



CHAPTER 6: STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

The next four chapters will explore how students fared on the standardized assessments completed during the past two years. This includes

- (1) Public examinations,
- (2) Provincial assessments ,
- (3) Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and
- (4) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Each of these assessments is for a specific grade level and has a specific purpose. There is only one that directly impacts a student's educational career - public examinations. It is how students perform on these courses that will determine if they graduate and what type of diploma they will receive (i.e., honours, academic or general).

Students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 complete write provincial assessments at the end of the school year. These assessments are based on the provincial curriculum and provide a common standard to assess a student's proficiency in a specific subject area. The information obtained from these assessments assist in:

- Improving student achievement,
- Evaluating the effectiveness of provincial programs,
- Informing parents and students of performance based on curriculum outcomes, and
- Setting expectations of what students should know and be able to do by the end of the primary elementary and intermediate levels.



In 2012/13, the provincial assessment schedule was changed. Prior to this, students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 were assessed in two subject areas each year: mathematics and English Language Arts. Starting in 2012/13, these subjects are now assessed on a rotating schedule with English Language Arts first followed by mathematics in 2013/14.

Finally, students regularly take part in three international and one national assessment. Table 6.1 provides a summary of these four assessments. Student performance on these assessments provides two valuable types of information:

- Allows comparisons to be made between Newfoundland and Labrador and other Canadian jurisdictions; and
- Shows how student performance changes over time.

Table 6.1: International Assessments Overview

	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)	Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP)	International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS)
Cycle	Every 5 years	Every 3 years	Every 3 years	Every 3 years
Date of last assessment	2011	2012	2013	2013
When were/ will the results published?	December 2012	December 2013	Summer 2014	November 2014.
Who was assessed?	Grade 4 students	15 year old students (around Grade 10)	Grade 8 students	Grade 8 students
What was assessed?	General reading skills defined as the ability to understand information presented in the written format required by society and favoured by the person, and the ability to use it.	Knowledge and skills in science, reading and mathematics The 2013 assessment focused on mathematics.	Knowledge and skills in science, reading and mathematics. The 2013 assessment focused on science.	The extent students know about, understand, and are able to use information and communication technology (ICT).

