



Provincial Reading and Mathematics Assessment For Grades Three, Six, and Nine

Questions and Answers For Parents and Teachers

1. What is PRMA?

- ✓ PRMA is a new provincial assessment of curriculum outcomes in reading and mathematics for grades three, six and nine students beginning in May 2020.
- ✓ The purpose is to help inform policy development, and help educators recognize areas of strength as well as barriers that may exist to students reaching their full potential.

2. Why do we need a new assessment?

- ✓ The Premier's Task Force Report, Now is the Time, identified a need for a new provincial assessment of curriculum outcomes in reading and mathematics curricula to better align with national and international assessments.
- ✓ As recommended by the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes, a full-time consultant was hired to lead the strategy on the use of assessment information to ensure that the department, districts and educators are equipped to work with all data and identify where action is needed to improve student learning.

3. Where will this assessment take place and how much preparation time will students be provided for these tests?

- ✓ PRMA will be presented as a classroom activity. Total testing time is one hour, with additional time available if needed.
- ✓ There is no preparation required for PRMA. It is an assessment that measures what students know in mathematics or reading at a specific point in time.
- ✓ School and student scores will not be collected to ensure individual students and schools are not identified.

4. Is the new assessment mandatory?

- ✓ All students on the prescribed curriculum in grades three, six and nine are expected to complete the assessment.

5. Can students opt out?

- ✓ There is no process for "opting out". That said, an exemptions policy exists for eligible students according to their school programming. All other students will complete the assessment.

6. Will parents/guardians be able to see their child's results?

- ✓ No. Each child completes only a piece of the assessment, so any student level data would only be on a small portion of the assessment. This sampling method

allows more areas to be assessed with less testing time per student, giving a bigger picture provincially.

7. Will schools get their results?

- ✓ No. Schools will receive a detailed report on the provincial results of PRMA that can be used in conjunction with their many sources of internal achievement data.

8. Will the results be released publicly?

- ✓ Yes, provincial results will be released by the department and available online.

9. Why is government only providing provincial results?

- ✓ The focus of PRMA is to collect system-level data to measure the progress of our province as a whole.

10. What other assessments are currently in place?

- ✓ In Newfoundland and Labrador, student achievement is assessed at many levels including individual, classroom, school, district, provincial, national and international assessments. These include:

National:

- The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) for grade eight students (every three years alternating in math, reading and science as the major domain in one year, with the other two as minor domains).

International:

- The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) for grade four students;
- The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for 15 year olds (every three years, similar to PCAP); and
- Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) for grade four students. 2019 was the first year that NL participated as a province.

11. What are the current provincial results for students?

- ✓ Historically, Newfoundland and Labrador has performed below the Canadian average in most years for national and international assessments except for PIRLS (Grade 4 Reading), where this province has performed at the Canadian average.

12. In what languages will PRMA be administered?

- ✓ PRMA will be administered in French and English, assessing French First Language and English First Language students.