

# A New Kind of Academic Check-Up

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Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
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PARCC



# New Academic Standards in New Jersey

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**In 2010 New Jersey adopted new, college and career-ready academic standards to better prepare our children for the next steps in their education and in life.**

## Why?

- ✓ **Students are graduating high school unprepared for college.** More than 50 percent of first-year community college students must take remedial courses in English or math because they are not prepared for postsecondary studies.
- ✓ **The jobs of today — and tomorrow — require students to attain a postsecondary credential or degree.** Labor economists predict that by the end of this decade, more than 65 percent of all jobs in the United States will require education and training beyond high school.
- ✓ **Many of today's students lack the skills and preparation needed to enter the workforce.** Nationally, more than half of employers have an open job for which they cannot find qualified candidates.

# Implementing New Standards in New Jersey

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- ✓ School districts developed curriculum to meet the new standards and teachers are providing instruction of the curriculum.
- ✓ New Jersey joined **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)** —a group of states that collaboratively developed a new assessment that measures student progress towards meeting the common core standards.
- ✓ New Jersey educators contributed **many hours** over a four year period to develop an assessment that measures students' knowledge and progress toward the common core standards.



# What are the objectives of PARCC?

- ✓ Determine whether students are college- and career-ready or “on track”
  - ✓ Provide tools to assess student learning and support instruction *during* the school year
  - ✓ Report growth in performance, as well as absolute achievement
  - ✓ Report comparable results across schools, districts and member states
  - ✓ Generate valid and reliable information to inform instruction and accountability decisions
- ✓ Use technology for a range of purposes including increasing student access, providing accommodations, engaging students and creating efficiencies in administration, scoring and reporting



# How are these tests different?

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- ✓ **They are taken on a computer** so they are more interactive for students, allow for greater accommodations and make it more efficient for schools to use results to improve instruction. *In schools that are not yet ready, students take the tests on paper.*
- ✓ **They allow students to show their work.** On the new tests, students are required to show their work and explain their reasoning so teachers can better understand what they know and where there are gaps in learning that need to be addressed.
- ✓ **They are more than multiple choice tests.** Rather than focusing on what a child has memorized through multiple choice questions, the new tests ask students to apply skills like thinking, reasoning and justifying answers – showing what they know and can do.
- ✓ **The tests do not lend themselves to “teaching to the test.”** Since they focus on applying skills, it is the daily practice of these skills in the classroom that will serve as the best preparation for the tests.



# How are these tests different?

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Other tests	PARCC assessments
Primarily use multiple-choice format that emphasizes memorization, “test prep” and guessing.	Allow students to submit answers and detailed responses, eliminating guesswork and allowing students to show their thinking and knowledge.
Test students’ rote learning.	Assess students’ abilities to read carefully, communicate clearly and problem solve.
Offer basic, one-step problems.	Present challenging, multi-tiered problems.
Are too vague to offer detailed insight to gauge students’ readiness for the next step toward success.	Provide students, parents and educators detailed information so they can understand how students are progressing, where they need assistance and where they can be encouraged to do more.

# Sample Questions




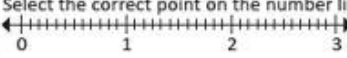
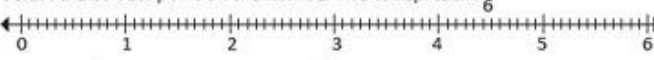
## ELA, Grade 5

 OLD TEST ITEM	 PARCC TEST ITEM
<p>Which two words are synonyms for heap?</p> <p>A. pile B. row C. corner D. mound E. pattern</p>	<p><b>PART A</b> What is the meaning of the word <b>dictate</b> as it is used in paragraph 23?</p> <p>a. Hint b. Fix c. Understand d. Decide</p> <p><b>PART B</b> Which phrase helps the reader understand the meaning of dictate?</p> <p>a. "...recreate the tree house..." b. "...determine the shape..." c. "...is less expensive to build..." d. "...has all the time in the world..."</p>
WHAT'S DIFFERENT?	
Students must memorize vocabulary words without context.	At first, this may look like the multiple choice questions of the past. But note that in Part A students have the advantage of the reading passage to gather meaning and, in Part B, students are asked to support their response with evidence from the text. PARCC focuses attention on vocabulary, particularly academic language, which is emphasized in the standards.

To take a practice PARCC test: <http://www.parcconline.org/take-the-test>

# Sample Questions

## Math, Grade 4

 OLD TEST ITEM	 PARCC TEST ITEM
<p>Justine is using the stickers below to decorate a picture frame.</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What fraction of Justine's stickers are hearts? Which of the number in your fraction represents the whole set of stickers?</li> <li>2. Draw and label a number line and mark an X on the number line to show the location of the fraction of Justine's stickers that are ladybugs.</li> </ol> <p>BE SURE TO LABEL YOUR RESPONSES 1 AND 2.</p>	<p>Ava and Mia are comparing the fractions <math>\frac{3}{2}</math> and <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>.</p> <p><b>PART A:</b> Ava created this number line to graph <math>\frac{3}{2}</math>.</p> <p>Select the correct point on the number line to represent <math>\frac{3}{2}</math>.</p>  <p>Mia created this number line to graph <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>.</p> <p>Select the correct point on the number line to represent <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>.</p>  <p><b>PART B:</b> Is <math>\frac{3}{2}</math> greater than or less than <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>? Explain how you know.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div> <p><b>PART C:</b> Write a fraction that is between <math>\frac{3}{2}</math> and <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Explain how you know your fraction is between <math>\frac{3}{2}</math> and <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>
<b>WHAT'S DIFFERENT?</b>	
<p>Notice the focus on procedure only (counting in this case). You can also see that it's a simple, static item. In other words, students aren't engaging with the material.</p>	<p>The PARCC item is in several parts. Part A asks students to demonstrate they know that a fraction is a number, rather than just a ratio (like heart stickers to total number of stickers), which puts the focus on understanding the concept. Students will interact with the problem by placing fractions on the number line, an example of using technology to enhance the question.</p> <p>In Part B, students are asked to make sense of the fractions as numbers by comparing them — taking a step beyond just putting them on the number line.</p> <p>In Part C, students apply their understanding by creating a fraction that is between <math>\frac{3}{2}</math> and <math>\frac{5}{6}</math>. You can see that the tasks build upon one another and ask students to do more than just procedures. They have to demonstrate understanding and apply and explain their knowledge.</p>

To take a practice PARCC test: <http://www.parcconline.org/take-the-test>



# PARCC in New Jersey

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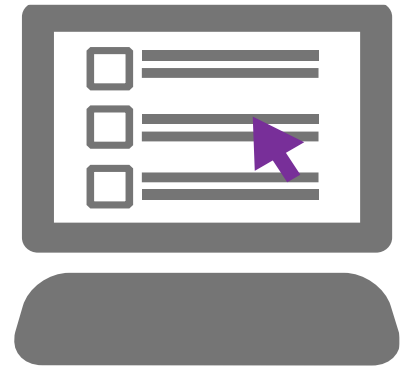
- ✓ **This year, students will spend less time testing.** Rather than two test windows, there will be one.
- ✓ The NJDOE testing window for ELA & Math for grades 3-8 is from April 4, 2016 through May 13, 2016
- ✓ HTSD is still developing the exact dates and times for each grade level



# Technology

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- ✓ At the Hess and Davies Schools students take the PARCC assessments on the computer.
- ✓ The technology is engaging, as it includes videos and interactive tools.
- ✓ PARCC is using Universal Design principles to make the new tests as accessible as possible to all students, including English learners and students with disabilities.
- ✓ Paper-and-pencil assessments will be available for those students who require them.



# The Road to the First Parent Score Report

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**Spring 2015**

Administration of  
PARCC  
assessments

**July/August  
2015**

Performance  
level setting for  
high school and  
grades 3-8

**August/  
September  
2015**

State K-12 and  
higher-ed chiefs  
review/vote on  
recommended cut  
scores

**November  
2015**

School districts  
receive high  
school score  
reports

**December 2015**

School districts  
receive 3-8 score  
reports

# Five Performance Levels

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PARCC uses five performance levels that delineate the knowledge, skills, and practices students are able to demonstrate:

**Level 1:**  
Did Not Yet  
Meet  
Expectations

**Level 2:**  
Partially Met  
Expectations

**Level 3:**  
Approached  
Expectations

**Level 4:**  
Met  
Expectations

**Level 5:**  
Exceeded  
Expectations

# What Parents Should Know About PARCC

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- ✓ **The PARCC tests replace the old state tests.** They measure how well students are performing against the common core standards that guide math and English language arts instruction.
- ✓ **The PARCC tests move away from multiple choice questions** to ones that allow students to demonstrate a real understanding of what they know and can do by writing essays, solving real world problems, and reading and analyzing complex text—all critical skills in the real-world.
- ✓ **The PARCC tests are only one of several measures**, including report card grades and in-class performance, that are used to determine a student's academic achievement. They do not impact a student's GPA.
- ✓ **The score reports are a valuable tool for parents and teachers.** The report provides a deeper level of information that can be used to better understand students are doing well and where they need additional support.



# What Parents Should Know About PARCC

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- ✓ **Your child's score may look lower this year because the tests measured more complex skills.** A low score does not mean your child did not improve or learned less; instead, it means that the expectations have been raised for students.
- ✓ **The first year's scores are a new baseline** from which to progress from and measure against moving forward.
- ✓ **It will take time.** While teachers have been gearing up for the new standards for almost four years, the tests are new and they ask questions in different ways and require students to show their work. Just as what happens with new standardized tests, scores will start to improve as teachers and students become more familiar with the standards and acquire the skills and knowledge to meet them.

# Sample English Language Arts Report

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS / LITERACY

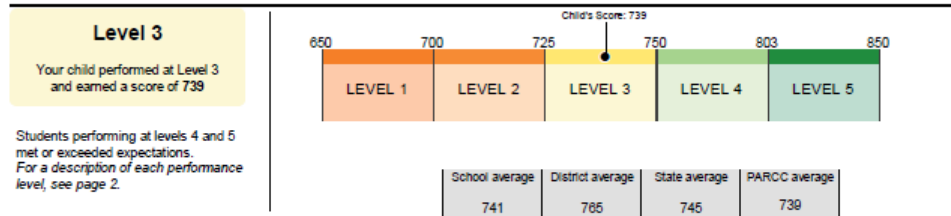
### Grade 4 Assessment Report, 2014–2015

This report provides information about how your child performed on the PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment. It shows whether your child met grade-level expectations and if your child is on track for the next grade level.

This test is just one measure of how well your child is performing academically. Other information, such as grades, teacher feedback and scores on other tests will help determine your child's academic strengths and needs.

To learn more about the test, and to view sample questions and practice tests, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS / LITERACY PERFORMANCE



## READING

Reading score range: 10 to 90	Average of students just meeting expectations 50	School average 52
Your child's score 44	District average 48	State average 45

### LITERARY TEXT

In this area, your child did not do as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can read and analyze grade appropriate fiction, drama and poetry.

### INFORMATIONAL TEXT

In this area, your child did almost as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can read and analyze grade-appropriate non-fiction, including texts about history, science, art, and music.

### VOCABULARY

In this area, your child did as well as or better than students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can use context to determine what words and phrases mean in grade-appropriate texts.

## WRITING

Writing score range: 10 to 60	Average of students just meeting expectations 35	School average 39
Your child's score: 30	District average 35	State average 31

### WRITING EXPRESSION

In this area, your child did not do as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can compose well-developed, organized, and clear writing, using details from what they have read.

### KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

In this area, your child did as well as or better than students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can compose writing using the rules of standard English, including those for grammar, spelling, and usage.

### LEGEND

Below Expectations   Nearly Meets Expectations   Meets or Exceeds Expectations

To see selected questions from the test, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

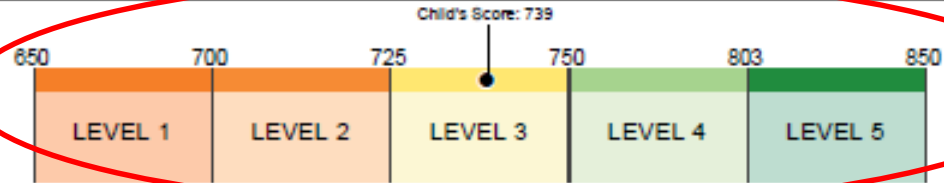
# Sample English Language Arts Report

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS / LITERACY PERFORMANCE

### Level 3

Your child performed at Level 3 and earned a score of 739

Students performing at levels 4 and 5 met or exceeded expectations. For a description of each performance level, see page 2.



School average	District average	State average	PARCC average
741	765	745	739

## READING

Reading score range: 10 to 90	Average of students just meeting expectations 50	School average 52
Your child's score 44	District average 48	State average 45

## WRITING

Writing score range: 10 to 60	Average of students just meeting expectations 35	School average 39
Your child's score 30	District average 35	State average 31



# Sample English Language Arts Report

## READING

Reading score range: 10 to 90	Average of students just meeting expectations 50	School average 52
Your child's score 44	District average 49	State average 45

### LITERARY TEXT



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Students meet expectations by showing they can read and analyze grade-appropriate fiction, drama and poetry.

### INFORMATIONAL TEXT



In this area, your child did almost as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can read and analyze grade-appropriate non-fiction, including texts about history, science, art, and music.

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In this area, your child did as well as or better than students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by showing they can compose writing using the rules of standard English, including those for grammar, spelling, and usage.

### LEGEND



Below Expectations



Nearly Meets Expectations



Meets or Exceeds Expectations

To see selected questions from the test, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

# Sample Math Report

## MATHEMATICS

### Grade 4 Assessment Report, 2014–2015

This report provides information about how your child performed on the PARCC mathematics assessment. It shows whether your child met grade-level expectations and if your child is on track for the next grade level.

This test is just one measure of how well your child is performing academically. Other information, such as grades, teacher feedback and scores on other tests will help determine your child's academic strengths and needs.

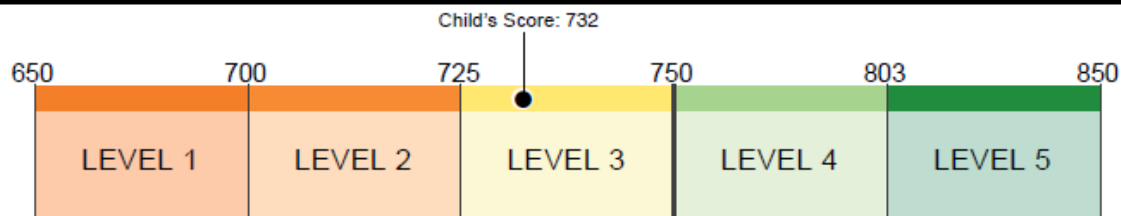
To learn more about the test, and to view sample questions and practice tests, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

## MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE

### Level 3

Your child performed at Level 3  
and earned a score of **732**

Students performing at levels 4 and 5  
met or exceeded expectations.  
*For a description of each performance  
level, see page 2.*




School average	District average	State average	PARCC average
761	759	758	747

# Sample Math Report


## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S MATHEMATICS SCORE

### MAJOR CONTENT

 In this area, your child did almost as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by solving problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, place value, fraction comparisons, and addition and subtraction of fractions with same denominators.


### ADDITIONAL & SUPPORTING CONTENT

 In this area, your child did not do as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by solving problems involving number and shape patterns, simple measurement conversions, angle measurements, geometric shapes classification, and representations of data.


For a list of the major and additional content at each grade level, see [parcconline.org/math](http://parcconline.org/math).

### EXPRESSING MATHEMATICAL REASONING

 In this area, your child did as well as or better than students who met the expectations.




Students meet expectations by creating and justifying logical mathematical solutions and analyzing and correcting the reasoning of others.

### MODELING & APPLICATION

 In this area, your child did not do as well as students who met the expectations.

Students meet expectations by solving real-world problems, representing and solving problems with symbols, reasoning quantitatively and strategically using appropriate tools.

### LEGEND

 Below Expectations     Nearly Meets Expectations     Meets or Exceeds Expectations

To see selected questions from the test, visit [understand](#)

# Sample Math Report

## MATHEMATICS

### Grade 4 Assessment Report, 2014–2015

#### HOW CAN I USE THIS REPORT TO HELP MY CHILD?

Use the report to start a discussion with your child's teacher(s) about his/her academic strengths and areas for improvement. You could ask:

- What can we do at home, in class and at school to help continue building my child's knowledge and skills in areas where he/she exceeds the expectations?
- What can we do at home, in class and at school to help support my child, where the expectations of the grade level were not met?

**What are the PARCC tests?** The tests measure how well students have learned grade-level material in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Students who meet or exceed expectations are on track for the next grade level and, ultimately, for college and careers. The tests include questions that measure your child's fundamental skills and knowledge, and require students to think critically, solve problems and support or explain their answers. The test is one of several ways to help parents and teachers understand how well children are learning.

**What do the performance levels mean?** The performance levels listed below describe how well students met the academic expectations for their grade level.

- Level 1: Did not yet meet expectations
- Level 2: Partially met expectations
- Level 3: Approached expectations
- Level 4: Met expectations
- Level 5: Exceeded expectations

**How do the test scores this year compare to those in past years?** The knowledge and skills tested this year are different - and in some cases more rigorous - than in the past. If your child's score is different than you expected, meet with your child's teacher to understand what that means and how you can help your child improve his or her performance.

**How will my child's school use the test results?** Results from the test give your child's teacher information about his/her academic performance. The results also give your school and school district important information to make improvements to the education program and to teaching.

**How can I use the mathematics scores?** The best way to make sense of these scores is to compare them to the average for students who met the expectations and the average for students in your child's school, district, and state. Also, look at the information below the scores. How is your child doing in each area of mathematics? Ask your child's teacher how you can give your child more opportunities to be challenged and how you can support his/her academic needs.

**Probable range.** The probable range in the score on this test is plus or minus 3 points. This is the amount of change that would be expected in your child's score if he/she were to take the test many times. Small differences in scores should not be over interpreted.

For information and resources, including sample PARCC test questions and the PTA's Guide to Student Success, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

# How You Can Support Your Child

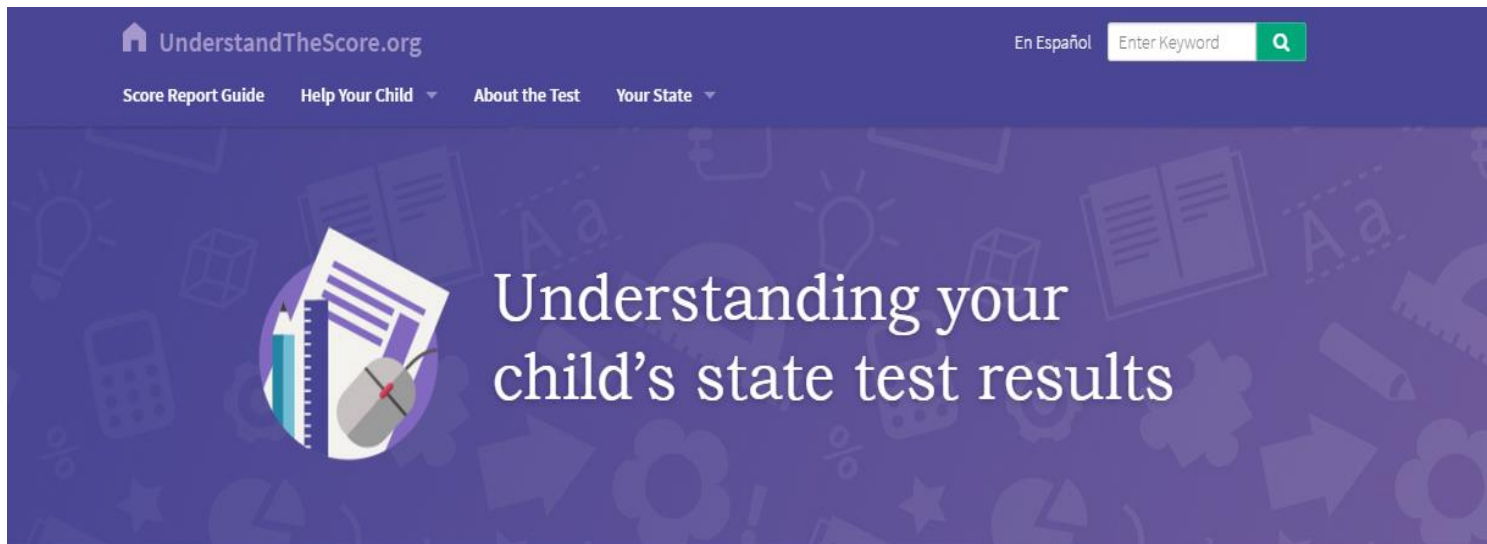
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- ✓ Read both fiction and non-fiction aloud or with your child. Look for subjects of interest – from sports heroes to dinosaurs.
- ✓ Discuss and “do” real life math with your child.
- ✓ Discuss the new tests with your child. Make sure he/she is not scared or anxious going into the new tests.
- ✓ Explain to your child that the tests will initially be more challenging. Tell your child to do his/her best on the test and that you are there to help every step of the way.
- ✓ After the test, review the results with your child. Bring the teacher into the discussion as needed.
- ✓ Provide a quiet, comfortable place for studying at home and make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep and a nutritious breakfast before a test.
- ✓ **Check out [UnderstandTheScore.org](http://UnderstandTheScore.org) for free tools and resources to support your child’s success**
- ✓ **Check out [prc.parcconline.org](http://prc.parcconline.org) for released test items to support your child’s success**



# Understand The Score

<http://understandthescore.org/>



UnderstandTheScore.org

En Español

Score Report Guide Help Your Child About the Test Your State

## Understanding your child's state test results

FIRSTNAME M. LASTNAME  
Date of Birth: 01/14/2000 ID: 99000000 Grade: 10  
SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME  
SAMPLE SCHOOL ONE NAME

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**MATHEMATICS**  
**Geometry Assessment Report, 2014–2015**

This report provides information about how your child performed on the PARCC mathematics assessment. It shows whether your child met grade-level expectations and if your child is on track for college and careers.

This test is just one measure of how well your child is performing academically. Other information, such as grades, teacher feedback and scores on other tests will help determine your child's academic strengths and needs.

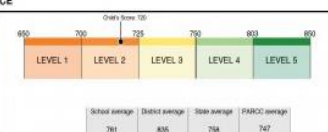
To learn more about the test, and to view sample questions and practice tests, visit [understandthescore.org](http://understandthescore.org).

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**MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE**

**Level 2**  
Your child performed at Level 2 and earned a score of 720

Students performing at levels 4 and 5 met or exceeded expectations. For a description of each performance level, see page 2.



School average	District average	State average	PARCC average
781	835	798	747

## SCORE REPORT GUIDE: STEP ONE

### Overall Score

Your student's overall score (out of a possible 850) and performance level (1-5) gives a quick glimpse of whether he or she is on-track with grade-level expectations. Level 1 indicates the greatest need for improvement and Level 5 indicates the strongest performance.

[Continue Guide](#)





# Skill Builder



Changes In The Classroom ▾

Helping Your Child ▾

Game Plan For Success

Who We Are

## Skill Builder

Looking for ways to use your children's test scores to support them at home? Search by grade, subject, and scoring category to find resources tailored to the areas where your child needs support. These resources have been identified as helpful to kids and mapped to standards by Raise the Bar, an initiative of America Achieves.

State

Which state are you in?

Showing All



Grade

Which grade are you looking for?

Showing All



Subject

Which subject are you interested in?

Showing All



Test Area

Which test areas are you interested in?

Showing All



Get Results

218 RESULTS





# GreatKids State Test Guide For Parents



PARENTING ▾ WHOLE CHILD ▾ LEARNING ISSUES ▾ ACADEMICS ▾ MILESTONES ▾ WORKSHEETS ▾ VIDEOS

Trending Topics: Emotional smarts Understanding the new state tests

SEARCH

## GreatKids State Test Guide for Parents

### Understanding your child's test scores

The test results are in! Wonder what they mean? We break down the details — and give you powerful ways to help your child succeed.

ELA/Literacy

Math

3rd

4th

5th

6th

7th

8th



4TH GRADE

#### ELA/Literacy Skills

Fourth graders should read smoothly and with expression. Instead of skipping unknown words, they should use context, root words, or a dictionary to figure them out.

#### > Reading

What it means

How to help

#### What they're learning

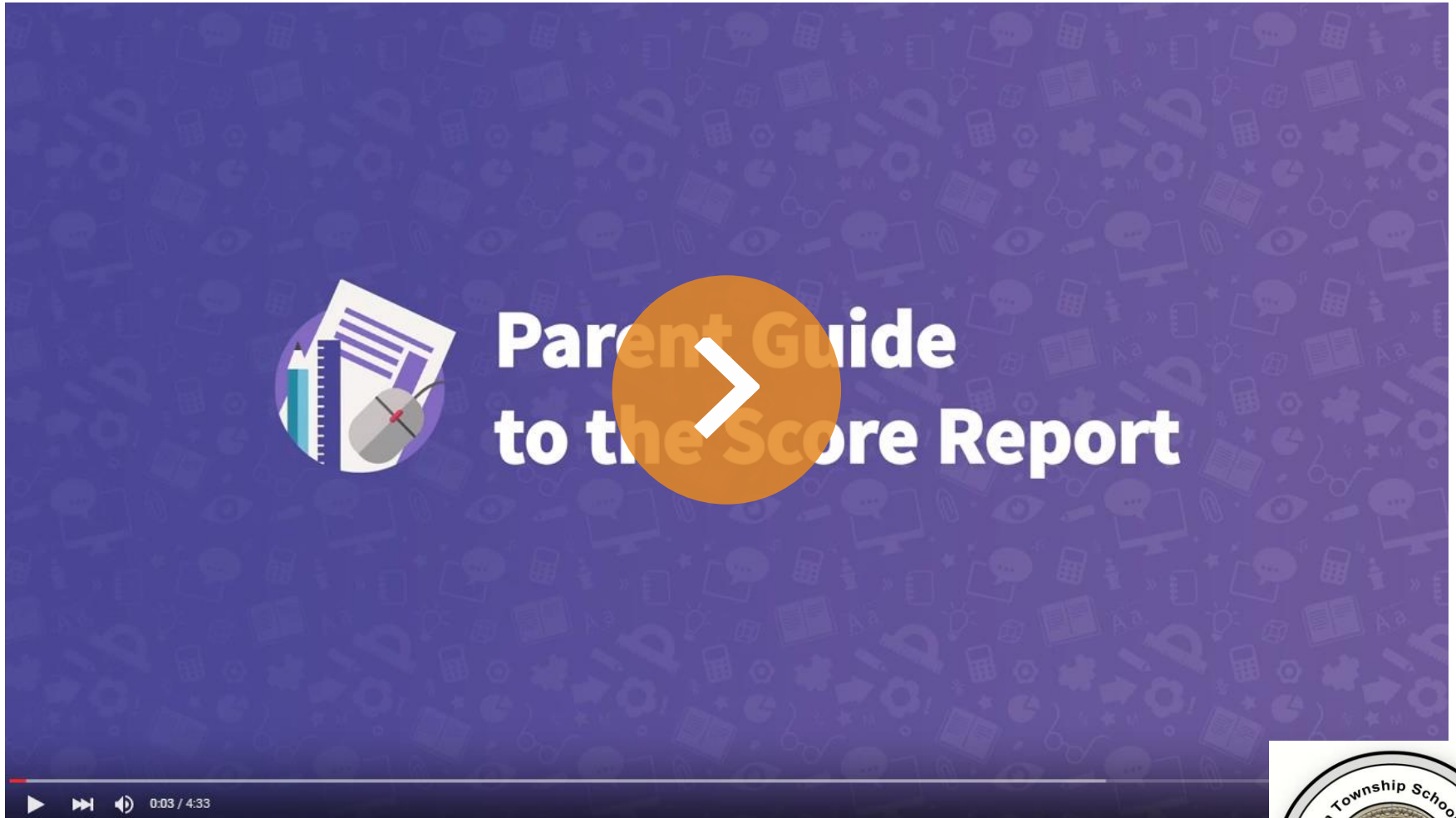
Fourth graders should be independently reading increasingly challenging books, such as *The Black Stallion*, and poems, such as Shel Silverstein's *Whatif*. They will discover a range of sentence structures and vocabulary words (like *descended*) that make them flex their reading muscles. As students discuss what they've read, they should be able to point to several examples in the text (also called *evidence*) to back up their ideas.

Kids need to explain their thinking, use details, and make connections between what they read and what they already know.

Fourth graders begin to make sense of information presented in maps, timelines, and charts in history or science readings. Students are expected to work independently, even on challenging assignments that require research.



# Understanding The PARCC Score Report



# Contact Information

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For more information about the PARCC assessments, contact:

- Presenter/District contact: Lisa Dagit [dagitl@hamiltonschools.org](mailto:dagitl@hamiltonschools.org)
- Hess School contact: Melanie Lamanteer [lamanteerm@hamiltonschools.org](mailto:lamanteerm@hamiltonschools.org)
- Davies School contact: Steve Santilli [santillis@hamiltonschools.org](mailto:santillis@hamiltonschools.org)
- PARCC contact: <http://parconline.org/contact>

