



Provincial Science Assessment Pilot (Phase 2) at Grade 6

**Information Bulletin
2008**

**Department of Education
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PROVINCIAL SCIENCE ASSESSMENT AT GRADE 6 PILOT (PHASE 2) JUNE 2008

OVERVIEW

The Department of Education administers a comprehensive Provincial Evaluation Program to monitor overall student achievement at particular points in the system. This provides important feedback at provincial and local levels about students' knowledge and skills.

Who will participate?

To obtain a realistic picture of student achievement after five years of schooling, virtually all grade 6 students will be involved in this assessment. Modifications to administrative procedures may be considered to enable students with special needs to participate. For details, see Exemptions and Accommodations (pg. 3 and 4) in this document.

Testing Procedures

Phase 2 of the Grade 6 Science Assessment Pilot will take between June 4 – 10, 2008. The results of this pilot will be important to the Department of Education in developing and finalizing the Provincial Grade 6 Science Assessment.

Approximately two weeks before the assessment, the *Administrative Guidelines* will be sent to each school. Teachers administering the assessment should read these guidelines carefully prior to the administration date. These guidelines clarify how the assessment is to be administered. Assessment materials will be sent to schools in late May.

The principal of each middle school is responsible for the security of the Grade 6 Science Assessment materials sent to his/her school and for ensuring that there is no unauthorized reproduction of these materials.

Following completion of the assessment, a checklist is provided on the Packing/Return Packing Slip to assist the principal in preparing materials for return to the Department of Education.



Test Description

- The Grade 6 Science Achievement Test consists of 30 - 40 multiple-choice questions, and 10 – 20 open ended questions.
- The test is developed to be completed in 60 minutes; however, students may take an additional 30 minutes to complete the test.
- Students record their answers directly in the test booklet.
- Test items are created from the student outcomes contained within each of the following four strands of the New Brunswick Science Curriculum at Grade 6 Science:
 - Physical Science; Electricity
 - Life Science; Diversity of Life
 - Earth and Space Science; Space
 - Physical Science; Flight
- Knowledge and skill components are integrated in the assessment. Knowledge components relate to fundamental understanding of both the concepts and the processes of science. Skill components relate to the application of science processes and the use of higher-level thinking to solve problems.
- Some questions are placed in real-life contexts and frequently, a number of questions will be clustered around a common theme. Some questions will be in straight question and multiple question format.

Bilingual Version of the Assessment

A bilingual version of the assessment will be produced for French Immersion students. French Immersion students will be able to respond to any item in French or English so that language does not interfere with their ability to demonstrate knowledge and skill in science.

Exemptions

The Grade 6 Science Assessment (Pilot) is compulsory for all students presently enrolled in the sixth grade in New Brunswick schools. The assessment is meant to be as inclusive as possible. However, the school principal may request an exemption for a student who is unable to respond with any degree of success to the assessment instrument or if participation would be harmful to the student.

A recommendation for exempting an individual student should be provided using the appropriate form and bearing the required signature(s). Please refer to the document *Guidelines for Exemptions and Accommodations* for more specific information located at <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/eval/guidelin.pdf>.



Conceptual Framework

The science component will assess the concepts and skills addressed by the end of grade 6. The balance between process skills and content articulated in the science curriculum document will be reflected in the assessment. The table below provides the framework of the science component:

Strand	Percentage of Assessment
Physical Sciences: Electricity	25%
Life Sciences: Diversity of Life	25%
Earth and Space Science: Space	25%
Physical Science: Flight	25%
	100%

Science Outcomes

Please note that there has been no attempt to assign priority among outcomes. Please refer to the *Atlantic Canada Science Curriculum Grade 6* at <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/anglophone-e.asp#cd> for comprehensive details.

Reporting of Results

All parts of the assessment will be scored by the Department of Education. Scoring will take place in July/August.

APPENDIX A



Exemptions and Accommodations

Eligibility: Grade Six Science Assessment (Pilot Spring 2008)

Exemptions

The Provincial Grade Six Science Assessment (Pilot Spring 2008) is compulsory for all students presently enrolled in the sixth grade in New Brunswick schools. The assessment is meant to be as inclusive as possible. The school principal should consider requesting an exemption for a student only if it is not conceivable for the student to respond with at least minimal success to the assessment instruments or if participation would be harmful to the student. Any decision to exempt a student must be made in conjunction with that student's parents or guardians. Students with special needs should be considered for exemption only if their capabilities would not enable them to perform at least at the Experiencing Difficulty level, or to demonstrate any of the skills described for that level. **Students are required to complete all parts of the assessment.**

Exemption from the Grade Six Science Assessment (Pilot Spring 2008) will be allowed for students who have been identified with exceptionalities and have current Special Education Plans which document the need for exemption.

A recommendation for exempting an individual student should be provided using the appropriate form and bearing the principal's signature. Exemption forms should be forwarded to the Director of Education for the school district. Otherwise, the student's Grade Six Science Assessment (Pilot Spring 2008) report will show an INCOMPLETE, confirming that the candidate was not officially excused.

Completed exemption forms are sent to the Director of Education for confirmation and signature. The Director of Education will then forward them to the Assessment and Evaluation Branch.

Accommodations

Altering the administration procedures may be considered to enable students that require accommodations to participate. Generally, the Guidelines for Accommodations should be followed. For students who have physically handicapping conditions or specific Learning Disabilities, it may be necessary to have someone in the school act as a scribe. These students may also use any special equipment they are accustomed to using at school. **Additional working time may be provided.** Students who disrupt the class may be allowed to work in an alternate location. Forms are provided for registering such students and describing the special provisions made. (Sample enclosed)

Notwithstanding these guidelines, any assistance provided to students must be restricted to clarifying directions and procedures and helping students to record their responses. Students must not receive assistance in understanding the content or in constructing their work.

Completed forms are to be returned to the Assessment and Evaluation Branch with copies to the District Director of Education.



GRADE SIX SCIENCE ASSESSMENT (PILOT SPRING 2008)

Guidelines for Accommodations

1. School Principals are responsible for identifying students who will require accommodations in order to write this Provincial Assessment.
2. Once the students who require accommodations are identified, they must be registered on the enclosed form(s), one student per form. **A copy of each form submitted should be forwarded to the Director of Education of the school district for signature.**
3. In most cases only persons who have been previously identified by the school district as exceptional students can qualify for accommodations.
4. The following assistive technology or procedures may be requested to allow special needs students to be tested:
 - A. Large print tests
 - B. Braille versions
 - C. Personal FM systems
 - D. Interpreter 'signing'
 - E. Scribe
 - F. Any electronic communication device currently used by a test candidate
 - G. Extended time
 - H. Other*
- * Other forms of assistance may be required depending on the particular needs of the student. Determination of the use of other types of assistive technology or procedures will be made on an individual basis by the school principal in cooperation with the Director of Evaluation, Department of Education.
5. The term scribe refers to a person who will transcribe dictation for a candidate who is unable to write the examination responses. **Directions** may also be read aloud to a candidate. It will be the school's responsibility to secure the services of a scribe, and to provide adequate space for him/her and the test candidate. Scribing sessions must be taped and the tape submitted with the student's assessment.
6. Students on a Special Education Plan who require additional time to write an assessment shall have it. The amount of time beyond one hundred percent extra will be determined on an individual basis by the school in cooperation with the Director of Evaluation, Evaluation Branch, Department of Education.



GRADE SIX SCIENCE ASSESSMENT (PILOT SPRING 2008)

Request for Exemption **New  Brunswick**

PRINCIPAL

I recommend that _____
(Name of Student) (Student #)

be granted an exemption from writing the Grade Six Science Assessment (Pilot Spring 2008).

REASON:

COMMENTS:

SCHOOL: _____ DISTRICT #: SCHOOL #:

PRINCIPAL'S NAME (Please print): _____

PRINCIPAL'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN: _____

Please submit completed form to your Director of Education.

I confirm that a Special Education Plan and documentation exist to support this exemption.

Director of Education

2007-2008

SPECIAL REGISTRATION

GRADE SIX SCIENCE ASSESSMENT (PILOT SPRING 2008)

Request for Accommodations

Name: _____ **Student #:** _____

School: _____

District #:

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School Phone Number: _____

School #:

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Accommodations Required: (Please check appropriate box.)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large print | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra time | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scribe* | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal FM system | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braille | | |

Please add details below:

*** Any session during which a student’s work is scribed must also be recorded on tape.**

Completed by: _____

Principal’s Signature

Please submit by fax to the Evaluation Branch at 457-6906 or mail to the Evaluation Branch, Department of Education, 250 King Street, Place 2000, Fredericton, NB, E3B 9M9.

Please send a copy to your Director of Education.

2007-2008

