

# NC Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) for English Language Arts



## Read to Achieve Test Grade 3

### North Carolina Assessment Specifications

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#### Purpose of the Test

- The North Carolina Read to Achieve Test is linked to the Read to Achieve Program and is aligned to the NC *Standard Course of Study* (NCSCS).
- The [General Statute §115C-83.7](#) states that the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) “shall require that a student be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for a third grade student, as demonstrated on a State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students” (i.e., end-of-grade [EOG] assessment). “The test may be readministered once prior to the end of the school year.” Students may, however, be exempt from mandatory retention in third grade for good cause by demonstrating reading proficiency appropriate for third-grade students on an alternative assessment approved by the SBE. The Read to Achieve Test is a valid and reliable standardized alternative assessment of reading comprehension that has been approved for good cause by the SBE.
- Students who score Achievement Level 3 or higher on the Read to Achieve Test demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third-grade students, which satisfies the requirements of the Read to Achieve legislation.

#### Curriculum Cycle

- June 2010: North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the English Language Arts (ELA) NCSCS
- 2010–2011: Item development for the Next Generation of Assessments, EOG Edition 4
- 2011–2012: Administration of stand-alone EOG field tests of Edition 4 assessments
- 2012–2013: Operational administration of EOG Edition 4 assessments
- 2013–2014: First administration of the Grade 3 Read to Achieve Test

#### Standards

The ELA NCSCS may be reviewed by visiting the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCPDI)/[K-12 English Language Arts Standard Course of Study](#) page. The ELA NCSCS is divided into 4 strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.

## Developing Assessments

- North Carolina educators were recruited and trained to write new items. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current standards was addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the instructional validity of the items.
- For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see State Board Policy [Multiple-Choice Test Development \(TEST-013\)](#) or reference the [Test Development Process: Item, Selection and Form Development](#).

## Prioritization of Standards

- Members of the NCDPI/Test Development Section invited North Carolina educators to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards for the EOG assessment indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for a multiple-choice item format. Subsequently, curriculum and test development staff from the NCDPI met to review the results from the teacher panels and to develop weight distributions across the strands. *Table 1* describe the range of total items that will appear on the test.

*Table 1. Weight Distribution for the Read to Achieve Test Grade 3*

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Range of Total Items</b>
Reading for Literature	35–40%
Reading for Informational Text	40–45%
Reading Foundation Skills	NA
Writing	NA
Speaking and Listening	NA
Language	20–25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

- Appendix A shows the number of operational items by standard. Note that future coverage of standards could vary within the constraints of the content category weights in *Table 1*.

## Cognitive Rigor and Item Complexity

Assessment items has been designed, developed, and classified to ensure that the cognitive rigor of the test form aligns to the cognitive complexity and demands of the NCSCS for English Language Arts. These items will require students to not only recall information, but also apply concepts and skills, make decisions, and explain or justify their thinking.

## Test Structure and Test Administration Time

- The Read to Achieve Test was built using the same pool of items developed for the EOG ELA/Reading Grade 3 Test. However, each original selection is divided into two separate texts for the Read to Achieve Test. The selections are divided so that one part does not depend upon the other and each section of the text has its own set of unique items. It was a solution for balancing the complexity and length of the new passages aligned to the standards and the reading load for grade 3 students. Psychometrically this “chunking” design allowed the NCDPI/Test Development Section to use the selections that were field tested as full-length with their accompanying items. Additional multiple-choice items were added to the assessment without adding additional selections. *For example: The standard full-length selection may have 6-8 accompanying items. A “chunked” selection used on the Read to Achieve Test may have 4-5 items.* This design ensures students are able to complete the assessment in the provided time.
- The Read to Achieve Test will contain 44 four-response-option multiple-choice items. The test will not contain field test items. All item responses are scored and included in the student’s score. Each item is worth point each.
- The Read to Achieve Test may be administered to students at grade 3 who failed to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for a third-grade student on the regular administration (i.e., first administration) of the Grade 3 EOG ELA/Reading Assessment.
- Students who have satisfied the requirements of the Read to Achieve law through one of the following options need not participate in the Read to Achieve Test:
  - The student scored Achievement Level 3 or higher on the Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) English Language Arts/Reading Test.
  - The student scored Achievement Level 3 or higher on the regular administration (i.e., first administration) of the Grade 3 EOG ELA/Reading Assessment.
  - The student passed the retest of the Grade 3 EOG ELA/Reading Assessment.
  - The student passed the locally determined alternative assessment. The local alternative assessment and proficient achievement level must be approved by the SBE (SBE policy [Read to Achieve KNEC-003](#)).
  - The student successfully completed a Grade 3 Student Reading Portfolio. Additional information about the Grade 3 Portfolio is available at the [NC Read to Achieve LiveBinders](#) table of contents page.

Note: Any student who has a Good Cause Exemption is not required to take the Read to Achieve Test; however, the student can be given the opportunity to test. Additional information about Good Cause Exemptions is available in the *NC Read to Achieve Guidebook* available at the [NC Read to Achieve LiveBinder](#) table of contents page.

- The NCDPI requires all students be allowed ample opportunity to complete the Read to Achieve Test. However, no administration may exceed the maximum testing time of three and one-half hours (except for those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*). The estimated test administration time of 160 minutes is the time that the NCDPI estimates it will take for nearly all students to complete the Read to Achieve Test.

### **Types of Items and Supplemental Materials**

- The test will consist of 44 four-response-option multiple-choice items.
- All students will be provided blank paper.

### **Test Cycle and Delivery Mode**

- There are three testing windows available for the administration of the Read to Achieve Test. It may be administered to eligible students (1) following the regular (i.e., first) administration of the Grade 3 EOG ELA/Reading Test during the last ten days of the school year, (2) at the end of reading camp on a day designated by the local education agency (LEA), and (3) before the November 1 midyear promotion of students placed in a 3/4 transitional class or a Grade 4 accelerated class.
- The Grade 3 Read to Achieve Test is designed for a paper-and-pencil administration. The assessment will be available for online administration effective with the 2017–18 administration. The online version will be administered through NCTest, the NCDPI’s online assessment platform.
- Schools must ensure every student participating in an online assessment for the North Carolina Testing Program completes the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated assessment at least once at the school before test day. The tutorial provides students the opportunity to practice the mechanics of navigating through the testing platform, to become familiar with the tools, and to respond to the sample items. Refer to the [North Carolina Test Coordinators’ Policies and Procedures Handbook](#) for additional information.

### **Additional Resources**

- Achievement level information is available at the NCDPI/[Achievement Level Information](#) page.
- Additional information and resources for districts and parents about the Read to Achieve program are available at the [NC Read to Achieve LiveBinder](#) page.

**Appendix A**  
**Read to Achieve Test Grade 3**  
**Number of Items by Standard**

The following table shows the number of items assessing each standard.

<u>ELA Grade 3 Standard</u>	<b>Number of Items by Standard</b>
RL.1 (Reading for Literature)	5
RL.2	3
RL.3	3
RL.4	5
L.4.a (Language)	7
L.5.a	3
RI.1 (Reading for Informational Text)	5
RI.2	3
RI.3	4
RI.4	1
RI.7	3
RI.8	2

### Read to Achieve Test Specification—Document History

Date	Comment	Revision Location	Revision Description
November 2014	Original document posted	N/A	N/A
February 2017	Additional information added	Purpose of the Test (p. 1)	This section was reorganized and additional information was added (last bullet).
		Curriculum Cycle (p. 1)	Additional information was added.
	Section added	Standards (p. 1)	This section was added.
	Additional information added	Developing Assessments (p. 2)	Additional information was added.
		Cognitive Rigor and Item Complexity (p. 2)	This section was reorganized and information about supplemental materials was added including links to review the test development process.
		Test Structure and Test Administration Time (p. 3)	This section was reorganized. Links for SBE policy and the NC Read to Achieve LiveBinder were added.
		Types of Items and Supplemental Materials	This section was reorganized. Additional information was added. <i>All students will be provided with blank paper.</i>
		Test Cycle and Delivery Mode (p. 4)	Information about the test cycle was added. Also added was information about the online administration option available for the 2017–18 administration and the Online Assessment Tutorial.
	Section added	Additional Resources (p. 4)	This section was added.
	Revision	Multiple pages	Hyperlinks were updated and formatting was adjusted as needed.