeting, the Bookmark, or Item Mapping, procedure was used and utilized a panel of teachers from across the state final test data and incorporated data from the students administered the final operational test. The results of this comprehensive study were used to set the final standards, or cut scores, on the EOG science tests. These cut scores will remain in place for the duration of the current version of the EOG science tests.

8. Why did the results from the spring 2008 administration take so long to get to schools?

The scores could not be released until the data on the new, shortened assessment was evaluated. This included an evaluation of the final cut scores, described above, which then needed to be adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). This time intensive process is required for quality assurance that the tests and scores are correct.

9. How will results be reported in the future? (goal summaries, individual student reports, etc.)

Results will be reported in much the same way that they have been reported in the past for the reading and mathematics EOG tests. Schools will receive Goal Summary Reports and students will receive Individual Student Reports (ISRs). Score reporting that will appear on the ISRs will provide more information than has been provided in the past for the EOG assessments. With the previous editions of the EOG tests, only total scores (scale score, percentile rank, and achievement level) for the tests were provided. In an effort to meet the demands of school personnel and parents, the NCDPI is exploring ways

to provide additional information at the student level regarding performance on all EOG assessments.

10. Will LEAs and schools still receive Goal Summary Reports?

A form of the Goal Summary Report depicting performance on the science EOG assessments will be provided by the NCDPI. Results will be reported by goal.

11. Will scores count for ABCs or AYP?

As approved by the State Board of Education on November 6, 2008 in policy HSP-C-020, the EOG science test will count in the performance composite of the ABCs for the 2008-09 school year. The EOG science tests will not be included in the Growth component of the ABCs or in calculating AYP.

The EOG science test scores at grades 5 and 8 did not count toward AYP calculations for the 2007-08 accountability year, nor did the scores count in the ABCs school accountability program for 2007-08.

The scores from the spring 2009 EOG science administration at grades 5 and 8 will be reported at the student, classroom, school, district, and state levels.

Additional information on the EOG Science tests is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eog/science/>.