

Will the CRCT change with the new statewide curriculum?

Testing in Georgia will be changing with the state's implementation of a new statewide curriculum, called the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The GPS content areas are phased in according to a set schedule. For more information on the GPS and the phase-in schedule, visit www.georgiastandards.org. The CRCT will always align to the required state curriculum.

What can I do to help my child?

Students who are prepared, calm, and rested perform better on tests. Here are some of the many ways to help your child approach the CRCT in a relaxed, positive way:

- Encourage your child to employ good study and test-taking skills. These skills include following directions carefully, avoiding careless errors, and reviewing the work.
- Explain the purpose of the test. The CRCT gives students an opportunity to show what they have learned in school. It also gives teachers information that helps them plan instruction.
- Let your child know that you consider the test important and that the child should try his or her best.
- Point out that some items may be more difficult than others and that some material may be new to the child.
- Reassure your child that there will be ample time to take the tests and that it is okay if he or she does not know all of the answers.

- Be sure that your child gets plenty of sleep and has a good, nourishing breakfast and lunch. Test taking is hard work for many students and can require a lot of energy.
- Be sure your child is at school on time. Rushing and worrying about being late could affect performance on the test.
- Remember to ask your child about the testing at the end of each day.

Where can I find out more about the CRCT?

Talk with your child's teacher or school principal. They can provide specific information about the dates your child may be taking the CRCT this year. Tools to help your child prepare for the CRCT are available on the Georgia Department of Education's website at www.gadoe.org.



GEORGIA'S CRITERION-REFERENCED COMPETENCY TESTS (CRCT)



Questions and Answers for Parents of
Georgia Students in Grades 1–8

*We will lead the nation
in improving student achievement.*



*Kathy Cox,
State Superintendent of Schools*

www.gadoe.org

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What are the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests, or CRCT?

The CRCT are state-mandated achievement tests for students in grades 1 through 8. The CRCT cover the subject areas of reading, English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students in grades 1 and 2 do not take the CRCT in science and social studies.

What is the purpose of the CRCT?

The CRCT measure how well a student has acquired the knowledge and skills taught in the state curriculum. The purpose of the tests is (1) to ensure students are learning at their grade level, and (2) to provide data to teachers, schools, and school districts in order to make better instructional decisions.

The tests also serve as an accountability measure and are part of the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). For more information on NCLB, visit www.ed.gov/nclb.

When do students take the CRCT?

Students will take the CRCT on the days specified by their local school system in April or May 2008. Generally, the tests are administered over five consecutive days (three days each for first grade and second grade). Students are tested on one subject per day. Each subject has two test sections that last about 60 minutes each.

What do the questions look like in the CRCT?

The CRCT is being aligned to meet the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), the newly adopted state curriculum. The following are sample items.

Language Arts, Grade 2

Which is a complete sentence?

- A. Mowing the lawn.
- B. The man is mowing.
- C. The man and the mower.

Mathematics, Grade 6

There are two girls for every boy in a class. What is the percentage of girls in the class?

- A. 33.3%
- B. 50%
- C. 66.7%
- D. 200%

What is the Georgia Online Assessment System?

The Online Assessment System (OAS) provides Georgia public school students access to tests that are similar to the CRCT.

During the school year, students can take practice tests to evaluate their own work and progress. To create customized classroom tests, teachers also have access to the Online Assessment System. Because practice tests available through the Georgia Online Assessment System are taken online, they offer students and teachers immediate achievement feedback. School systems assign personal login IDs and passwords to students and teachers for use at www.georgiaoas.org. Georgia districts and schools have been using the Online Assessment System since 2003.

What scores do students receive on the CRCT?

Georgia's statewide curriculum, known as the Georgia Performance Standards, sets specific academic standards or expectations for all students in Georgia's public schools. The CRCT measure how well a student has acquired the knowledge and skills covered by the curriculum for their grade level. Students are not compared to each other but are measured on their achievement in meeting the standards. Student scores are reported according to three performance levels: *Does Not Meet Expectations*, *Meets Expectations*, and *Exceeds Expectations*. Student test results will be provided to parents and schools.

Performance on the reading portion of the CRCT is linked to the Lexile scale, a national reading measure that matches students to appropriately challenging reading materials. Tens of thousands of books and millions of articles have Lexile measures. Hundreds of publishers assign a Lexile score to their materials, and all major standardized tests can report student reading scores in Lexiles.

For more information about the Lexile scale, as well as resources to help you select literature for your student, visit www.lexile.com.

How are test results used?

CRCT results provide information about the academic achievement of students, classes, schools, school systems, and the state. This information is used to identify individual student strengths and weaknesses and to measure the quality of education throughout Georgia.

Third-grade students are required to perform at grade level on the reading portion of the CRCT

in order to be considered for promotion to the next grade level. Fifth-grade and eighth-grade students are required to perform at their grade levels for both the reading and mathematics portions of the test in order to be promoted to their next respective grade levels. Grade-level performance means that the student achieved a score in Performance Level 2 (*Meets Expectations*) or higher.

The CRCT also fulfill accountability requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Are students with disabilities or students who are English Language Learners required to take the CRCT?

State rules, the federal requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandate that all students participate in the state assessment program. All students are tested in all content areas of the CRCT, and they are tested on grade level.

Certain accommodations are allowed on all state assessments when required. Neither an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team nor a parent can request that a student be exempted from the state's assessment program. However, if the IEP team determines regular state testing is inappropriate for a student, even with accommodations, then the student may participate in the Georgia Alternate Assessment. Students with limited English proficiency who are enrolling in a U.S. school for the first time may receive a one-year deferment from assessments in content areas other than mathematics and science.