

How do the CRCTs align with Georgia's statewide curriculum?

Georgia's Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCTs) are designed to measure student acquisition of the knowledge and skills set forth in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The primary purpose of the CRCTs is to provide a valid measure of the quality of educational services provided throughout the state.

For more information on the GPS, visit www.georgiastandards.org.

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 CRCTs 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 work.
- Explain the purpose of the tests. The CRCTs give 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 tests 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 the answers.

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

Where can I find more information about the CRCTs?

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




GEORGIA'S CRITERION-REFERENCED COMPETENCY TESTS (CRCTs)



Questions and Answers for Parents of
Georgia Students in Grades 3–8

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


GEORGIA
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What are the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests, or CRCTs?

The CRCTs are state-mandated achievement tests for students in grades 1 through 8. The CRCTs cover the content areas of reading, English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Due to budget constraints, grades 1 and 2 will not be administered during the 2010–2011 school year.

What is the purpose of the CRCTs?

The CRCTs measure how well a student has acquired the knowledge and skills taught in the state curriculum. The CRCTs are designed to (1) ensure students are learning at their grade level and (2) provide data to teachers, schools, and school districts to support 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 CRCTs?

Students will take the CRCTs on the days specified by their local school system in April or May 2011. Generally, the tests are administered over five days for grades 3 through 8. Students are tested on one content area per day. Each content area test has two sections that last about 70 minutes each.

What do the questions look like in the CRCTs?

The CRCTs have been aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), the newly adopted state curriculum. The following are sample items:

English/Language Arts, Grade 3

Which of these is an incomplete sentence?

- A. I want to go to sleep.
- B. Malcolm grinned at the baby.
- C. The dog ran across the street.
- D. Blue and gold paint on my hands.

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 provides Georgia public school students access to tests that are similar to the CRCTs. Georgia districts and schools have been using the Online Assessment System since 2003.

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.

What scores do students receive on the CRCTs?

The Georgia Performance Standards set specific academic benchmarks and expectations for all students in Georgia's public schools. The CRCTs measure how well a student has acquired the knowledge and skills covered by the curriculum at his or her grade level. Students are not compared to each other but are measured instead on how well they are meeting the standards. Student achievement in each content area is classified into three performance levels: *Meets Standard*, *Does Not Meet Standard*, and *Exceeds Standard*. Student test results are provided to parents and schools.

Performance on the reading portion of the CRCTs 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 areas of challenge and to measure the quality of education throughout Georgia.

Third grade students are required to perform at grade level on the Reading 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 on both the Reading and Mathematics CRCTs in order to be promoted to their next respective grade levels. Grade-level performance means that the student must achieve a Performance Level 2 (*Meets Standard*) score or higher.

The CRCTs also fulfill the 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 CRCTs?

State rules, the federal requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) mandate that all students participate in the state assessment program. All students must be tested in all CRCT content areas at their respective grade levels.

Certain accommodations are allowed on state assessments for students who require them. 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 an IEP team determines that regular state testing is inappropriate for a student, even with accommodations, the student may participate in the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA). In addition, 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.