

# THE STATE ASSESSMENTS

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What Parents Need to Know



# Agenda

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- **Annual Grades 3-8 English Language Arts & Mathematics Tests**
  - Test Content
  - Test Results
  - Redesigned Score Reports for Parents
  - Test Facts
- **Adjustments to the Tests**
  - Untimed
  - Fewer Questions
  - Greater Teacher Involvement
- **What's Next?**
- **Q+A**

## Test Content

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The annual Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests:

- Focus on the New York State learning standards, which guide classroom instruction in ELA and math;
- Measure important real-world skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and writing; and
- Require students to explain their answers and describe and defend their reasoning.

## Test Results

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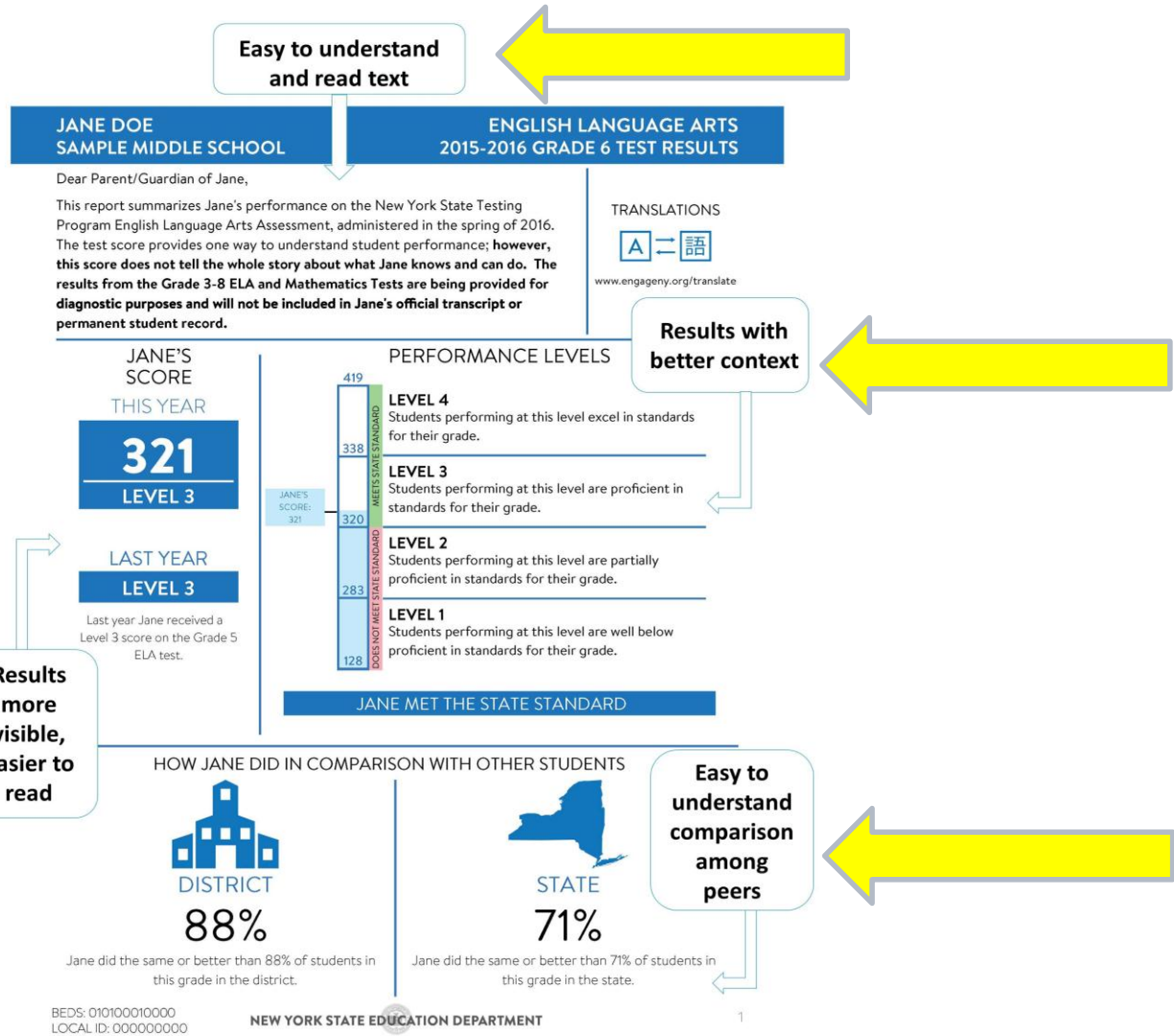
Your child's test results...

- ❑ serve as an 'academic checkup' to make sure your child is on track for the next grade level;
- ❑ measure progress over time so you can see your child's year-to-year performance; and
- ❑ provide a deeper level of information by pinpointing what skills your child has mastered and what skills your child is still developing.

This information is included in the redesigned **Score Reports** for parents. The updated reports are **easier to understand** and provide **more information about what students should know** and be able to do at each grade level.

# Redesigned Score Reports for Parents – Page 1

Report  
Page 1



# Redesigned Score Reports for Parents – Page 2

## Report Page 2

JANE DOE  
SAMPLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS  
2015-2016 GRADE 6 TEST RESULTS

The New York State Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy describe what Jane should know and be able to do at each grade level. This section shows the number of points earned on the Reading and Writing from Sources test sections.

JANE'S SCORE	OF	MAX SCORE
21		35

JANE'S SCORE	OF	MAX SCORE
19		22

### READING

In this section, students were asked to:

- comprehend the explicit and implicit ideas present in grade-level text and recognize how they develop over the course of the text;
- describe characters in depth, and connect ideas and events;
- understand the meaning and effects of words and figurative and connotative phrases;**
- analyze the text's structure and organization, and identify how point of view is developed;
- integrate the knowledge and ideas conveyed in text using illustrations and logical connections between parts of the text.

### WRITING FROM SOURCES

In this section, students were asked to:

- make claims that show valid reasoning and sufficient textual evidence;**
- write about characters and describe how they relate to each other in the text;
- compare and contrast points of view and themes in texts;
- analyze events and actions in a text;
- determine the effect of language on aspects of a text and describe the importance of story and structural elements of the text;**
- communicate understanding by producing coherent writing that demonstrates grade-level English grammar and use.

Helpful next steps

Simplified explanation  
of what students are  
asked to know and be  
able to do

### SUPPORTING JANE'S SUCCESS

Contact Jane's teacher and ask which skills are the most challenging for Jane.

Ask your school how you will receive regular reports on Jane's progress.

If appropriate, seek student support services such as counseling or school guidance to help Jane be most successful.

Review classwork and homework with Jane to see how Jane's skills are progressing.

For more information about this test, the New York State standards, and how you can help Jane, go to:  
[www.engageny.org/parent-and-family-resources](http://www.engageny.org/parent-and-family-resources)

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## Test Facts

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- ❑ The federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires that students in grades 3-8 are tested once a year in ELA and math. No additional federal or state required tests have been introduced since the adoption of more rigorous learning standards in 2010.
- ❑ State law and regulations of the Commissioner of Education prohibit school districts from making promotion or placement decisions based solely or primarily on student performance on the tests.
- ❑ Scores are not currently used to evaluate teachers in an official way.

## Test Changes

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- ❑ The State Education Department made several changes to the annual Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests in response to concerns from parents and educators.
- ❑ The changes were first introduced for the 2016 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests.
- ❑ The 2017 tests will be the same length and will be administered in the same way as the 2016 tests.



## Test Changes – No Time Limits

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- ❑ The **2017 tests will be untimed**, like the 2016 tests.
- ❑ Students who are still working on their exams will be allowed to continue to work, within the confines of the regular school day, beyond the recommended testing times.
- ❑ Without time limits, students are able to work at their own pace and not have to worry about the clock while taking the tests. **The tests are designed to measure what students know and are able to do, not how quickly they can finish.**

## Test Changes – Fewer Questions

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- ❑ Beginning last year, the State Education Department **decreased the number of test questions** on both the ELA and math tests for all grade levels, compared to previous years.
- ❑ The number of questions of the 2017 tests will be the same as the 2016 tests.
- ❑ Fewer questions will help to **reduce testing fatigue** for students.

## Test Changes – Greater Teacher Involvement

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- ❑ The 2017 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests were **thoroughly reviewed and constructed by New York State educators** to ensure they measure what students are learning in their classrooms.
- ❑ Educators from across the State came to Albany several times this past summer and fall to review and select all passages and questions on the 2017 tests.
- ❑ **Each passage and question on the 2017 tests has been reviewed by at least 22 educators.**

## Test Changes – Earlier Release Dates

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- ❑ **Test questions and instructional reports will be released on or around June 1.**
- ❑ An earlier release date for the instructional reports gives teachers more time to use the information before the end of the school year.
- ❑ The State Education Department will release at least **75-percent of test questions from the 2017 exams**, as it did last year. You can view the [2016 questions](http://www.engageny.org/3-8) (www.engageny.org/3-8) at EngageNY.

## What's next for the 3-8 tests? Computer-Based Testing

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- ❑ Computer-based tests are tests administered on a computer, tablet, or Chromebook. In other words, **students take the test on a computer** instead of using a pencil and paper.
- ❑ Computer-based testing (CBT) has the **potential to make the assessments stronger instructional tools and will make it possible to get test results back sooner.**
- ❑ This spring, some districts chose to participate in CBT for the Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests. The computer tests and the paper tests are the same tests.
- ❑ The State is helping **districts transition to CBT** and plans to have additional districts utilize CBT for the annual assessments next year.

## What's next for the 3-8 tests? Questions by Teachers

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- ❑ Since 2016, New York State teachers have been engaged in writing future test questions.
- ❑ The questions written by New York State teachers will first appear on the tests in 2018.

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# Questions + Answers

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# Learn more about the assessments

Visit [NYSED.gov](https://www.nysed.gov) and [EngageNY.org](https://www.engageNY.org)

Talk to your child's teacher