

Measure Up

Fall 2009

Assessment news for twelfth-grade teachers



Did You Know?

- **NAEP 2010 will include assessments in geography, civics, and U.S. history.**
- **More than 1,000 twelfth-grade public schools will participate in NAEP in 2010.**
- **Assessments will be conducted from January 25 to March 5, 2010.**

NAEP Long-Term Trend Results Released

The results from the NAEP 2008 long-term trend assessments in reading and mathematics have been released. Nationally representative samples of more than 26,000 public and private school students at age 9, 13, and 17 were assessed in each subject area.

The long-term trend assessments make it possible to chart educational progress since the early 1970s. Results in reading are available for 12 assessments going back to 1971. The first of 11 assessments in mathematics was administered in 1973.

The original assessment format, content, and procedures were revised minimally in 2004 to update content and provide accommodations to students with disabilities and English language learners. The knowledge and skills assessed, however, remain essentially the same since the first assessment year.

The long-term trend results show the percentages of 17-year-olds taking higher-

level courses increased in 2008. A comparison of 2008 to 1978 shows that a greater percentage of 17-year-olds indicated that they had taken pre-calculus or calculus. The percentage of 17-year-olds who had taken second-year algebra or trigonometry increased from 37 percent in 1978 to 52 percent in 2008. The percentage of students who indicated that the highest level of mathematics they had taken was pre-algebra or general mathematics, or first-year algebra, decreased over the same time period. The full report is available at <http://nationsreportcard.gov>. In the boxes below, the most recent results are compared to those from 2004 and from the first year the assessment was conducted.

Highlights of Mathematics Results at Age 17

- White students are up 4 points from 1973.
- Black students are up 17 points from 1973, and Hispanic students are up 16 points from 1973.
- There is no significant change in scores from 2004 among White, Black, or Hispanic students.

Highlights of Reading Results at Age 17

- White students are up 4 points from 1971 and up 7 points from 2004.
- Black students are up 28 points from 1971, and Hispanic students are up 17 points from 1971.
- There is no significant change in scores from 2004 among Black or Hispanic students.



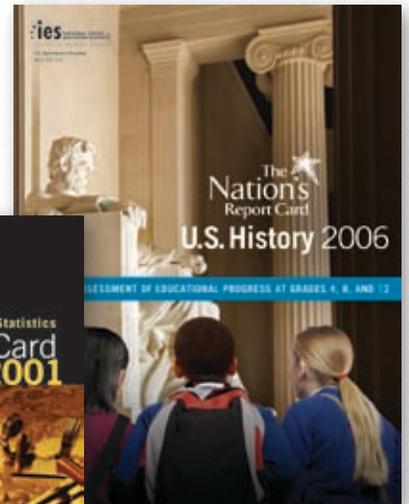
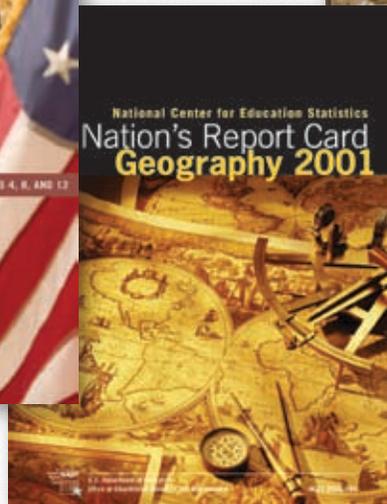
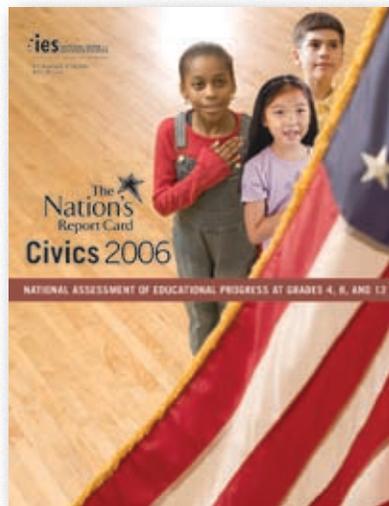
Using NAEP in Your Classroom: Civics, U.S. History and Geography

In 2010, NAEP will assess twelfth-grade students in U.S. history, civics, and geography. U.S. history and civics were last assessed in 2006. Geography was last assessed in 2001. The assessment framework for each of the subjects contains guidance for the content of the assessment and are developed under the National Assessment Governing Board. The framework provides an outline of what hundreds of teachers, curriculum experts, policymakers, and members of the general public thought each assessment should test. Once each framework is finalized and adopted, a committee works with measurement specialists to create assessment items and scoring criteria that are aligned to the framework's specifications.

With the publication of NAEP results, select items from each assessment are released. Teachers can access the items, answer keys and scoring guides, sample student responses, and national performance results for twelfth-grade students using the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls>. The Questions Tool includes both multiple-choice and constructed-response items for all NAEP subjects and grades. One sample item for each of the subjects follows. Included with each item are sample student responses, a scoring guide for constructed-response items, and the aspects of the framework the item addresses.

To access the assessment frameworks, please visit <http://nagb.org>, and select "Publications."

For more information about the subjects discussed here, please visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> and select the subject from the left-hand list of content areas.



Sample Civics Item

On the 2006 twelfth-grade civics assessment, 25 percent of students provided a correct response on the item below.*

Assume that you are a member of Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) and that you believe that laws against drunk driving should be strengthened.

Identify two ways that you could try to get the laws changed.

For each way explain why you think your actions could be effective.

Excerpts from Civics Framework

The content area addressed by this item is *What are the Roles of Citizens in American Democracy?* Citizens should understand that through their involvement in civic life and in nongovernmental organizations they can help to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods, communities, and nation.

The cognitive domain addressed by this item is *Evaluating, Taking, and Defending Positions*. This domain refers to skills required of citizens for assessing issues on the public agenda, making judgments about issues, and discussing their assessments with others in public or private.

Scoring Guide Excerpts

Complete Response identifies TWO ways to try to get laws changed and explains why the actions proposed would help in getting laws changed.

Acceptable Response identifies ONE way or TWO ways to try to get laws changed, but only provides one explanation about why a proposed action would be effective in getting the law changed.

Partial Response identifies ONE or TWO ways to change laws, but does not explain why any proposed action would be effective or does so unconvincingly.

Unacceptable Response does not identify any practical way to change the laws or give any reasonable explanations.

Sample Student Response (Complete)

1. I could write to Congress and tell them why I think the laws should be changed. I think this method would be successful because Congressmen are very likely to listen to the comments and suggestions of the future generations.
2. I could also get my friends together and make posters of loved ones we have lost to drunk driving and send them to Congress. I think this would work because they would actually be able to see the damages caused by drunk driving.

* The percent correct for constructed-response items is calculated by summing a weighted percent attaining each score (or level). The weight is based on the number of levels for the item. For example weights in a 5 score level item would be: excellent 5/5, sufficient 4/5, etc.

Sample U.S. History Item

On the 2006 twelfth-grade U.S. history assessment, 41 percent of students provided a correct response to the item below.*



BERLIN
1989

1. What event is depicted in the photograph above?
2. How was American foreign policy influenced by the event depicted in the photograph? Explain, using one example.

Excerpts from U.S. History Framework

The content area addressed by this item is *Changing Role of America in the World*. Students will be able to answer the following questions: How have the geographical location and resources of the United States, its ideals, its interests, and its power influenced its role in the world? How have the interests, institutions, ideologies, individuals, power, and activities of other nations affected the U.S.?

The cognitive level addressed by this item is Historical Analysis and Interpretation. Students will be explaining issues, identifying historical patterns, finding value statements, establishing significance, applying historical knowledge, and rendering insightful accounts of the past.

Scoring Guide Excerpts

Appropriate The response identifies the event as the tearing down of the Berlin Wall AND provides one example to explain how American foreign policy was affected by the destruction of the Wall or the end of the Cold War more generally.

Partial The response identifies the event but offers no explanation of how American foreign policy was affected by the destruction of the Wall or the end of the Cold War more generally.

Inappropriate The response does not identify the event correctly, does not explain how American policy was affected by the destruction of the Wall or the end of the Cold War, and gives no examples.

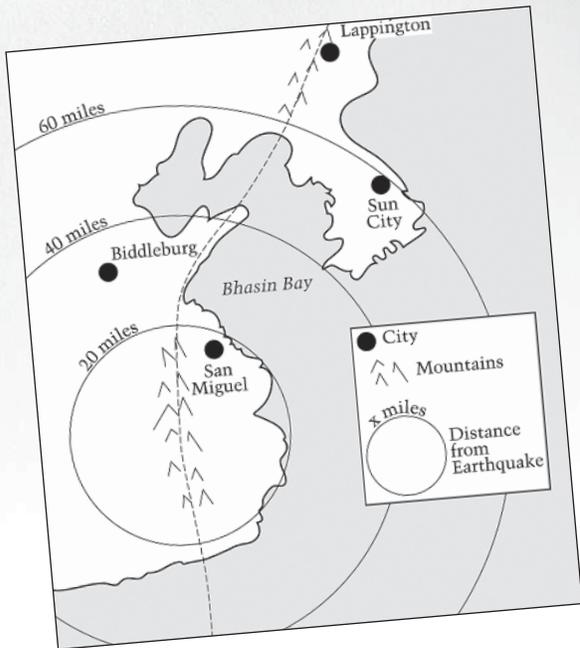
Sample Student Response (Appropriate)

1. The fall of the Berlin wall.
2. The fall of the Berlin wall also signified the fall of communism in many parts of Eastern Europe which opened up trade to these countries which before were shut off to the United States. Policies were adjusted to account for these new trading partners.

* The percent correct for constructed-response items is calculated by summing a weighted percent attaining each score (or level). The weight is based on the number of levels for the item. For example weights in a 5 score level item would be: excellent 5/5, sufficient 4/5, etc.

Sample Geography Item

On the 2001 twelfth-grade geography assessment, 86 percent of students selected the correct answer choice (B) on the following item.



Which city probably suffered the most damage in the earthquake?

- A) Lappington
- B) San Miguel
- C) Sun City
- D) Biddleburg

Excerpts from Geography Framework

The content area addressed by the item is *Space and Place*. Spatial understanding develops as students learn the context of place geography—where a specific place (or a particular thing) is located in the community, nation, and the world. Knowing the location of a place is practical information, and thinking about why it is there and what it is like helps students develop an understanding of a place and the issues that affect it.

The cognitive level addressed by this item is *Knowing*. In this area, students are assessed on their ability to perform two related functions concerning information: (1) an observation function and (2) a recall function. In general, tasks in this cognitive area are meant to measure students' ability to observe different elements of the landscape and to answer questions by recalling, for example, the name of a place or a resource indigenous to a particular country, or by finding information about trading patterns among several countries.

For more information...

For more information about these and other released items, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> and select "Sample Questions."

What is The Nation's Report Card™ ?

The Nation's Report Card™ informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time.

For more than three decades, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects. By collecting and reporting information on student performance at the national, state, and local levels, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only information related to academic achievement and relevant variables is collected. The privacy of individual students and their families is protected, and the identities of participating schools are not released.

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Access specific results for a grade level, subject, jurisdiction, and/or student groups	The NAEP Data Explorer at http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata
Find information regarding the types of questions used on NAEP assessments or view subject-specific questions	The NAEP Questions Tool at http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls
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