

## APPENDIX A

### Report to Students and Parents

This appendix is a *Report to Students and Parents for CTBS Form K, Levels 9-14*.

If you are preparing a similar report for *CTBS Form L*, the descriptions of the tests for Form L can be found in the *Directions for Administration* for Form L.

Permission is granted for you to copy and/or adapt this appendix for your school's use with the *Canadian Tests of Basic Skills*.

Please refer to our website, <http://assess.nelson.com>, for the text of this appendix.

The *Report to Students and Parents* for Levels 9-14 contains brief descriptions of the test areas. For longer descriptions of each of the individual tests, please refer to the *CTBS Directions for Administration*.

## REPORT TO PARENTS

## GRADES 3 THROUGH 8

This pamphlet can help you and your parents understand your scores from the *Canadian Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS)*. It provides information that can help you take advantage of the opportunities to learn that are available at your school. You should take this pamphlet home to share the information with your parents.

## TEST CONTENT AND SCORES

The *Canadian Tests of Basic Skills* are designed to provide a measure of many of the important skills that students learn at school. The descriptions below tell which skills are measured by the separate tests, areas of educational achievement in which you have received a score are briefly described below.

The *Vocabulary* test measures how well you know the meanings of written words. The test required you to choose the best synonym for a given word from among several alternatives.

The *Reading* test measures your ability to comprehend and interpret a cross-section of reading materials.

The *Total Language* score comes from the average of four separate scores that are measures of the skills used in standard written English: (1) *Spelling*, (2) *Capitalization*, (3) *Punctuation*, and (4) *Usage and Expression*.

The *Total Math* score comes from the average of three separate scores: (1) *Math Concepts and Estimation*, (2) *Math Problem Solving and Data Interpretation*, and (3) *Math Computation*.

The *Math Concepts and Estimation* test measures your understanding of math ideas, relationships and visual representations, plus your ability in mental arithmetic and estimation.

The *Math Problem Solving and Data Interpretation* test has two parts. The first part includes word problems that require one or two steps to solve. In the second part of the test, data are presented in tables and graphs and you used these displays to obtain information, compare quantities, and determine trends or relationships.

Each problem in the *Math Computation* test requires your use of one arithmetic operation—addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division—and requires operations with whole numbers, fractions, decimals and various combinations of these. You were required to work a problem and to compare your answer with the choices given.

The *Science* test measures how well you understand methods and procedures of scientific research and ideas that come from life science, earth and space sciences, and physical science.

The *Reference Materials* test measures your ability to use reference materials and libraries to obtain information.

The *Maps & Diagrams* test is in two parts. The first part uses a variety of maps representing authentic locations to measure your ability to use maps for multiple purposes. The second part uses a set of charts and diagrams to measure your abilities to use information presented visually.

The *Total Sources* score comes from the average of the *Reference Materials* and the *Maps & Diagrams* tests.

The *Composite* score combines the scores from all of the tests in the battery and it presents a general measure of overall achievement.

If you or your parents want more detail about the topics covered by the tests, your teacher or counsellor can probably provide it.

## THE PURPOSES OF THE TESTS

The main reason your school administers the *CTBS* is to provide you, your parents, and your teachers an opportunity to see your educational progress. Although the tests do not measure all the important skills you have learned, they do focus on some of the most important areas of the school curriculum.

Of course, your teachers and counsellors gain knowledge of you and your abilities through a variety of sources: your class work, conversations and conferences with you, and your extracurricular activities. To these important sources of information, the *CTBS* scores add another valuable perspective in the picture of your educational achievement, by providing evidence of your achievement that does not depend on anyone's personal opinion.

The scores in one area can be directly compared to scores in another area—unlike grades, *CTBS* test scores do not require that differences in grading standards or course content be taken into account. The tests can help identify your strongest areas and the areas in which greatest improvement is needed. Your teacher can use this information to choose materials and methods of teaching that might best help you to learn.

The tests also help teachers and counsellors look at your learning from one year to the next. Just as a doctor might measure your height and weight and make a record of your physical growth, your school establishes records and reviews your growth in the basic subject areas. Tests like the *CTBS* are designed to make it possible to measure year-to-year growth in such areas as reading, language and mathematics.

The scores from tests like the *CTBS* can also be used to compare your performance with the performance of other students in your grade across Canada. However, this is not the most important use of the scores. Instead, the main uses should be: (a) to help identify which of your skills most need improvement, and (b) to see how much you have grown in each skill area since last year.

## THE PERCENTILE RANK CHART

Your *CTBS* scores may be given to you separately or they may be provided in the chart at the end of this pamphlet—these scores are called percentile ranks.

Your percentile rank for any test shows how your test score compares with the scores of other students at your grade level, who were tested in the same semester of the school year—the number is the percentage of students in a certain group who received lower scores on that test than you did. For example, if your percentile rank for Science is 65, that means that 65 percent of the group scored lower than you. The highest possible percentile rank is 99. Percentile ranks in the range 25 to 75 are considered to be the “average” range.

To determine your percentile ranks, your test scores were compared with scores from one of two groups of students at your grade level. It is, therefore, important to know just which group was used to figure your scores. The group could be all students in your grade in the country—a *national* percentile rank. On the other hand, the group could be all students in your grade in your school

district or board—a *local* percentile rank. In the chart, an NPR designation for your scores means national percentile rank, and an LPR designation for your scores means local percentile rank.

You can use the chart on the last page of this pamphlet to make a line graph of your percentile rank scores. To begin, find your *Vocabulary* score in its box and then follow the arrow down to the number line below that box—find your score on the number line and make a dot with your pencil at that place on the line. Do the same thing for each of your scores. Then draw a line from dot to dot to make a line graph that describes your level of development in those areas.

The line graph can help identify your areas of strength—the higher points on your graph. It can also help you to see the subjects in which the most improvement may be needed. This information may be useful in making decisions about (1) how to direct your time and efforts and (2) whether you need to ask your teachers and parents for help in certain subjects.

## UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE SCORES

For most students, the line graph gives a fairly accurate picture of their school achievement. For a few, however, it might not. Occasionally, a student's test results may be affected if he or she was not feeling well or was distracted during the testing. You might find that your test scores describe your educational development one way, but your report card or your scores on teachers' tests evaluate your achievement in a different way. If this is the case, it would be a good idea to talk with your teachers and your parents about the differences you notice.

Another important idea to keep in mind is that these tests do not measure all of the important things that you are learning in school. For example, the tests did not measure your speaking ability, your creative writing ability, or your achievement in art or music; nor did they measure such things as your leadership quality or your ability to work well with others. So the test scores tell some of the story about your school progress, but there is much that they do not tell.

To help you think about what the scores indicate and how this information might be useful, try to answer the questions below. Then talk with your parents, counsellors, and teachers about your answers. Set some goals, and the next time you take these tests you can check to see how well you have achieved them.

What do you think your scores say about your academic development?

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Do any of your scores make you feel particularly proud? Why or why not?

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In which subject areas would you most like to do better? Why?

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In which subject areas do you think you could use the most help? Why?

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**PROFILE CHART FOR AVERAGES**

**CANADIAN TESTS OF BASIC SKILLS**

**FORM K**

**LEGEND FOR AVERAGES RECORDED**

**Levels  
9-14**

Check (✓) type of norm:

School  Student

NAME OF BUILDING OR BOARD/DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ TEST DATE \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE	READING		LANGUAGE			REFERENCE MATERIALS	MATHEMATICS			SCIENCE	MAPS & DIAGRAMS	SOURCES OF INFO TOTAL	COMPOSITE	LANGUAGE ARTS TOTAL	MATH & SCIENCE TOTAL			
	VOCABULARY	READING	SPELLING	CAPITALIZATION	PUNCTUATION	USAGE & EXPRESSION	LANGUAGE TOTAL	CONCEPTS & ESTIMATION	PROBLEM SOLVING	COMPUTATION	MATH TOTAL	SCIENCE	MAPS & DIAGRAMS	SOURCES OF INFO TOTAL	COMPOSITE	LANGUAGE ARTS TOTAL	MATH & SCIENCE TOTAL	
99																		99
98																		98
97																		97
96																		96
95																		95
90																		90
85																		85
80																		80
75																		75
70																		70
65																		65
60																		60
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50																		50
45																		45
40																		40
35																		35
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25																		25
20																		20
15																		15
10																		10
5																		5
4																		4
3																		3
2																		2
1																		1

PERCENTILE RANKS

**PROFILE CHART FOR AVERAGES**

**CANADIAN TESTS OF BASIC SKILLS  
FORM L**

**Levels  
9-14**

**LEGEND FOR AVERAGES RECORDED**

Check (✓) type of norm:  
 School     Student

NAME OF BUILDING OR BOARD/DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_

TEST DATE \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE	READING	LANGUAGE TOTAL	MATH TOTAL	COMPOSITE
99	---	---	---	---
98	---	---	---	---
97	---	---	---	---
96	---	---	---	---
95	---	---	---	---
90	---	---	---	---
85	---	---	---	---
80	---	---	---	---
75	---	---	---	---
70	---	---	---	---
65	---	---	---	---
60	---	---	---	---
55	---	---	---	---
50	---	---	---	---
45	---	---	---	---
40	---	---	---	---
35	---	---	---	---
30	---	---	---	---
25	---	---	---	---
20	---	---	---	---
15	---	---	---	---
10	---	---	---	---
5	---	---	---	---
4	---	---	---	---
3	---	---	---	---
2	---	---	---	---
1	---	---	---	---

PERCENTILE RANKS