

Nova Scotia Assessments

Information Guide

Nova Scotia Assessment:
Literacy and Mathematics in Grade 3
Mathématiques in Grade 3

Nova Scotia Assessment:
Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques
in Grade 6

Nova Scotia Assessment:
Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques
in Grade 8

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Opportunities for writing scoring sessions will be posted on the Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS) Professional Opportunities page:
<http://plans.ednet.ns.ca/professional-opportunities>

Information concerning assessments such as administration dates, assessment results, as well as additional information for each provincial assessment is available online at plans.ednet.ns.ca.

Overview

Nova Scotia Assessments provide valid and reliable information about student performance relative to selected curriculum outcomes. The table below outlines the Nova Scotia Assessments administered to English program and French immersion program students in Nova Scotia. French immersion program students write the mathematics assessments in French; the assessments follow the same curriculum connections and table of specifications as the mathematics assessments for English program students.

For 2021–2022, only outcomes that are identified as foundational in the Foundational Outcome documents (September 2020) and measurable on large scale assessments will be included on Nova Scotia Assessments. To reflect this change, the Mathematics portion of the Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 8 has been reduced to 60-minute sessions for Mathematics Day 1 and Mathematics Day 2.

Each assessment must be completed during the morning of the school’s administration dates according to the administration schedule available below and online at plans.ednet.ns.ca. Assessment sessions may be scheduled any time during the morning that is most convenient for schools.

With an administration period over multiple weeks, schools have the flexibility to administer assessments over non-consecutive days. However, schools that administer the assessment over non-consecutive days must still administer the assessment in the same order as the booklet (Literacy/Reading and Writing is administered prior to Mathematics/Mathématiques).

Schedules should allow for a stretch break (5–15 minutes, duration at the discretion of the teacher) in the middle of each assessment session. For example, students could complete the first section of the assessment before recess, participate in their recess time or morning break, and complete the remainder of the assessment after recess. The day’s schedule may need to be adjusted, as needed, to accommodate the stretch breaks. Specialist classes may need to be rescheduled in order to accommodate assessment administrations.

Literacy/Reading and Writing Day 1 and Day 2: students will have a total of 90 minutes (45 minutes for Reading section and 45 minutes for Writing section) with a stretch break of 5–15 minutes in between those sections.

Mathematics Day 1 and Day 2/Mathématiques Jour 1 and Jour 2: Students will have 60 minutes to complete the Mathematics/Mathématiques assessment each day with a stretch break of 5–15 minutes in the middle of the session.

Further information about the Program of Learning Assessments for Nova Scotia (PLANS) is available online at plans.ednet.ns.ca.

NOVA SCOTIA ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Participation	Administration
Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 6	- Grade 6 English program students - Grade 6 French immersion students	October 4–21, 2021
Nova Scotia Assessment: Literacy and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 3	- Grade 3 English program students - Grade 3 French immersion students (only Mathématiques)	May 16–27, 2022
Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 8	- Grade 8 English program students - Grade 8 French immersion students	May 24–June 3, 2022

Administration of Nova Scotia Assessments

A consistent format for administering the assessments is necessary to ensure fairness for all students in the province. An administration guide specific for each assessment will be made available to schools prior to the administration period.

Security

Nova Scotia Assessments are secure documents, so the following rules apply:

- All assessment materials must be kept secure before, during, and after the administration.
- No part of the assessment, including student work, may be reproduced or photographed.
- Teachers must not use Nova Scotia Assessment questions, texts, or writing prompts in their teaching.
- Students who are not eligible to participate in the assessment must be in an alternate location while the assessment is being written (e.g., combined classes, students on an IPP not participating in the assessment).
- Students are not to use electronic devices during each assessment session unless they require an assistive technology adaptation.
- Teachers are to ensure that copies of student work written using assistive technology are deleted from all locations once printed.
- No copies of assessments are provided for the teacher's use, with the exception of grade 3 teachers, who require it for administering the writing section, and French immersion mathématiques teachers, who are provided a single English student booklet.
- After administration is complete, all secure assessment materials must be returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the department) as outlined in the School Assessment Coordinator Checklist (included in the shipment of materials and available online at plans.ednet.ns.ca).

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Ensure that students with documented adaptations have access to the adaptations required during the assessment. For students requiring assistive technology for verbatim reading using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Read-aloud (NSA-RA) platform, registration must be completed by September 30, 2021 for grade 6, and by May 1, 2022 for grade 3 and grade 8 (see Appendix).
- Ensure that the Information for Parents and Guardians pamphlet is distributed to parents and guardians of participating students during the week before the assessment.
- Be familiar with the assessment administration, make-up session(s), scoring, and reporting procedures.
- Oversee the administration of the assessment.
- Minimize any interruptions during the assessment administration timeframe (e.g., announcements, bells).
- Ensure that assessment materials are returned to the department on or before the deadline.

School Assessment Coordinator (checklist included in the shipment of materials and online at plans.ednet.ns.ca)

- Ensure all required assessment materials have been received as outlined on the packing slip.
- Distribute materials to teachers as outlined on the School Assessment Coordinator Checklist.
- Work with teachers to arrange make-up session(s).
- Ensure that assessments remain secure at all times.
- Work with administration to minimize any interruptions during the assessment administration timeframe (e.g., announcements, bells).
- After the assessment, verify that the applicable circle on the back cover of the student

- booklet is bubbled in for each student who required the use of an adaptation (as documented in TIENET) during the assessment or did not participate or is on an Individual Program Plan (IPP).
- Return all secure materials to the department on or before the deadline.

Teacher (checklist included in the shipment of materials and online at plans.ednet.ns.ca)

- Ensure that the *Information for Parents and Guardians* pamphlet is distributed to parents and guardians of participating students during the week before the assessment.
- Prepare the classroom as outlined in the Teacher Checklist.
- Ensure that students with documented adaptations have access to the adaptations required during the assessment. For students requiring assistive technology for verbatim reading using the Nova Scotia Assessment: Read-aloud (NSA-RA) platform, registration must be completed by September 30, 2021 for grade 6, and by May 1, 2022 for grade 3 and grade 8 (see Appendix). Sample Questions need to also be completed using the read-aloud platform, so students have an opportunity to become familiar with the platform before the assessment (see Appendix).
- Ensure that each student receives the correct assessment materials.
- Administer the assessment according to the procedures and teacher script in the Administration Guide.
- Record student participation/attendance on the class list to track students needing to participate in make-up sessions.
- Arrange make-up assessment sessions for absent students.
- After the assessment, complete the back cover of student assessment booklets for students who have an IPP, students who used adaptations on the assessment, or for students who did not participate in the assessment.
- Ensure that copies of student work written using assistive technology are deleted from all locations once printed.

Specific information regarding the administration of the assessment is included in the Administration Guide which is included in the assessment materials that are sent to schools.

Sample Questions

The purpose of the sample questions is to provide an opportunity to familiarize students with the format and types of questions on Nova Scotia Assessments. The sample questions are to be done together in class and are not intended to be sent home as homework.

The sample questions are provided in the form of mini-lessons. Teachers will use their professional judgment to select which mini-lessons are best suited for their students' needs; it is recommended that only one mini-lesson is completed in a single session.

Teachers may consider projecting the Sample Questions document in the class so that everyone can follow along together. This would allow teachers to point out specific questions or relevant sections of the reading texts.

Sample Questions and teacher instructions for each assessment will be sent to schools before the assessment. Students should complete the sample questions at a time that is convenient sometime during the weeks prior to the assessment administration dates. Sample Questions are included on the Nova Scotia Assessment: Read-aloud (NSA-RA) platform for students who are registered (see Appendix).

The Sample Questions documents for each assessment are also available online at plans.ednet.ns.ca.

Student Participation

Students on an Individual Program Plan (IPP)

The Program Planning Team determines whether or not it would be appropriate for a student on an IPP to complete the assessment. When the Program Planning Team decides that it is appropriate for a student on an IPP to participate in the assessment, the student's results will be reported on the Student Assessment Report and included in the overall school, regional, and provincial results.

Section 1 of the back cover of the assessment booklet relates to the participation of students on an IPP. If a student on an IPP participates, the signature of the principal is required.

- IPP in English language arts and student did not participate.
- IPP in English language arts and student participated per the Program Planning Team's decision.
Principal Signature: _____
- IPP in Mathematics/Mathématiques and student did not participate.
- IPP in Mathematics/Mathématiques and student participated per the Program Planning Team's decision.
Principal Signature: _____

Students with Adaptations Documented in TIENET

An adaptation is a documented strategy or resource for an individual student that facilitates their equitable access to achieve the Public School Curriculum outcomes. An adaptation is planned, implemented, monitored, and evaluated to ensure it remains effective for the student.

It is important that the results of an assessment accurately reflect what students know and are able to do independently in relation to learning outcomes. Adaptations used to provide equitable access to the curriculum for students during classroom instruction and assessment should also be available during provincial assessments. It should be noted that some adaptations used for the purpose of building independence with learning and demonstrating knowledge may impact the validity of the provincial assessment, and therefore may not be suitable for this type of assessment. For example, if terms used on an assessment are defined for students, it may alter the validity of the assessment as independent understanding of the concept may not be reliably demonstrated. If such adaptations are used, the student report will indicate “not enough evidence.” Parent(s) and guardian(s), through the program planning process, should be informed if an adaptation being used may compromise validity of a provincial assessment.

If an adaptation compromises the validity of a provincial assessment, the student’s Program Planning Team should determine whether or not the student should write or be exempted from the assessment.

Adaptations made available to the student during the assessment must be in place prior to the assessment and documented in TIENET (developed by the Program Planning Team) and thereby have been communicated to parent(s) and guardian(s) through the program planning process.

Section 2 of the back cover of the assessment booklets relates to students using adaptations for provincial assessments. The following categories describe adaptations that may be used during Nova Scotia Assessments. It is important to fill in the corresponding circle on the back cover of the student booklet after the assessment has been completed.

- **Alternate Format**, please specify: _____
Alternate formats provided include enlarged-print, Braille, and black-and-white versions of assessments as well as other formats upon request. Please see the online *Request for Alternate Formats (NSA and NSE) – Quick Reference Guide* at <https://inschool.ednet.ns.ca/board-school-administration/tienet/user-guides/top-nav>. The adaptation must be documented in TIENET. The type of alternate format must be specified on the back cover of the assessment booklet.
- **Verbatim Reading – Human Reader**
The verbatim reading adaptation is available for provincial assessments of Literacy/Reading and Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques.

This adaptation provides reading assistance on provincial assessments to a student

- who has a reader adaptation for assessments documented in TIENET, and
- who normally has forms of assessment read verbatim

When selecting the adaptation format for a provincial assessment (either a human reader or technology read-aloud), Program Planning teams should consider the individual student’s technological comfort level and preference. The adaptation format used during regular classroom assessments should be the format used during provincial assessments.

The reader should be an educator from the school. A student requiring a reader must complete the assessment in a separate quiet area so that other students writing the assessment are not disturbed.

The reader must

- read the assessment verbatim (exactly as it appears in the assessment booklet)
- be aware of and follow all punctuation
- without leading the student, read in such a way that the student understands the use and purpose of punctuation, including the beginning and the end of each sentence
- repeat readings as often as necessary and read consistently in the same way each time

The reader must not

- add emphasis, inflection, or read in such a way as to prompt or guide the student
- ask leading questions, provide suggestions, provide interpretations, or word definitions of any kind
- alert the student to mistakes
- prompt the student in any way
- initiate the use of test-taking strategies
- show any reaction to the student's responses
- correct the student's responses or computations
- engage in incidental conversation with the student or others during the administration of the assessment

If a verbatim reading adaptation is used during the assessment, it must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet in the section for Adaptation(s).

The student must complete the assessment in the allotted time, unless additional time is an adaptation documented in TIENET and used regularly in classroom assessment by the student. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ **Assistive Technology – Read-aloud** (see Appendix)

The verbatim reading adaptation using technology is available for provincial assessments of Literacy/Reading and Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques.

This adaptation provides an audio recording of provincial assessments to a student

- who has a read-aloud adaptation for assessments documented in TIENET, and
- who normally has forms of assessment read-aloud using technology

When selecting the adaptation format for a provincial assessment (either a human reader or technology read-aloud), program planning teams should consider the individual student's technological comfort level and preference. The adaptation format used during regular classroom assessments should be the format used during provincial assessments. Students using an assistive technology read-aloud adaptation may use the technology with earphones in the classroom so that other students writing the assessment are not disturbed.

Other technologies such as a C-pen that read aloud printed text may also be used on provincial assessments for students with a documented read-aloud adaptation for classroom assessments.

The student must complete the assessment in the allotted time, unless additional time is an adaptation documented in TIENET and used regularly in classroom assessments by the student. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ **Assistive Technology – Writing**

If assistive technology (e.g., text-to-speech, speech-to-text, word processor, writing software) is an adaptation documented in TIENET and used regularly in the classroom, and it does not compromise the validity of the assessment, it can be provided to a student during the writing portions of the assessment.

Students who have a regularly used, documented adaptation for assistive technology for writing for classroom assessments may use the same format on provincial assessments. When using assistive technology during the assessment of writing, internet access must be turned off, if possible. However, if certain programs require internet access, it is expected that the invigilating teacher would monitor this to ensure appropriate use of technology during the assessment administration.

Students may access grammar/spell check, word prediction, thesauri, and definition features during the assessment. Even when students use this adaptation, they must still independently apply their understanding of all areas of the rubric (Ideas, Organization, Language Use, and Conventions) when they proofread and edit their writing. If Assistive Technology for writing is not available, verbatim scribing may be used.

Students using assistive technology for writing are encouraged to complete the assessment in the classroom, when appropriate, so they may participate in the discussion prior to independent writing.

Ensure that the student's name and provincial student ID# is included on the printed copies of both writing tasks and place them inside the front cover of the student assessment booklet. Do not use staples or paper clips. Once a hard copy of the writing has been printed, the computer file must be deleted from all locations. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ **Verbatim Scribing** (for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques)

This adaptation provides writing assistance to a student

- who has a scribe adaptation for assessments documented in TIENET, and
- who normally has forms of assessment scribed, or
- who has a temporary condition (such as a broken arm) and is unable to write

The scribe should be an educator from the school. Students requiring a scribe must complete the assessment in a separate quiet area so that other students are not disturbed. However, students should remain in the classroom to participate in the discussion prior to completing the writing task.

Students who use a scribe adaptation during an assessment of writing will not receive a score for writing conventions. In this case, "not enough evidence" will be reported for conventions since the use of a scribe does not provide enough evidence of a student's independent use of writing conventions. It should be noted that if a student uses a scribe for only one of the two writing tasks, the student would receive "not enough evidence" rather than a score for writing conventions because writing scores are based on writing performance across both writing tasks. However, students who use a verbatim scribing adaptation for one or both writing tasks will still receive scores for ideas, organization, and language use since the writing reflects a student's independent use of these elements.

The scribe must

- fill in the circles on selected response questions, as directed by the student
- write by hand directly in the student's assessment booklet, or type exactly what the student dictates and print, for writing tasks
- write the word "scribed" at the top of handwritten, or typed, writing tasks

- show the student the transcription, after the student has finished dictating the work
- read the transcription back to the student, if requested
- make any other modifications the student requests (the scribe may erase, cross out or insert the student's corrections)
- Please note:
 - include the student's name and provincial student ID#, and the word "scribed" on the printed student writing
 - insert printed student writing inside the front cover of the student assessment booklet
 - do not use staples or paper clips
 - delete the computer file from all locations once printed

The scribe must not

- edit or alter the student's dictation or their transcription in any way without student request
- alert the student to mistakes
- prompt the student in any way
- initiate the use of test-taking strategies
- show any reaction to the student's responses
- correct the student's responses or computations
- engage in incidental conversation with the student or others during the administration of the assessment

Unless providing an official verbatim scribing adaptation as documented in TIENET, teachers should not write inside the student assessment booklet.

The student must complete the assessment in the allotted time, unless additional time is an adaptation documented in TIENET and used regularly in classroom assessment by the student. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ **Additional Time**

Additional time can be given to a student during an assessment if this adaptation has been documented in TIENET. This additional time does not refer to the extra 15 minutes, per day, that may be given to an individual or the entire class as outlined in the Administration Guide. A student eligible to receive an additional time adaptation can be given up to twice the allotted time for the assessment with periodic, supervised breaks. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ **Alternate Setting**

A student may complete any part of the assessment in a setting different from that of the other students in the class if this is an adaptation documented in TIENET. The teacher in the alternate setting must be familiar with and follow all procedures for the administration of the assessment. All adaptations used during the assessment must be recorded on the back cover of the student's assessment booklet after the assessment has been completed.

○ Operation Charts

Students who have the adaption for using Operation Charts during mathematics assessments as documented in TIENET (developed by the Program Planning Team) and regularly use operation charts when writing classroom assessments, are permitted to use them when writing provincial assessments. If a student uses an operation chart during the assessment, it must be recorded on the back cover of the assessment booklet. Below are sample operation charts for addition and multiplication.

Operation Chart: **Addition**

+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Operation Chart: **Multiplication**

x	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1						6	7			
2						12	14			
3						18	21			
4						24	28			
5						30	35			
6	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8						48	56			
9						54	63			
10						60	70			

Addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division tables are not operation charts and are not permitted to be used on provincial assessments. Below is a sample of a multiplication table.

Multiplication Table

1x0=0	2x0=0	3x0=0	4x0=0	5x0=0
1x1=1	2x1=2	3x1=3	4x1=4	5x1=5
1x2=2	2x2=4	3x2=6	4x2=8	5x2=10
1x3=3	2x3=6	3x3=9	4x3=12	5x3=15
1x4=4	2x4=8	3x4=12	4x4=16	5x4=20
1x5=5	2x5=10	3x5=15	4x5=20	5x5=25
1x6=6	2x6=12	3x6=18	4x6=24	5x6=30
1x7=7	2x7=14	3x7=21	4x7=28	5x7=35
1x8=8	2x8=16	3x8=24	4x8=32	5x8=40
1x9=9	2x9=18	3x9=27	4x9=36	5x9=45
1x10=10	2x10=20	3x10=30	4x10=40	5x10=50
6x0=0	7x0=0	8x0=0	9x0=0	1x0=0
6x1=6	7x1=7	8x1=8	9x1=9	10x1=10
6x2=12	7x2=14	8x2=16	9x2=18	10x2=20
6x3=18	7x3=21	8x3=24	9x3=27	10x3=30
6x4=24	7x4=28	8x4=32	9x4=36	10x4=40
6x5=30	7x5=35	8x5=40	9x5=45	10x5=50
6x6=36	7x6=42	8x6=48	9x6=54	10x6=60
6x7=42	7x7=49	8x7=56	9x7=63	10x7=70
6x8=48	7x8=56	8x8=64	9x8=72	10x8=80
6x9=54	7x9=63	8x9=72	9x9=81	10x9=90
6x10=60	7x10=70	8x10=80	9x10=90	10x10=100

Additional Notes:

- Provincial assessments of mathematics provide an opportunity for students to show what they know and can do independently in mathematics; some adaptations typically used in the classroom are not appropriate adaptations during provincial assessments.
- Worked examples or cognitive credit cards/cue cards compromise the validity of the assessment. Therefore, they are not considered appropriate adaptations and are not permitted during the assessment.
- Calculators compromise the validity of some assessments as they remove the need for, or mask the presence of, conceptual understanding of some mathematical concepts being assessed. The use of calculators is not considered an appropriate adaptation during some provincial assessments of mathematics because it would compromise the validity of the assessment of certain outcomes.
- Calculators are not permitted on the following:
 - Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 3
 - Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 6
 - Mathematics/Mathématiques Day 1 in Grade 8
- Calculators are permitted on the following:
 - Mathematics Day 2/Mathématiques Jour 2 in Grade 8 (because it would not compromise the assessment of the outcomes included on Mathematics Day 2/Mathématiques Jour 2)
 - Note: must be a dedicated standard or scientific calculator (not a graphic calculator or a feature on a cell phone or other technological device)

○ **Other, please specify:** _____

This section should be used for recording the use of adaptations documented in TIENET other than those specifically listed on the back cover as long as they do not compromise the validity of the student's assessment results. These adaptations must be used by the student on a regular basis during classroom assessments.

If you have further questions regarding the use of adaptations during a Nova Scotia Assessment, please your Regional Assessment Coordinator or you can also contact Student Assessment and Evaluation at 902-424-7746 or PLANS@novascotia.ca. Please note, the department may contact the school for further clarification regarding the use of certain adaptations.

Students who are not Enrolled, Absent, or Exempt

Students in assessed grade levels are expected to participate in provincial assessments, if appropriate. For example, principals, in consultation with parents and guardians and the student, may exempt a student or the student's program planning team may determine if a student should be exempted from the assessment.

Section 3 of the back cover of the assessment booklet relates to students who did not participate in the assessment. The following categories describe students who do not participate in Nova Scotia Assessments, with the exception of students on an IPP (see Participation of a student on an Individual Program Plan section). It is important to fill in the corresponding circle on the back cover of the student booklet.

Not enrolled at this school

A personalized booklet for a student no longer attending your school must not be used. Include their empty booklet with other secure assessment materials to be returned to the department.

Do not use this booklet for another student, and do not send it to the student's new school. (The student will use a non-personalized booklet at their new school.)

Absent

The student was absent during the assessment administration and make-up sessions (e.g., illness, bereavement).

Exempt

When a student does not write some or all of the assessment due to a reason not listed on the back cover of the student assessment booklet, please fill in the "Exempt" circle. Reasons for exemption could include the following:

- a) Student is home-schooled and does not follow the Public School Program
- b) Student participates in the Public School Program in a location other than the school (e.g., hospital, long-term care facility)
- c) Student is learning English as an Additional Language (EAL): see section on *Students Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)*.

Students Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Students Learning English as an Additional Language are expected to participate in the Nova Scotia Assessment (NSA) in Literacy/Reading and Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques. However, principals, in consultation with parents and guardians and the student, may exempt a student if the student has been learning English for one year or less, or if completing the assessment would be deemed inappropriate given the student's current English language skills.

Students Learning English as an Additional Language may use the full range of adaptations that are available to all students as long as they are documented in TIENET. In addition, they may use an electronic translator and/or a bilingual dictionary (paper or electronic) during the NSA. Internet access may be provided for students using an electronic translator and/or bilingual dictionary. An electronic translator or dictionary must be used on a computer monitor large enough to be visible by the teacher.

Students Learning English as an Additional Language may be given extra time to write the NSA as long as each section is written in one sitting.

The use of an electronic translator or extra time does not need to be a documented adaptation in TIENET for Students Learning English as an Additional Language.

Scoring and Reporting

Overview of Scoring and Reporting Procedures

Student writing tasks completed on Nova Scotia Assessments will be scored by teachers at scoring sessions. Selected response items will be electronically scored at the department. Individual student reports will be made available through PowerSchool to schools and then distributed to parents and guardians. Provincial and regional results will be published on the Student Assessment and Evaluation website at plans.ednet.ns.ca/results.

Procedures for Requesting the Re-scoring of Nova Scotia Assessments

- A student's parent or guardian may submit a request to the school principal for the re-scoring of a student assessment within the time frame outlined in the Re-score Requests: Schedule of Dates on the following page.
- The principal will explain to the person making the request that the student booklet will not be made available for viewing. The principal will explain the reasoning for this: the assessment is a secured assessment instrument, and there is no evidence in the student booklet itself regarding how the assessment was scored (so that all scorings are blind). The principal will also explain the following:
 - Student writing is scored at scoring sessions, and selected response items are electronically scored at the department. Assessment reports are then made available to the school through PowerSchool.
 - Procedures used in the scoring process ensure reliable, accurate, and fair scoring of student work.
 - Re-score results will be final and will replace the original results, even if the results are lower than the original.
- The principal will then have the parent or guardian confirm the request and acceptance of the re-scoring outcome by signing the Request for Re-scoring form. The principal will then forward all completed forms to the Regional Assessment Coordinator according to the schedule.
- The Regional Assessment Coordinator must notify the appropriate coordinator in Student Assessment and Evaluation in advance of emailing or faxing completed re-scoring requests to ensure they are promptly received for processing.
- An expert panel of three teachers will re-score the assessment. The scores determined by this expert panel will be final, even if the results are lower than the original scores.
- According to the schedule, Student Assessment and Evaluation will notify the school principal (by email, copied to the Regional Assessment Coordinator) when the revised report is available on PowerSchool.
- The school principal will convey the re-score results to the person who made the request according to the schedule.
- The school principal will ensure that the student's cumulative records are updated with the new student assessment report.

Re-score Requests: Schedule of Dates

Action	Deadline
Parent or guardian contacts Principal to request a re-score	4 weeks from the date individual student results are released
Principal forwards parent or guardian re-score request to Regional Assessment Coordinator	6 weeks from the date individual student results are released
Regional Assessment Coordinator forwards parent or guardian request to the department	7 weeks from the date individual student results are released
The department returns the re-score results to the Principal	9 weeks from the date individual student results are released
Principal conveys the re-score results to the parent or guardian	10 weeks from the date individual student results are released
Principal updates the student's cumulative records	10 weeks from the date individual student results are released

Note: The specific dates for re-score requests will be provided to principals when individual student assessment results are released to schools.

Questions and Answers

1. What does secure assessment mean?

The Nova Scotia Assessments are secure forms. No part of the assessment, including student work, is to be copied or shared. Every copy of the assessment sent to the school must be returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the department). Only students enrolled in the grade level of a particular assessment will write that assessment. Students with an Individual Program Plan (IPP) in English language arts or Mathematics/Mathématiques may or may not write that subject area's assessment based on their Program Planning Team's decision. Alternate arrangements are required for students who are not eligible to write an assessment during the administration of the assessment (e.g., students in combined classes, students on IPPs not writing the assessment). Copies of assessments will not be provided for the teacher's use; however, one English assessment booklet will be provided to French immersion teachers for use during the mathématiques assessment.

2. Why must Nova Scotia Assessments remain secure?

Measures are taken to ensure that Nova Scotia Assessments are reliable, valid, and fair to students. In addition to new assessment items, selected items from one year's assessment will be embedded in the following year's assessment. This enables the department to make a genuine comparison of student performance on those common items, independent of the overall difficulty of the assessments. Making the assessment secure allows the department to use these common items to equate forms year-over-year, and it allows the department to perform longitudinal studies of student performance.

3. Do French immersion students participate in Nova Scotia Assessments? Would they be at a disadvantage?

French immersion students participate in all Nova Scotia Assessments except for Literacy in Grade 3 because early French immersion students begin formal English language arts instruction at the beginning of grade 3. French immersion students are not at a disadvantage; they have just as much opportunity to succeed in an English language arts assessment as do their counterparts in the English program. For mathematics, all students write the same assessment in the language of their mathematics instruction, either English or French. An English assessment booklet is provided to French immersion teachers during the assessment in case a student has difficulty reading a question. The teacher can then show the English booklet to the student so they can read it in English.

4. Do international students participate in Nova Scotia Assessments?

Yes. International students are expected to participate in the assessments.

5. Do Students Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) participate in Nova Scotia Assessments?

Students Learning English as an Additional Language are expected to participate in the Nova Scotia Assessment (NSA) in Literacy/Reading and Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques. However, principals, in consultation with parents and guardians and the student, may exempt a student if the student has been learning English for one year or less, or if completing the assessment would be deemed inappropriate given the student's current English language skills.

Students Learning English as an Additional Language may use the full range of adaptations that are available to all students as long as they are documented in TIENET. In addition, they may use an electronic translator and/or a bilingual dictionary (paper or electronic) during the NSA. Internet access may be provided for students using an electronic translator and/or bilingual dictionary. An electronic translator or dictionary must be used on a computer monitor large enough to be visible by the teacher.

Students Learning English as an Additional Language may be given extra time to write the NSA as long as each section is written in one sitting. The use of an electronic translator or extra time does not need to be a documented adaptation in TIENET for Students Learning English as an Additional Language.

- 6. Do students who were retained in a grade participate in an assessment a second time?**
Yes. Taking an assessment a second time provides updated results for students and teachers. This information can be used in combination with classroom assessment information to inform instruction that will support the student's learning in the areas of reading, writing, and/or mathematics/mathématiques.
- 7. Do students who are home-schooled participate in Nova Scotia Assessments?**
Students who have been formally withdrawn from the Public School Program, and are home-schooled are not eligible to participate in the assessment. Many students considered to be "home-schooled" are, in fact, participating in the Public School Program—even if only for a subject or two. Such students may be registered at their local school, and, as such, should be offered the opportunity to participate in the assessment.
- 8. Do students who participate in the Public School Program in an alternate location participate in Nova Scotia Assessments?**
Students enrolled in the Public School Program in an alternate location (e.g., hospital, long-term care facility) may or may not be eligible to write an assessment. Contact Student Assessment and Evaluation (902-424-7746) regarding eligibility.
- 9. Do students who are suspended participate in Nova Scotia Assessments?**
Students who are suspended are expected to participate in the assessments, whether they are serving an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. It is best if arrangements can be made for students who are suspended to participate in the assessment at the same time as the other students.
- 10. Are students allowed to use dictionaries and thesauri when they write Nova Scotia Assessments?**
Students are allowed to use a paper (not electronic) dictionary and thesaurus during only the literacy/reading and writing assessments. Dictionaries and thesauri are not permitted during mathematics/mathématiques assessments.
- 11. What about combined classes? Should non-grade level students participate in the assessment?**
No. Those students will have to be otherwise accommodated during the assessment.
- 12. What about multiple English language arts or mathematics classes—but just one English language arts or mathematics/mathématiques teacher? Who should administer the assessment to the other classes?**
All students should write the assessment at the same time. Some schools may require other teachers to administer the assessment. The Administration Guide includes scripts that all teachers administering the assessment must follow. These procedures ensure consistency and uniformity across classes and schools.
- 13. Can all the students write the assessment together in the gymnasium or cafeteria?**
No. Gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias, etc. are not appropriate venues for the administration of the assessment. The assessment should be seen as just another part of the students' day, and students should participate in the assessment in a familiar environment where they can be comfortable and relaxed. Students should write the assessment in the classroom where they would normally take English language arts or mathematics/mathématiques; if this is not possible, then they may write the assessment in their home room or another classroom.

14. What happens if a student is absent for one day of the assessment?

Upon return, the student will write the same part of the assessment as the rest of the class. The previous day(s) missed can be made up during a make-up session(s). It is recommended that teachers consult with the school's administration in order to find a convenient time and place for the student to write the assessment. Students may write only one day's tasks on any single day. All days of the assessment are to be completed. The school's assessment booklets must be returned to the department on or before the deadline.

15. What happens if a student is absent during the school's administration dates?

If a student is absent during the school's administration dates, the student is expected to write the assessment before the deadline. It is recommended that teachers consult with the school's administration in order to find a convenient time and place for the student to write the assessment. Students may write only one day's tasks on any single day. All days of the assessment are to be completed. The school's assessment booklets must be returned to the department on or before the deadline.

16. What happens if the teacher is absent during the assessment?

Although substitute teachers who are familiar with the assessment information guide, administration procedures, and scripts can administer an assessment, it may be more effective to have a teacher who is familiar to the students administer the assessment. In this case the substitute would cover that teacher's class for the administration of the assessment. Regardless of who administers the assessment, it is critical that the teacher is familiar with the purpose of the assessment, the information guide, administration procedures, and scripts prior to the administration.

17. How can students prepare for the assessment?

Students should be informed of upcoming provincial assessments in reading, writing, and/or mathematics/mathématiques. Students may feel more relaxed once they know what to anticipate. Students will become familiar with the format and types of questions on the assessment through sample questions provided by the department prior to the assessment. Teachers' positive comments about the assessment will encourage students to do their best.

18. May teachers help students during the assessment? What instructions may teachers give to their students?

In order to ensure an accurate picture of students' independent reading, writing, and mathematics/mathématiques skills, it is important that teachers do not help students other than by directing them to the appropriate pages on which to work. Teachers can, and should, encourage their students to try their best, to answer every question, to read the instructions carefully, to take their time, and to check their work.

19. May teachers define terms to their students?

No. Students are allowed to use a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words and use a thesaurus to look up synonyms and antonyms of words during only Literacy/Reading and Writing assessments. Dictionaries and thesauri are not permitted during Mathematics/Mathématiques assessments.

20. May teachers explain or clarify questions on the assessment?

No. Teachers may not explain or clarify questions on the assessment. If students have difficulty reading a word or question during an assessment of Mathematics/Mathématiques, teachers may quietly read an individual word or question verbatim that students request (no elaboration or explanations). Teachers may quietly read an individual word, but they may not read whole texts or questions during an assessment of Literacy/Reading and Writing unless the student has a documented adaptation for verbatim reading.

- 21. Can I rewrite or edit a student's handwriting if it is difficult to read or decipher?**
No. Teachers may not rewrite or edit a student's writing on the assessment. With the exception of verbatim scribing and the back cover, there should be no teacher marks in a student booklet.
- 22. May teachers give students more time than the allotted time per day, if needed?**
Yes. Each day teachers may give students an additional 15 minutes, per day. (This 15 minutes of extra time is not considered an adaptation, and it does not need to be documented.) It is important that all students across the province have the same opportunity for an additional 15 minutes to complete the assessment, if needed.
- 23. May students go back and complete sections that they may not have completed on previous days?**
No. In order to maintain assessment validity and to ensure an accurate picture of students' independent reading, writing, and mathematics/mathématiques skills, it is important that students are given only the time allotted each day and do not return to a previous day's work.
- 24. Should the results of the Nova Scotia Assessments be used as part of students' class marks or report card grade?**
No. Students' class marks and report card grades are determined by their classroom teacher, and they are based upon each student's achievement in relation to a wide range of curriculum outcomes over time.
- 25. Can students use worked examples or cognitive credit cards/cue cards during Nova Scotia Assessments?**
No. Worked examples or cognitive credit cards/cue cards compromise the validity of the assessment. Therefore, they are not considered appropriate adaptations and are not permitted during the assessment.
- 26. Can students use privacy screens/personal offices during Nova Scotia Assessments?**
Students are permitted to use privacy screens/personal offices during assessments of Literacy/Reading and Writing of provincial assessments. If students use them during assessments of Mathematics, they must not compromise the validity of the student's assessment results; for example, if privacy screens/personal offices are used, they must not include mathematics strategies, definitions of mathematical terms, metric unit conversions, etc.
- 27. What if another class is scheduled during the morning of the assessment (e.g., physical education or music with specialist teachers)?**
The assessment must be completed in the mornings of the school's administration dates within the administration period as outlined on the Student Assessment and Evaluation website at plans.ednet.ns.ca. Each assessment session must be completed according to the assessment's administration guide. Specialist classes may need to be rescheduled in order to accommodate assessment administrations.
- 28. Which documented adaptations should students use during provincial assessments?**
Students are eligible to use their adaptations documented in TIENET as long as they are used on a regular basis for classroom assessment and follow the criteria outlined in the Adaptations section of the Information Guide. If students are not familiar with a particular adaptation, it may not be in the student's best interest to use it for the first time during a provincial assessment. However, as an example, if students usually use the documented adaptation of assistive technology for writing for classroom-based assessments, they should have access to this technology during provincial writing assessments.
- 29. How should assessment sessions be scheduled to accommodate stretch breaks?**
Assessment sessions may be scheduled any time during the morning that is most convenient for schools. For example, students could complete the first section of the assessment before recess, participate in their recess time or morning break, and complete the remainder of the assessment after recess. The day's schedule may need to be adjusted, as needed, to accommodate the stretch breaks.

30. Do students who use the verbatim reading adaptation receive a student report for reading?

Yes. Although decoding is an integral part of the reading process, decoding is not the focus of provincial reading assessments; decoding is best assessed through individual conferences and reading records by the classroom teacher. Provincial assessments provide important information around students' understanding of different aspects of text comprehension (literal, non-literal, and analytical understanding) across four different genres (information, narrative, visual, and poetry/song texts). Students will receive information about these elements as well as an overall reading comprehension performance level on their individual student report for reading.

31. What happens with provincial assessments when there are changes to curriculum?

Provincial assessments are based on selected curriculum outcomes in English language arts and mathematics/mathématiques. Provincial assessments are responsive to changes in curriculum and reflect new outcomes when new curriculum is fully implemented. During times of transition between curricula, such as during curriculum pilots or gradual implementation phases, provincial assessments include outcomes that are common to both the current and the new curriculum.

For 2021-2022, only outcomes that are identified as foundational in the Foundational Outcome documents (September 2020) and measurable on large scale assessments will be included on Nova Scotia Assessments. To reflect this change, Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 8 has been reduced to 60-minute sessions for Mathematics Day 1 and Mathematics Day 2.

32. What do I do if I have a question that is not answered above?

If you have a question that is not answered above or on the Student Assessment and Evaluation website at plans.ednet.ns.ca, please contact Student Assessment and Evaluation at 902-424-7746 or PLANS@novascotia.ca for assistance.

Appendix: Nova Scotia Assessment: Read-aloud (NSA-RA) Platform

Overview: The Nova Scotia Assessment: Read-aloud (NSA-RA) Platform provides an audio recording of provincial assessments to a student

- who has a read-aloud adaptation for assessments documented in TIENET, and
- who normally has forms of assessment read-aloud using technology

We recognize the realities and variances that technology present; therefore, if students have any access issues, or technical glitches, we recommend a back-up plan for a human reader.

Registration: Classroom teachers are to register their students who require access to the NSA-RA (who have a documented adaptation for read-aloud and use this adaptation on a regular basis during classroom assessments). Please note:

- the NSA-RA registration must be done at the school site; the registration process tests the school IP address to ensure the school IP will work during the NSA-RA access dates.
- only students who have been registered for the NSA-RA will be able to access the audio files. Teachers are not to register their own username for the NSA-RA because access is only for student GNSPES user logins.

Registration is available online (<https://plans.ednet.ns.ca/content/school-registration>) and open as outlined below:

NSA-RA Registration Dates	2021-2022 Nova Scotia Assessments
September 2-30 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 6 (RWM6-EN) • Reading, Writing, and Mathématiques in Grade 6 (RWM6-IM)
March 1-May 1 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy and Mathematics in Grade 3 (LM3-EN) • Mathématiques in Grade 3 (M3-IM) • Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 8 (RWM8-EN) • Reading, Writing, and Mathématiques in Grade 8 (RWM8-IM)

Registration Instructions: Classroom teachers will need to complete the following steps:

1. Select the **number of students** you are requesting read-aloud (audio files) for. *(You can register up to 10 students at a time; if you have more than 10 students, complete the registration a second time.)*
2. Select the **grade and program** you are registering students for. *(If you are registering students in the English program as well as students in French immersion, complete the registration for one assessment and submit, and then complete the registration for the second assessment.)*
3. Click **“Set up form”**.
4. Enter the **student GNSPES user IDs** for the students you are registering; click **“tab”** to move to the next field because if you click **“Enter”**, the registration form will be submitted. *(Enter the username only, for example, ABC123456; do not include “@gnspes.ca”; enter student user IDs only, do not enter teacher usernames; when you press “tab” the student name/grade is updated, or an alert indicating that the username is not recognized appears which means the username needs to be verified before submitting the registration.)*
5. Click **“Submit Registrations”**.

Complete this request at the school site where the student attends.

Step 1: Requesting Read-Aloud (audio files) for how many students?
Select number [dropdown]

Step 2: In what grade and program?
Select Grade & Program [dropdown]

Step 3: Set up form [button]

Access & Use Policy (French) | Code of Conduct (French) | Department of Education and Early Childhood Development | Google Apps Support

Read-Aloud adaptation requested by:

Region: [dropdown]
School: [dropdown]
Teacher: [dropdown]
From IP: [dropdown]

This information will be saved with your request.

For the following students completing Literacy and Mathematics in Grade 3:
Enter GNSPES username only. For example, abc123456.
TAB (NOT ENTER) to next space.

abc123456 [input] No user found [input]
[input]
[input]
[input]

Submit Registrations [button]

Access & Use Policy (French) | Code of Conduct (French) | Department of Education and Early Childhood Development | Google Apps Support

Access Dates: Below are dates that the NSA-RA is available for student access.

NSA-RA Access Dates	2021-2022 RWM6-EN <i>Grade 6 English Program students</i>	2021-2022 RWM6-IM <i>Grade 6 French immersion students</i>
September 13- October 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Sample Questions • Mathematics in Grade 6 - Sample Questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Sample Questions • Mathématiques en 6^e année - Échantillon de questions
October 4-21, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Day 1 • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Day 2 • Mathematics in Grade 6 - Day 1 • Mathematics in Grade 6 - Day 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Day 1 • Reading and Writing in Grade 6 - Day 2 • Mathématiques en 6^e année - Jour 1 • Mathématiques en 6^e année - Jour 2

NSA-RA Access Dates	2021-2022 LM3-EN <i>Grade 3 English Program students</i>	2021-2022 M3-IM <i>Grade 3 French immersion students</i>
April 25-May 13, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy in Grade 3 - Sample Questions • Mathematics in Grade 3 - Sample Questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathématiques en 3^e année - Échantillon de questions
May 16-27, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy in Grade 3 - Day 1 • Literacy in Grade 3 - Day 2 • Mathematics in Grade 3 - Day 1 • Mathematics in Grade 3 - Day 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathématiques en 3^e année - Jour 1 • Mathématiques en 3^e année - Jour 2

NSA-RA Access Dates	2021-2022 RWM8-EN <i>Grade 8 English Program students</i>	2021-2022 RWM8-IM <i>Grade 8 French immersion students</i>
April 25-May 20, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Sample Questions • Mathematics in Grade 8 - Sample Questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Sample Questions • Mathématiques en 8^e année - Échantillon de questions
May 24-June 3, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Day 1 • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Day 2 • Mathematics in Grade 8 - Day 1 • Mathematics in Grade 8 - Day 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Day 1 • Reading and Writing in Grade 8 - Day 2 • Mathématiques en 8^e année - Jour 1 • Mathématiques en 8^e année - Jour 2

Access Information and User Instructions: It is important for teachers to review the following information and instructions so they can show students where to access the NSA-RA on the Google Landing Page.

- It is recommended that students access the NSA-RA to complete the Sample Questions prior to the administration of the assessment so that they become familiar with the types of questions and the format of the NSA-RA site; if there are any issues loading the NSA-RA on your computer, try a different browser (i.e. Chrome).
- Students are encouraged to use the NSA-RA per usual classroom practice (i.e. using headphones or earbuds in the classroom as opposed to relocating to another area in the school).
- NSA-RA is only available from school site IP addresses from Monday through Friday during access dates.
- The NSA-RA icon will be available on a registered student’s GNSPES landing page according to the scheduled access dates outlined on the previous page.

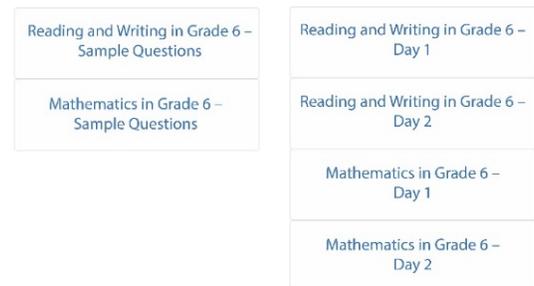
Step 1: Instruct student(s) to log into GNSPES (gnspes.ca) with their student username and password.



Step 2: On the GNSPES landing page, have student(s) click on the **NSA-RA** icon which is located in the “Classroom” block.



Step 3: Instruct student(s) to click on the block to access the audio files required for the sample questions or the day of the assessment being completed (see images on the right).



Step 4: Instruct student(s) to click on the “Play” button (▶) to play the audio file for each page of their booklet; students can click on the pause button (⏸) to stop an audio. Students can also slide the blue dot to the left to replay a section or to the right to skip ahead.

Audio files are displayed in the order of the booklet. Audio files include the page number and the file name (see images on the right).

