

## FOREWORD

The purpose of the West Virginia General Summative Assessment is to provide information about student performance. The West Virginia General Summative Assessment identifies and measures student strengths and weaknesses in English language arts (ELA), mathematics and science based on the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs).

The implementation of the CSOs was led by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), Division of Teaching and Learning which includes: Office of Secondary Learning, Office of Assessment and Research, Office of Special Programs, and Office of Early Learning along with Higher Education and educators from around the state.

This brochure has been developed by the Office of Assessment and Research to assist parents and guardians in understanding the components of the West Virginia General Summative Assessment.

Sincerely,



Michael Martirano, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Schools

## What is General Summative Assessment?

The West Virginia General Summative Assessment is an online assessment containing items aligned to the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). The results provide information about a student's academic strengths and areas that need improvement.

An annual report of a student's performance on the general summative assessment is sent to parent(s)/guardian(s). Teachers and principals use assessment results to develop instructional plans that support and improve student performance.

## Descriptions of the Assessments

This year, the online assessment will remain an untimed test and will be administered in ELA, math and science. The ELA and math tests are each composed of a Computer Adaptive Test and a Performance Task, while the science test is composed of two online fixed form sessions similar to last year.

A Computer Adaptive Test is based on student responses. The computer program adjusts the difficulty of questions throughout the assessment. For example, a student who answers a question correctly will receive a more challenging item, while an incorrect answer generates an easier question.

A Performance Task is an extended activity used to better measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with selected- or constructed-response items.

A Fixed Form Test is a test in which all students answer the same questions.

## Mathematics Test

Grades 3 – 11 Participate

Computer Adaptive Test

- Multiple-Choice Items
- Computer-Enabled Items

Performance Task

- Classroom Activity
- Online Performance Task

Grade level appropriate objectives aligned to the Mathematical Standards will be assessed:

Grades 3 – 5

- Numbers and Operations in Base Ten
- Numbers and Operations – Fractions
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Geometry
- Measurement and Data

Grades 6 – 8

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships (6 & 7)
- The Number System
- Expressions and Equations
- Functions (8)
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

High School

- Numbers and Quantity
- Algebra
- Functions
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

## English Language Arts (ELA) Test

Grades 3-11 Participate

Computer Adaptive Test

- Multiple-Choice Items
- Computer-Enabled Items

Performance Task

- Classroom Activity
- Online Performance Task

The ELA Performance Task consists of two parts. During Part 1, students are presented research sources that they use to answer an initial set of questions. During Part 2 of the ELA Performance Task, students are presented the same sources as in Part 1 and are given a writing prompt. Students must use the sources, along with their notes from Part 1, to write a fully developed essay using evidence from the sources.

Grade-level appropriate objectives aligned to the ELA Standards will be assessed:

Grades 3-11

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Research

## Science Test

Grades 4, 6 & 10 Participate

Fixed Form Test

- 43-46 Multiple-Choice Items
- 2 Equation/Numeric Items

Grade-level appropriate objectives aligned to the Science Standards will be assessed:

Grades 4 & 6

- Nature of Science
- Content of Science
- Application of Science

Grade 10

- Nature and Application of Science
- Content of Science

## College/Career Readiness

The General Summative Assessment grade 11 scores in mathematics and English language arts provide evidence of college content-readiness; that is, students have the content knowledge to be successful in entry-level, transferable, credit-bearing college courses. To help determine if grade 11 students are demonstrating college content readiness in time to make course corrections for the senior year, these students took the COMPASS Mathematics test and the COMPASS Writing Skills tests. The results were used to place grade 12 students into Transition Mathematics for Seniors and/or Transition English Language Arts for Seniors or other approved courses.

## Test Results

In West Virginia, the West Virginia General Summative Assessment is one indicator of how well students master the CSOs in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, and science.

The following information will appear on the individual reports for your student:

**Achievement Levels** describe the level of understanding students have of the content curriculum.

**Overall Performance** defines the skills and knowledge levels that are demonstrated by student at each achievement level.

**Scale Scores** are derived scores that are used to compare individual student scores to the range of scores within a content area and determine progress from one grade to the next.

**Comparison Scores** shows the average scale score for the student's school and district.

## P.A.R.E.N.T.S.

- PARTICIPATE** Participate in learning activities. Studies show that parental participation and influence have long-term positive effects on student performance.
- ASSIST** Assist the teacher by stressing the importance of setting and achieving educational goals.
- REASSURE** Reassure students that the assessment is used to determine strengths and weaknesses, and aids the teacher in planning appropriate instruction.
- ENCOURAGE** Encourage consistently working to one's full potential.
- NURTURE** Nurture by promoting a healthy lifestyle of good nutrition, a balance of rest and relaxation and a positive attitude for setting educational goals.
- TEACH** Teach that best performance is always important. Information from both formal and informal assessments are used to improve learning and prepare for the future.
- SUPPORT** Support by staying involved, encouraging good study habits, and reading activities, checking homework and discussing school-related issues.



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Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Schools

# West Virginia General Summative Assessments

Grades 3-11  
Mathematics &  
English Language Arts

Grades 4, 6 & 10  
Science

## Parent Brochure 2015

Office of Assessment and Research

Division of Teaching and Learning  
West Virginia Department of Education