

Assessment Brief



Public Schools of North Carolina • State Board of Education • North Carolina Department of Public Instruction • June St. Clair Atkinson Ed.D., State Superintendent

READY End-of-Course Assessments: Biology, English II, and Math I

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This brief is available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Accountability web site, www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing.

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Eligible Students

According to State Board of Education policy GCS-C-003, students who are enrolled for credit in a course in which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required shall take the appropriate EOC assessment at the completion of the course. Students must take the appropriate EOC assessment the first time they take the course requiring the assessment. Students who are exempt from local final exams by local board of education policy must not be exempt from EOC assessments. Students who are identified as failing a course for which an EOC assessment is required must take the appropriate EOC assessment.

EOC assessments are available for Biology, English II, and Math I. Eligible students are administered the EOC the last 5 days of the course (4x4/semester courses) or the last 10 days of the course for yearlong courses.

The Biology and English II assessments each have an estimated administration time of 150 minutes. The estimated administration time of the Math I assessment is 180 minutes. The estimated test administration time is the time that the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) estimates it will take nearly all students to complete the assessment. Students needing more than the estimated time to complete the tests may be allowed additional time to work. As long as students are engaged and working and the maximum time of 240 minutes has not been reached, they must be given time to complete the assessments.

The EOC assessments contain a small portion of experimental (field test) items, which do not count toward or against a student's score. These items are used for multiple purposes, including, but not limited to, linking between curriculum cycles, examining across grade performance, and examining items for inclusion on future operational assessments. These items are indistinguishable from operational items and should not interfere with the students' test-taking experience.

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) have the option of administering EOC assessments in an online or paper-and-pencil format; however, online testing is strongly encouraged.

Biology EOC Assessment

The paper-and-pencil version of the Biology EOC assessment contains all multiple-choice test items. The online version of this assessment includes both multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. The Biology assessment contains 75 total test items and is aligned to the 2009 North Carolina *Essential Standards*.

The unifying concepts within each set of essential standards provide a context for teaching both science content and scientific-process skill goals. The *Essential Standards* for Biology were written to provide deeper understanding of life science content learned throughout Grades K–8. The unifying concepts for Biology include:

- Structure and Function of Living Organisms
- Ecosystems
- Evolution and Genetics, and
- Molecular Biology.

English II EOC Assessment

The paper-and-pencil version of the English II EOC assessment contains multiple-choice and constructed-response test items. The online version of this assessment includes multiple-choice, constructed-response, and technology enhanced items. The English II assessment contains 68 total test items and is aligned to the 2010 *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)*. The assessment items are designed, developed, and classified to ensure the cognitive rigor of the operational test forms align to the cognitive complexity and demands of the *CCSS* for English Language Arts. These items require students to not only recall information but also to apply concepts and skills, make decisions, and explain or justify their thinking. The standards that are assessed include:

- Reading for Literature
- Reading for Information
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening, and
- Language.

Math I EOC Assessment

The paper-and-pencil version of the Math I EOC assessment contains multiple-choice and gridded-response test items. Gridded-response test items require students to write a numerical answer in the boxes provided on their answer sheet and then bubble the circles that match what they have printed in the boxes. The online version of this assessment includes multiple-choice items and other items that require the student to type a numerical answer into a text box rather than select an answer from several choices. The Math I EOC assessment consists of two parts: calculator inactive and calculator active. Students are not allowed to use calculators during the calculator inactive part of the test; students are allowed to use calculators during the calculator active part of the assessment. The minimum calculator required for the Math I assessment is a graphing calculator. Graph paper (NCDPI issued/approved) and blank paper are provided during the testing session. The Math I EOC assessment contains 60 total test items and is aligned to the 2010 *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)*. Assessment items are designed, developed, and classified to ensure the cognitive rigor of the operational test forms align to the cognitive complexity and demands of the *CCSS* for Mathematics. These items require students to not only recall information but also to apply concepts and skills and make decisions. The conceptual categories that are assessed include:

- Number and Quantity
- Algebra
- Functions
- Geometry, and
- Statistics and Probability.

Online Assessments

The EOC online assessments are presented through a web browser. All test items are formatted specifically for online presentation and presented on the screen one test item at a time. Audio buttons are available for students with documented accommodations of *Computer Reads Test Aloud–Student Controlled*. Schools must ensure every student participating in an online assessment has completed the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated assessment at least one time at the school before test day.

Online Assessment Tutorial

The Online Assessment Tutorial is not an assessment; it allows the student to practice navigating through the testing platform and to respond to sample test items. Schools may use one of two Online Assessment Tutorial options with students:

- Schools may play a video that demonstrates how to use the available tools, how to navigate the system, how to respond to each item type, and how to use the end-of-test review page. Immediately following the video, students must complete a self-paced interactive set of online sample items for the appropriate assessment offered in the same environment as the assessment. The NCDPI strongly recommends schools show the appropriate video to groups of students instead of allowing each student to stream the video to each computer or tablet simultaneously.
- Schools may use a standard script developed by the NCDPI that gives guidance for using the available tools, navigating the system, responding to each item type, and using the end-of-test review page while students complete the tutorial items.

Released Test Form

The online versions of EOC released forms are available in pdf format at

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/releasedforms>

Schools can access the released forms in the online interactive format through the NCTest Secure Web Browser.

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