

Historical Reading MCA-III Benchmark Reports Quick Guide

Assessments are designed to provide information about student learning, but there is no single assessment that can provide the full perspective of what a student has learned. These assessments provide one data point that should be considered in the context of additional evidence of student learning.

Benchmark reports are no longer available for Reading MCA-III beginning in 2026 due to the transition to the new assessment Reading MCA-IV.

The Reading MCA-III Benchmark Report served as a guidance tool available to educators to learn about performance at the school and district level on each benchmark from the Minnesota Academic Standards. The Minnesota Academic Standards identify the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to learn in each content area by the end of a grade or grade band. These standards are divided into one or more benchmarks which provide details about what students are taught in that content area.

Benchmark performance for Reading MCA-III was calculated by comparing students' observed performance on test content aligned to a benchmark to the expected performance of the "Meets" achievement level cut score for a benchmark at the school or district.

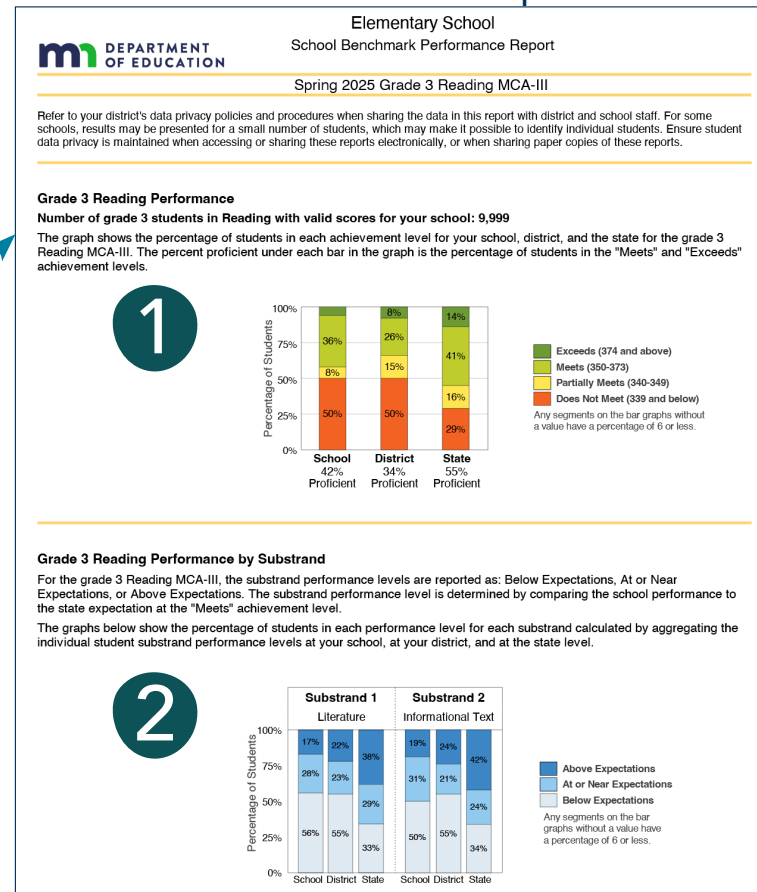
Report Considerations

The Reading MCA-III was an adaptive assessment at the "testlet" level, meaning questions are chosen based on the student's responses to a group of questions for a passage or passages.

- The reading benchmark reports show benchmarks organized under one of the three skill domains assessed on the MCA-III.
- All tests met the "blueprints" or requirements in the test specifications, which describe how the standards are assessed on the test and in what proportions. However, not all students had items for each benchmark, and other students may have seen more than one item for the same benchmark.

Note: Reading MCA-III Benchmark Reports are available in PearsonAccess Next through October 2026. Historical Reading MCA-III Benchmark Reports are not moving to the new ADAM platform. Download any reports you would like to keep for your records.

Sections of the Benchmark Report



1. Overall performance, including:

- The number of students with a valid, reportable score at the organization level for the grade and subject combination of the report.
- An achievement level bar graph at the school, district, and state level, with the percentage of students at each achievement level.
- The percent proficient, shown under each bar graph, is the combined percent of students at the "Meets" and "Exceeds" achievement levels.

2. Substrand performance, including:

- Content area strand names and performance level percentages at the school, district, and state level.
- Performance level categories include: Below Expectations, At or Near Expectations, and Above Expectations.
Expectation is defined as the school's performance on each strand compared to the "Meets" performance level cut score.

Reading Benchmark Report		Spring 2025 - Grade 3	
Grade 3 Reading Performance by Benchmark			
School performance on each benchmark is compared at the "Meets" achievement level cut score. Performance on each benchmark is calculated by comparing school performance on a benchmark to the performance on a benchmark that was achieved at the "Meets" achievement level cut score.			
	School performance on this benchmark is less than the "Meets" achievement level.		School performance on this benchmark is similar to the "Meets" achievement level.
	School performance on this benchmark is greater than the "Meets" achievement level.		
Key Ideas and Details			
Compared to "Meets" Achievement Level	Benchmark		
	3.1.1.1 Literature Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.		
	3.1.2.2 Literature Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through details in the text.		
	3.1.3.3 Literature Describe characters in a story (e.g., motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.		
	3.2.1.1 Informational Text Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.		
	3.2.2.2 Informational Text Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.		
	3.2.3.3 Informational Text Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.		

- Benchmark performance description.
- Three performance symbols specific to the benchmark report are used to represent school or district performance on each benchmark, including less than, similar to, or greater than the "Meets" achievement level.
An asterisk (*) indicates there were less than 20 student responses for that benchmark and results are not available.
- The skill domain the substrands and benchmarks are organized under.
- Benchmark performance and benchmark code reference.
For reading, the four-digit code (such as, 3.1.3.3) lists, in order, the grade (3), substrand (1), standard (3), and benchmark (3).
- Substrand title and benchmark descriptions.

Cautions When Interpreting the Historical Benchmark Report

- For Reading MCA-III, the number of items for each benchmark varied because the test was adaptive at the "testlet" level.
- Benchmarks not assessed on the MCA-III or only within the classroom, or benchmarks not applicable to a substrand, are noted on the report.
- The data displayed on the report are based on the student responses to the test questions (items) from a particular benchmark that were administered to students in a school or district.
- Benchmark performance symbols do not correspond to overall achievement levels for Reading MCA-III (Does Not Meet, Partially Meets, Meets, or Exceeds the Standards), and the color/shape of each symbol does not reflect benchmark difficulty.

Use of the Benchmark Report in Your Classroom, School, or District

The Reading MCA-III Benchmark Reports served as a resource available to educators to use to evaluate and compare performance on benchmarks at the school, district, and state levels on the current year's test. Note: These questions were most relevant when using the benchmark reports and evaluating instruction aligned to the 2010 Minnesota Academic Standards and the Reading MCA-III.

Guiding questions when reviewing and discussing benchmark reports:

- Are the students who completed the assessment representative of the total student population at your school or district?
- Where and how are specific benchmarks taught in a course's scope and sequence?
- What do you notice about the benchmark data? What surprises you?
- How does the data compare with what you saw in the classroom?
- What additional information do you have about student learning of the benchmarks?
- What may be some reasons for the benchmarks that have symbols indicating performance above the "Meets" achievement level?
- What may be some underlying causes for benchmarks below the "Meets" achievement level?
- Are there additional emerging themes in all the information?
- What are your next steps after reviewing your benchmark data?

Contact for Questions

Contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for questions related to the historical Reading MCA-III benchmark reports or the new Reading MCA-IV test.



Reading MCA-IV was first administered in 2026. Detailed score reports appropriate for the new assessments are in discussion for development in a future year.