

## What Parents Should Know About TNReady

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Because TNReady is a new assessment, parents may have questions for teachers and school leaders about the test. The Tennessee Department of Education, Questar, and the Expect More, Achieve More Coalition put together this resource for answering common questions about TNReady.

### **What is TNReady?**

TNReady is our state's end-of-year assessment for students in grades 3 through 11. It is actually a series of smaller subtests in English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science that are scheduled to be taken in a class period during a couple of weeks in April and May. The TNReady assessment replaced the old TCAP test that you may remember your kids taking – or even taking yourself.

### **Why did Tennessee create TNReady?**

Over the last several years, Tennessee has voluntarily set higher expectations for what students should learn so they are ready for the next grade and on track to graduate prepared for college and career. Teachers use these academic standards in their daily instruction, and TNReady was built to measure how well students are meeting the grade-level expectations for each subject.

### **What's different or better about the new tests?**

The new assessments are designed to measure whether students are acquiring the 21st century skills necessary to be prepared for college, career training, military service, or work by the time they graduate high school.

- In English language arts, students will analyze fiction and nonfiction texts and write in response to those texts to demonstrate critical thinking and communications skills appropriate for their grade.
- In math, TNReady will give students a chance to solve real problems involving the key knowledge and skills for their grade level; show their reasoning and construct a mathematical argument; and show how they solved the problems. Some problems must be solved without a calculator.

Many older tests could not measure in depth the skills and knowledge of students working significantly below or beyond their grade level. TNReady assessments will provide a more accurate assessment of these students' abilities.

### **What subjects are covered by TNReady?**

The assessments cover English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science for grades 3 through 11.

### **Will students take TNReady in paper-and-pencil format or online?**

Tennessee has been phasing in online testing for TNReady, starting with a pilot program for high schools. Beginning in 2017-18, all high school students will take TNReady online. For grades 5-8, districts will have the option of online or paper tests in 2017-18, and must use online tests in 2018-19 and thereafter. All students in grades 3-4 will take TNReady on paper in 2017-18. In the following years, districts will decide whether to use online or paper-and-pencil tests for students in grades 3-4. One advantage of online testing is faster delivery of test results to schools and families.

### **Have teachers been involved in developing the tests?**

Yes, educators from across Tennessee helped develop and improve TNReady. Many more will be involved in the coming years, including in the development and evaluation of new test questions. Feedback from Tennessee teachers and other educators has already produced significant improvements, including a shorter test that is easier to administer.

### **Will students have opportunities to practice the tests?**

While there will be a slight learning curve for the new assessments in this first year, it is important to remember that the best preparation for TNReady is the kind of high-quality work students are already doing in their classrooms. We know that teachers need additional tools to prepare their students, so they have access to a practice test they can use in class to help your student be prepared for TNReady.

## **STUDENT SCORES**

### **How quickly will assessment data be returned to teachers and parents?**

The state has a goal of returning TNReady reports to teachers and parents during the summer, before the start of the next school year.

### **How will TNReady scores compare to my child's previous test scores?**

As students and teachers rise to higher expectations with the TNReady tests, the first-year test scores have set a new baseline. Because TNReady is a different kind of test, it is difficult to compare the results to previous assessments. As students adjust to the new test, we should expect that many of them will be Level 1 or 2 on TNReady in the beginning. There is no reason to be discouraged. Based on previous experience when Tennessee introduced a new, more rigorous assessment in 2010-11, scores will rapidly progress after the first year.

## **SERVING SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS**

### **What types of accommodations will be allowed for students with disabilities?**

As in the past, the full range of accommodations will be available to make the test accessible for all students to participate. IEP teams will be provided with guidance on how to select appropriate accommodations for TNReady. For parents of students with disabilities, [www.tnready.gov](http://www.tnready.gov) features a supplemental guide on accommodations and preparing your student for TNReady.