Parent Guide to Being TNReady

Preparing for the 2016-17 School Year

TN Department of Education

How will this guidebook help me prepare my family for the school year?

In the pages that follow, you will find details about when your student will take TNReady, how long they will spend testing, what type of questions will be on the test, and more. Our goal is to help you prepare your student to learn and succeed everyday . If you have additional questions after reading this guide, please talk with your student's teacher or visit **TNReady.gov**.

WHY DO WE HAVE STATE TESTS?

In every Tennessee classroom, teaching and learning looks different based on the textbooks, curricula, and lessons that school and teacher have chosen. State leaders have a responsibility to make sure these varied learning opportunities are preparing all students for college, career, and life.

Our state tests serve multiple objectives:

- Provide feedback about students' academic progress and how it aligns with grade-level expectations
- Give parents and teachers a big-picture perspective about how a student is progressing compared to peers across the district and state, including a student's strengths and growth opportunities
- Build confidence and transparency about students' readiness for postsecondary and the workforce among Tennessee colleges, universities, and employers
- Help educators strengthen instruction and reflect on their practice
- Hold us accountable to serving all students fairly
- Highlight schools where students are excelling, so we can learn from those who are doing well

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Commissioner 1

Frequently Asked Questions 2

What is TNReady? 2

How much time will my child spend testing? 5

What types of questions will be on TNReady? 7

What practice tools are available to help my student prepare? 9

Will my student take TNReady online? 10

How can I help my high school student get ready to possibly take the test online? 10

When will my student take TNReady? 11

What testing supports will be available to help my student understand and access the material on the test? 11

When will I know how my student scored on TNReady? 12

How will TNReady scores compare to my student's previous test scores? 12

How are TNReady scores determined? 14

How will new standards impact TNReady? 15

Five Things to Know about TNReady 16

Parent Checklist 17

Glossary of Key Terms 18

Resources 19

Letter from the Commissioner

Dear parents,

In my conversations **with more than 10,000 teachers, students, and parents** since I took office in 2015, testing has been the issue about which I've received the most feedback—and understandably so. As a mom, an educator, and a policy maker, I understand both the benefits of assessment along with the need to ensure our focus remains on strong teaching and learning in the classroom. It is through all of those perspectives that I am working to improve how we approach assessment in Tennessee.

At the state level, we look to see how students, schools, and districts are performing through the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), which includes TNReady assessments for math, English language arts, social studies, and science. As Tennessee's teachers work to equip all students with the knowledge and skills they need, we have to ensure that we can identify any major gaps in students' learning and find variations in growth among different schools—both so we can strengthen support in places that need it and learn from those who are excelling. **TNReady provides teachers and parents a unique feedback loop and big-picture perspective to better understand how students are progressing and how they can support their academic development, but it is important to remember that results from annual assessments are just one snapshot.** They should never dominate the conversation.

We learned a lot from our experience with TNReady in the 2015-16 school year. As commissioner, I have committed to both creating better tests—so the results are helpful—while also looking for opportunities to improve test structure, time, delivery, and scheduling. We are taking immediate action on this work, as you will see in this guide. Overall, our state test is about **30 percent shorter** than it was in 2015-16, which is about three-and-a-half hours less for the average third grader. We are also **phasing into online assessments,** so this year, students in grades 3-8 will take TNReady on paper, with districts having the option to test their high schoolers online if they and our test vendor demonstrate readiness. Finally, we are working on making results more actionable for parents and teachers, including taking steps over the next couple of years to provide better information faster than before.

Our goals are the same: **we want all our students to develop real-world skills, including critical thinking, writing, and problem solving**. We want to minimize the burden of testing in our schools. We want to provide parents, teachers, and students with helpful information. And, we want to move forward with each of you as partners in this work- so ultimately our schools can foster positive learning environments that focus on whole child development. Each of our children deserves to be ready for the next step in their educational journey, and TNReady is one way we make sure they are prepared for the better opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for all that you do every day for our students,

Candice McQueen

Dr. Candice McQueen
Commissioner of Education

Frequently Asked Questions

What is TNReady?

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) has been the state's testing program since 1988, and it includes TNReady, the state's assessments in math, English language arts, social studies, and science. As the state has transitioned to higher academic standards over the past several years, and will continue to do so, our tests have become better aligned to what educators are teaching in their classrooms every day.

TNReady is designed to assess true student understanding, not just basic memorization and test-taking skills. TNReady measures students' **understanding** of our current state standards in English language arts, math, social studies, and science, but it is more than just a state test. It is a way to assess what our students know and what we can do to help them succeed in the future. Just as we take our children to the doctor for their annual check-ups, TNReady offers parents, students, and teachers with an academic check-up each year to ensure all students are moving forward, on track to be successful in the next step of their academic journey.

Why TNReady?

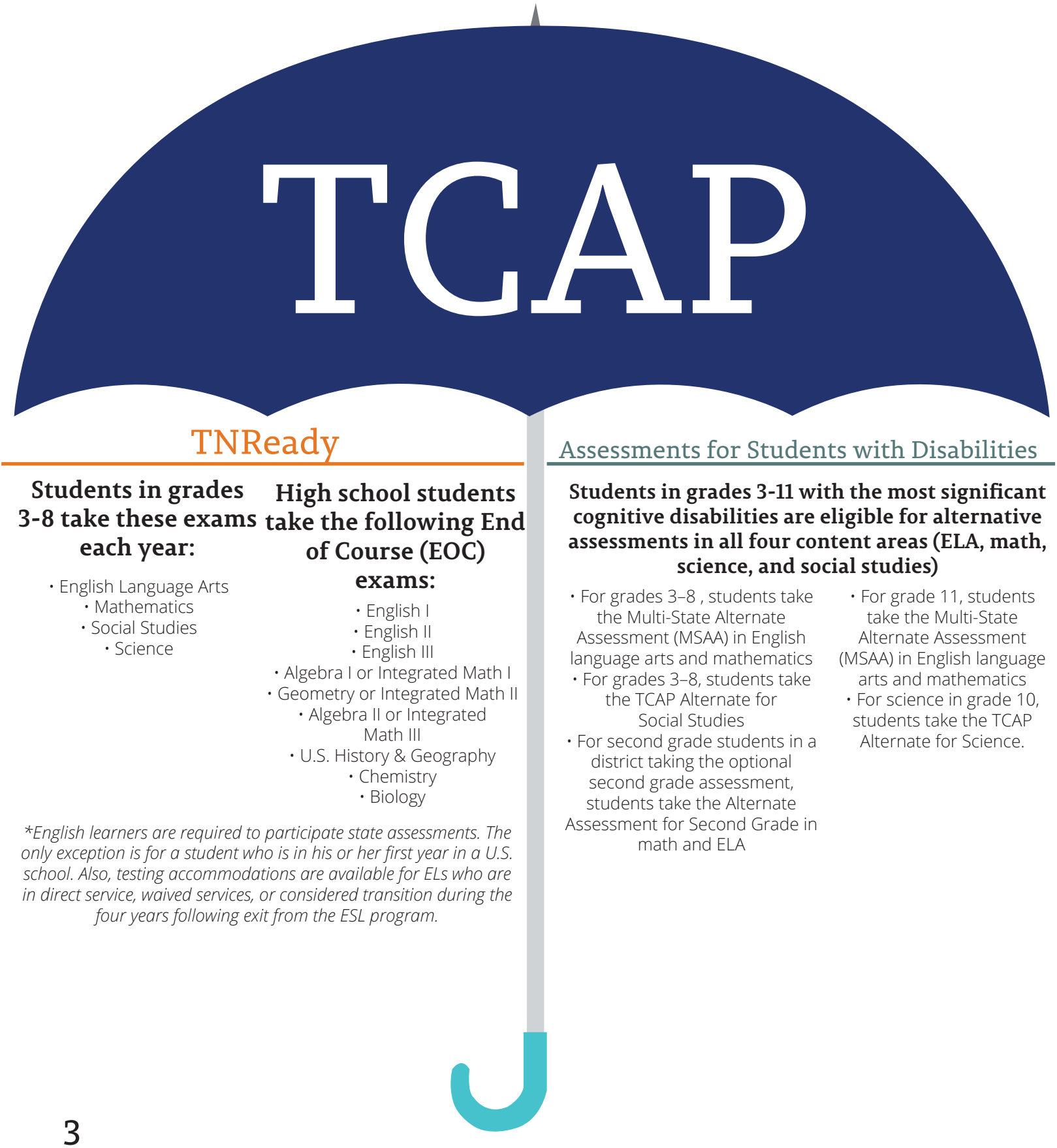
Develops skills that are in line with college and work expectations

Allows students to show what they know in new ways

Provides better information for teachers and parents

Promotes real-world problem solving

What tests are included underneath the TCAP testing umbrella?



TNReady

Students in grades 3-8 take these exams each year:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science

High school students take the following End of Course (EOC) exams:

- English I
- English II
- English III
- Algebra I or Integrated Math I
- Geometry or Integrated Math II
- Algebra II or Integrated Math III
- U.S. History & Geography
- Chemistry
- Biology

**English learners are required to participate state assessments. The only exception is for a student who is in his or her first year in a U.S. school. Also, testing accommodations are available for ELs who are in direct service, waived services, or considered transition during the four years following exit from the ESL program.*

Assessments for Students with Disabilities

Students in grades 3-11 with the most significant cognitive disabilities are eligible for alternative assessments in all four content areas (ELA, math, science, and social studies)

- For grades 3–8 , students take the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts and mathematics
- For grades 3–8, students take the TCAP Alternate for Social Studies
- For second grade students in a district taking the optional second grade assessment, students take the Alternate Assessment for Second Grade in math and ELA
- For grade 11, students take the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts and mathematics
- For science in grade 10, students take the TCAP Alternate for Science.

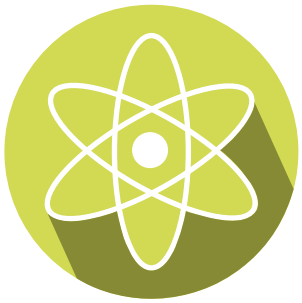
Overall, **students will spend less time on state tests this year**. Additionally, testing logistics and scheduling will improve. Instead of a Part I and Part II, **the test will be given in a single administration window at the end of the school year**. To minimize the impact on the overall school environment, this window will be **one week shorter** than last year's Part II window. And, instead of longer subtests, **students will take the test in a series of shorter subparts**, which are often small enough- sometimes as short as 30 minutes– to fit into the normal school day. While the department will continuously seek to improve testing in Tennessee, these changes move us forward.

TESTED SUBJECTS FOR THE 2016-17 YEAR

The TNReady math assessment will ask students to solve some multi-step problems and looks for their problem solving skills. It will have both calculator-permitted and calculator-prohibited sections.

The TNReady English language arts assessment still includes writing, as it has for the past few years, but it has been broken into shorter, more manageable subparts to help address concerns about students' stamina. This assessment will ask students to support their answers with evidence from passages they will read on the test.

This year's social studies TNReady assessment is a field test in grades 3–8 ––meaning it will not be scored for a grade or factor into educator's evaluations, but it will help the department develop future assessments. It will include multiple types of questions. U.S. history & geography is an operational End of Course assessment- so results will be available for parents, students, and educators.



The TNReady science assessment in grades 3–11 will be very similar to last year's. While it will be a multiple choice test, the department plans to redesign the test in future years to better capture what students know and are able to do.

How much time will my child spend testing?

Generally, students will spend about 30% less time on state tests than in 2015-16. In grades 3-8, TNReady has been shortened by 200-210 minutes, depending on the grade. Most End of Course assessments have been reduced by 40-120 minutes; the only End of Course tests that are unchanged are biology and chemistry, which are already the shortest test. The chart on the following page shows how much time students will spend taking their state assessment this year and how much time has been reduced from the 2015-16 test.

While districts and schools may add additional tests onto what is required by the state, the total amount of time a student spends on state tests is less than 1% of the school year.

2016-17 TESTING TIME CHART

End of Course Exam (EOC)		
English I/II/III	Subpart 1: 85 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 50 minutes Subpart 3: 50 minutes Subpart 4: 45 minutes Total: 230 minutes	120 minute reduction
Integrated Math I/II/III	Subpart 1: 35 minutes (no calculator) Subpart 2: 55 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 145 minutes	65 minute reduction
Algebra I/II	Subpart 1: 35 minutes (no calculator) Subpart 2: 55 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 145 minutes	65 minute reduction
Geometry	Subpart 1: 35 minutes (no calculator) Subpart 2: 55 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 145 minutes	65 minute reduction
Biology I	Subpart 1: 75 minutes Total: 75 minutes	no change
Chemistry I	Subpart 1: 75 minutes Total: 75 minutes	no change
U.S. History & Geography	Subpart 1: 50 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 45 minutes Subpart 3: 45 minutes Total: 140 minutes	40 minute reduction

2016-17 TESTING TIME CHART

	ELA	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Grade 2	*OPTIONAL; DISTRICT CHOICE* Subpart 1: 40 minutes Subpart 2: 40 minutes Subpart 3: 42 minutes Subpart 4: 40 minutes Total: 195 minutes	*OPTIONAL; DISTRICT CHOICE* Subpart 1: 40 minutes Subpart 2: 42 minutes Total: 82 minutes		
Grade 3	Subpart 1: 75 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 35 minutes Subpart 3: 35 minutes Subpart 4: 50 minutes Total: 195 minutes 95 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 45 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 40 minutes (calculator) Total: 115 minutes 20 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 53 minutes Subpart 2: 51 minutes Total: 104 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes
Grade 4	Subpart 1: 75 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 35 minutes Subpart 3: 35 minutes Subpart 4: 50 minutes Total: 195 minutes 95 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 45 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 40 minutes (calculator) Total: 115 minutes 20 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 48 minutes Subpart 2: 47 minutes Total: 95 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes
Grade 5	Subpart 1: 75 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 35 minutes Subpart 3: 35 minutes Subpart 4: 50 minutes Total: 195 minutes 95 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 45 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 40 minutes (calculator) Total: 115 minutes 20 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 48 minutes Subpart 2: 47 minutes Total: 95 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes
Grade 6	Subpart 1: 85 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 50 minutes Subpart 3: 50 minutes Subpart 4: 45 minutes Total: 230 minutes 90 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 40 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 125 minutes 25 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 48 minutes Subpart 2: 47 minutes Total: 95 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes
Grade 7	Subpart 1: 85 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 50 minutes Subpart 3: 50 minutes Subpart 4: 45 minutes Total: 230 minutes 90 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 40 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 125 minutes 25 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 48 minutes Subpart 2: 47 minutes Total: 95 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes
Grade 8	Subpart 1: 85 minutes (writing) Subpart 2: 50 minutes Subpart 3: 50 minutes Subpart 4: 45 minutes Total: 230 minutes 90 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 40 minutes (no calc) Subpart 2: 30 minutes (calculator) Subpart 3: 55 minutes (calculator) Total: 125 minutes 25 minute reduction	Subpart 1: 48 minutes Subpart 2: 47 minutes Total: 95 minutes no change	Field test: 50 minutes Total: 50 minutes

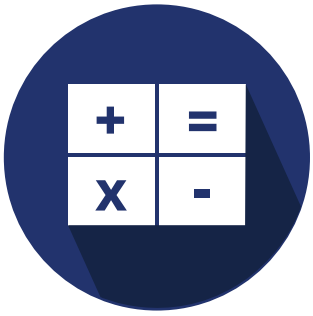
What types of questions will be on TNReady?

TNReady tests a deeper level of knowledge than previous tests. For example, in English language arts students will read from a passage and provide some written responses to support their answers. In math, students will solve multi-step problems, many without using a calculator, to show what they know. TNReady gives students a variety of ways to show what they know and can do.

TNReady gives students a variety of ways to show what they know and can do.

We know that teachers use a combination of things like writing assignments, projects, and multiple-choice questions to measure student learning throughout the year. In a similar way, TNReady will give students a variety of ways to show what they know. On the following pages you will see a few sample questions from TNReady in a variety of subjects and grades. **The correct answers are indicated in orange.**

Mathematics Sample Questions:



(Algebra II)

1. Makenna purchases a car for $27,500. The value of the car will depreciate each year. After five years, the value of the car is $14,186. What is the approximate yearly depreciation rate of the car, to the nearest tenth of a percent?

12.4%

(Grade 6)

2. Evaluate 39 - (11 + 5^3 ÷ 5)

3

English Language Arts Sample Questions:

(Grade 4)

3. The creator of Mickey Mouse was born December 5, 1901, in Chicago. His name was Walter Disney. He began drawing pictures when he **were** a young boy, His first drawing was of his neighbor's horse, Rupert. *Replace **were** with*:

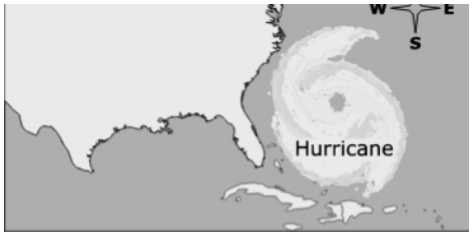
A. were
B. was
C. am
D. is

English Language Arts Sample Questions (continued):

4. Select the **two** sentences from the passage that **best** represent the idea of the New Year as "a time for fresh beginnings."

A. "This image ... was important to cross through the 'right way' to produce favorable outcomes."
B. "A resolution is simply an agreement with yourself to change something about your life for the better."
C. "A new year is like a clean sheet of paper to draw blueprints for a fresh vision."
D. "However, you should not wear black, as that will bring you sorrow in the New Year."
E. "There is also an old story that exactly at midnight animals are able to speak for one minute...."

Social Studies Sample Questions:

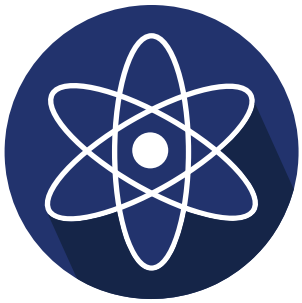


(Grade 3)
5. How does a person know that the hurricane is in the Atlantic Ocean?

A. It is west of South America
B. It is east of North America
C. It is north of Australia
D. It is south of Africa

(U.S. History & Geography)
6. Which person would most likely have been a "new" immigrant during the late 19th and early 20th centuries?

A. A farmer from Sweden
B. A Catholic from Italy
C. A merchant from England
D. A protestant from Germany



(Grade 8)

7. A student throws a toy airplane upward. The airplane travels for a short distance and then falls to the ground. What pulls the airplane to the ground?

A. air pressure
B. magnetic force
C. friction
D. gravity

(Chemistry)

8. When a student performs an acid-base test on a household cleaner, red litmus paper turns blue. Based on the results, which statement is a valid conclusion?

A. It is an acid
B. It is a base
C. It is a neutral
D. It is a salt

What practice tools are available to help my student prepare for TNReady?

While the best preparation for TNReady will be strong instruction every day in the classroom, we know that parents and teachers need additional tools to prepare students for success. Questions on TNReady this year will be in a similar format to the questions students were preparing for last school year and will be aligned to the standards students are learning in class every day.

The best preparation for TNReady is strong instruction every day.

Parent Access to Practice Questions

TNReady practice questions will be available to parents online in the coming months. Continue to check TNReady.gov for more information.

Practice Test

Teachers have access to a practice tests, which provides example questions for every standard that will be assessed on the test through an internal system called EdTools. Practice tests are available in all tested grades and subjects. Teachers can use the practice test in class to help your student be prepared for TNReady.

Will my student take TNReady online?

Tennessee will phase in online administration over multiple years to ensure both state and local technology readiness. For the upcoming school year, **the state assessment for grades 3–8 will be administered via paper and pencil**.

The department will work closely with Questar, our testing vendor for TNReady, to provide an online option for high school End of Course exams for math, English, and U.S. history & geography for the spring testing window if the testing platform demonstrates early proof of successful online administration in schools. However, all high schools on block schedule will administer their fall End of Course exams via paper and pencil.

Even if schools demonstrate readiness for online spring administration, districts will still have the option to choose paper and pencil assessments for their high school students this year.

Biology and chemistry exams will be administered via paper and pencil. For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, MSAA has online and paper options, and the TCAP Alternative assessment is paper and pencil only.

How can I help my high school student get ready to possibly take the test online?

In higher education, nearly every job, and our modern society, we use the internet to communicate and accomplish our work. It is the way of our world. We must prepare students for their future, which requires comfort with technology. With that in mind, high schools will have an option to administer their spring End of Course exams online.

> We must prepare students for their futures, which requires comfort with technology.

To prepare your student, encourage them to begin using digital devices every day in low-stress situations. Don't wait until testing begins to help your student learn how to use a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. Similar to last year, a student portal and practice test will be available for practice later this fall.

We know that some Tennessee students do not have access to a computer or the internet at home. If internet access is a challenge, we encourage you to talk with your school principal about options for allowing your student to use a computer after school hours. You could also visit a computer lab at the public library, community center, and/or place of worship.

When will my student take TNReady?

All TNReady assessments will be administered toward the end of the year (or at the end of the semester for high school students on block schedule). All assessments will now be taken in one administration window.

TNReady will be administered **between April 17 and May 5**, and districts have scheduling flexibility to minimize the impact of testing on school activities. The first subpart of the English language arts assessment, which includes the writing prompt, will be administered during the first week of the three-week window. High schools on a fall block schedule will take their assessment between November 28 and December 16. Fall block students will take the test via paper and pencil.

The assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, MSAA (math and ELA) and TCAP Alternative (science and social studies), will take place over a two-month window in the spring.

What testing supports will be available to help my student understand and access the material on the test?

As in the past, the full range of accommodations will be available to make the test accessible for all students to participate. IEP teams will be provided guidance on how to select appropriate accommodations for this, which will be similar to last year.

For parents of students with disabilities, please visit TNReady.gov for a supplemental guide on accommodations and preparing your student for TNReady.

When will I know how my student scored on TNReady?

Results in the first year of TNReady will be delayed while Tennessee teachers and the department complete the scoring process during the summer, so we expect to have official scores for students in grades 3-8 in the fall of 2017. For End of Course exams, the department is planning for results to be available for families and schools in summer 2017. During future test administrations, the department will publish results for grades 3-8 and high school on a similar timeline.

Scores and raw data from the End of Course 2015-16 state tests will be available later this fall, as the department outlined last year. Students who took End of Course exams in English language arts, math, and U.S. history & geography will receive full, newly redesigned score reports, which will provide better information to parents and students. Results from grades 3-8 will be more limited raw data—for example, the department will be able to share how many questions a student answered correctly, but not what that score means in terms of a student's proficiency and growth level.

How will TNReady scores compare to my child's previous test scores?

As students and teachers rise to new expectations with the new tests, we predict that first-year test scores for students in grades 3-8 will decline when compared to previous TCAP assessments. We expect first year results from TNReady to set a new baseline to measure rapid progress in the years to come. As a parent, you can use the information from the test to help support your child at home and begin a discussion with your child's teacher to identify what, if any, additional support is necessary to ensure they move from grade to grade with the academic knowledge and skills necessary for success in the next school year and beyond high school.

As a parent, you can use the information from the test to help support your child at home.

New parent reports will show more and better information than ever before, and will be given to parents once the scoring process has been completed. For students who took End of Course exams during the 2015-16 school year, their parents and teachers will receive these new reports later this fall. Each subject will be broken down into categories of skills to show where a student is doing well or needs some extra help and how their results compare to that of their peers in their school, district, and in Tennessee. On the next page, you will see a sample of the newly designed parent reports for TNReady.

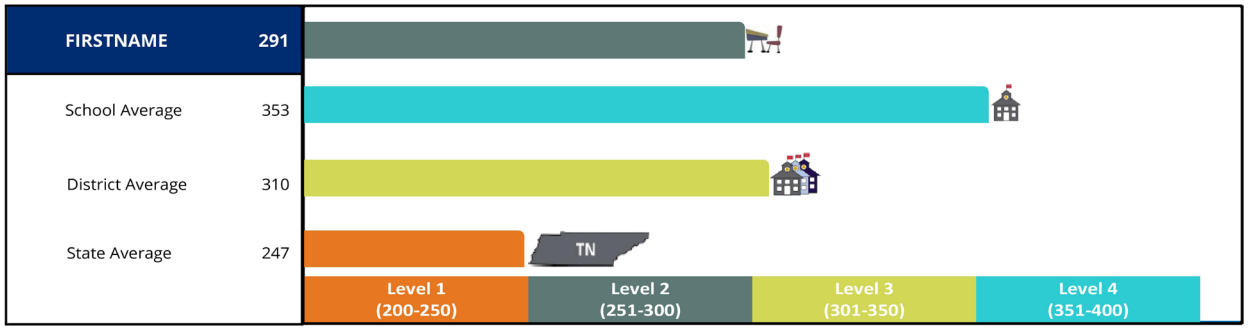
TN Department of Education

Individual Student Report

FIRSTNAME M LASTNAME

Grade 9 | Teacher: LASTNAME | CITY HIGH SCHOOL
USID: 12345XXXX | Test Date: 2015-2016 | CITY SCHOOLS SYSTEM

SUBJECT	PERFORMANCE LEVEL	OVERALL
ENGLISH I	LEVEL 2	291



FIRSTNAME scores within the Level 2 range on the English I End of Course (EOC) exam. This student may need assistance to be on-track for postsecondary and career readiness.

Generally, students who score at this level demonstrate they have a partial understanding of the literacy concepts and analytical skills expected of high school students.

Level 4	Mastered	Performance at this level demonstrates an extensive understanding and expert ability to apply the English I EOC knowledge and skills as defined by the Tennessee academic standards.
Level 3	On-track	Performance at this level demonstrates a comprehensive understanding and thorough ability to apply the English I EOC knowledge and skills as defined by the Tennessee academic standards.
Level 2	Approaching	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student is approaching understanding and has a partial ability to apply the English I EOC knowledge and skills as defined by the Tennessee academic standards.
Level 1	Below	Performance at this level demonstrates a minimal understanding and nominal ability to apply the English I EOC knowledge and skills as defined by the Tennessee academic standards.

Performance Level Comparison

Percent of students scoring at each level	School	District	State
Level 4	6%	10%	9%
Level 3	24%	32%	27%
Level 2	45%	40%	44%
Level 1	24%	18%	20%

mmddyy-Z9999999-99999-9999-9999999

FRONT

BACK

The **Sub-score Expectations** indicate how a student performed in each **Sub-score Category** *compared to other students in Tennessee*. Sub-scores are used to identify potential **Strengths** and **Areas for Improvement.** This is different from the overall **Performance Level,** which measures how a student performed *compared to the criterion standard set by teachers and other educators in Tennessee.*

ENGLISH I

Sub-score Category	*Students meet expectations by...*	Sub-score Expectation	Points Possible	Student Points Earned
Reading: Literature	reading and analyzing fiction, drama and poetry for grades 9-10.	Below ⬇	0–8	3
Reading: Informational Text	reading and analyzing non-fiction for grades 9-10.	Meets ⬌	0–8	4
Reading: Vocabulary	using context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases in text for grades 9-10.	Exceeds ⬆	0–8	7
Writing: Focus & Organization	effectively organizing writing for clarity.	Exceeds ⬆	0–8	2
Writing: Development	using relevant evidence from the text to thoroughly develop a topic.	Below ⬇	0–8	5
Writing: Language & Style	using precise language and literary techniques.	Meets ⬌	0–8	4
Conventions	correctly using the rules of standard English.	Exceeds ⬆	0–8	7
		FIRSTNAME'S Total ENGLISH I EOC Raw Score = 32/56	**0-56**	**32**

LEGEND

⬇ **Below Expectations:** scored less than students who met overall grade level expectations.

⬌ **Meets Expectations:** scored as well as students who met overall grade level expectations.

⬆ **Exceeds Expectations:** scored better than students who met overall grade level expectations.

STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	NEXT STEPS
FIRSTNAME may have a strong understanding in these areas:	**FIRSTNAME may need to improve skills in these areas:**	**Consider the following to increase FIRSTNAME's performance:**
• Using context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases	• Determining the theme or central idea of grade-level literary text	• Read and discuss complex text in the 9-10 grade band with others
• Including an effective introduction and conclusion in writing	• Writing a response appropriate to purpose and audience	• Focus on determining the meaning of unknown words using context
• Using effective organizational techniques when writing	• Using details from a text to demonstrate understanding	• Practice supporting ideas with evidence from both literary and informational text
• Editing text for correct grammar and conventions	• *Room for one more line*	• Reference the Parent Guide for more information
• *Room for one more line*	• *Room for one more line*	• *Room for one more line*
• *Room for one more line*	• *Room for one more line*	• *Room for one more line*

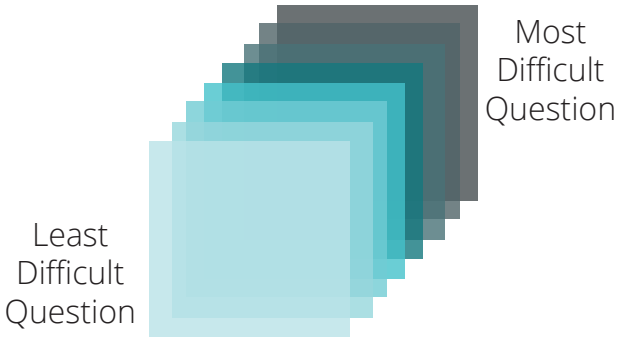
The **Family Report Guide** at **www.TNReady.gov** provides more detailed information to help you interpret this report. If you have further questions, please contact FIRSTNAME's teacher or principal in City Schools District at (800) 123-4567.

TN Department of Education

How are TNReady Scores Determined?

The Scoring Process

What is the standards setting?



Actual student performance determines where the questions fall from least difficult to most difficult; that's why you can only do standards setting after students take the test.

Based on broad definitions of what students should know and be able to do at each level, Tennessee educators look at each question, determining the cut off between each level of proficiency. This process is called standards setting.

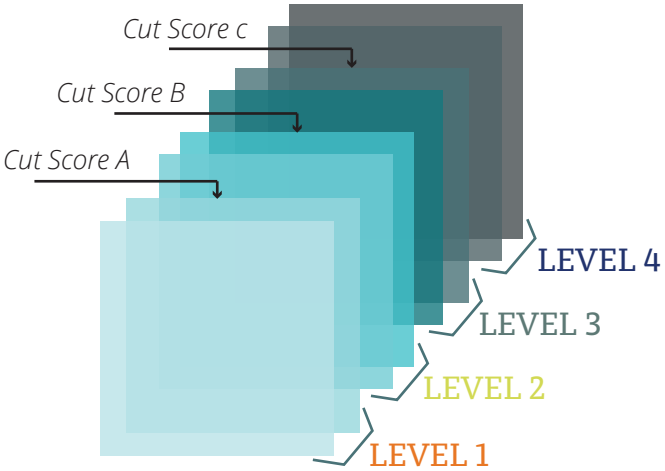
What is a cut score?

The point where two levels meet is called the cut score. Three cut scores determine four levels of performance.

What is a performance level?

The cut score is the minimum score a student must earn to be considered at a certain performance level.

Performance level is not the same as proficiency; rather, performance levels are used to determine proficiency.



How will new standards impact TNReady?

Tennessee teachers and the broader education community have been revising our state academic standards in math and English language arts over the past couple of years. The new standards will be fully implemented in Tennessee classrooms during the 2017-18 school year, with training that will get underway over the course of the 2016-17 year to help educators prepare for the transition. However, the 2016-17 TNReady tests are aligned to the standards our educators have been teaching for several years, not the new standards.

Science and social studies academic standards are also under review. On the current schedule, the new science standards will be in effect in 2018-19 and social studies in 2019-20. TNReady is a Tennessee specific test that is designed to easily adapt over time in order to measure new standards. As the state's standards evolve, so will TNReady.

What if I still have questions?

We know that you may still have questions about TNReady for the 2016-17 school year, and we have prepared a detailed frequently asked questions section that can be found on TNReady.gov. If you still feel like you have unanswered questions, you can submit a question on a form located at the bottom of the frequently asked questions page. Your question will be shared with us and someone at the department will provide you with an email response and any additional resources that may be helpful.

Five Things to Know About TNReady

1

Overall, students will spend about 30 percent less time taking state tests in math, social studies, English language arts, and science this year.

2

TNReady includes rigorous questions aligned with what educators are teaching every day and measure students' writing, critical thinking,and problem solving skills.

3

For grades 3–8, TNReady will be administered via paper and pencil and are working to provide an online option for high school assessments.

4

The test will be given in one part during a three-week window between April 17 and May 5.

5

The information from TNReady will provide a big-picture perspective on how students are progressing compared to their peers across Tennessee, and better information about a student's strengths, needs, and areas for growth.

Parent Checklist for TNReady

Help your child get ready to learn: ensure your child is going to school every day well rested and ready to take on new challenges.

Meet with your child's teacher: Ask about your child's strengths and areas to grow and how you can support them at home.

Talk to your child: Get feedback from them on which subjects your child feels most comfortable in and where they are most challenged.

Challenge your child: When your child is working on homework or studying for a classroom test, ask them to explain what they are learning and let them be the teacher.

Be an adult learner: Let your child see you discovering new things and overcoming challenges, whether it be learning new information or a new skill.

Glossary

Cut Scores: the minimum score s tudent must earn to be considered at a certain performance level

Performance Level: used to determine proficiency

Practice Test: a bank of questions that represents each standard or academic expectation that will be assessed on the actual test

Reporting: how we share details about student performance on TCAP

Seat Time: the amount of time students spend actually taking a test

Standards: what we expect students to know and be able to do by the end of a grade or school year

Standards Setting: the process of Tennessee educators looking at each question and determining the cut off between each level of proficiency

TCAP: Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment program, which includes all of our state tests. TNReady is a part of TCAP.

Testing Window: the window of dates in which districts can choose to administer TNReady; students only spend a portion of the testing window actually taking the test

TNReady: a new, better state test with questions that mirror what students are expected to know and be able to do in order to be on track for the next step in their educational journey that includes the main state tests in math, English language arts, social studies, and science in grades 3-11

Resources

Your student's teacher is always the best resource for questions about TNReady.

The following websites are recommended for preparing for and staying up-to-date about TNReady:

Tennessee Department of Education's webpage focused on TNReady information and resources:
www.tnready.gov

Tennessee Department of Education's website section with details about academic standards for all subjects and grade levels:
www.tn.gov/education/topic/academic-standards

Tennessee Department of Education's blog site, which features teacher perspectives and inspiring stories:
www.tnclassroomchronicles.org

Tennessee Department of Education's Twitter account:
www.twitter.com/TNedu

Tennessee Department of Education's Facebook account:
www.facebook.com/TennesseeEducation

Remember, the best resource is **always** your student's teacher.