M-Step™

Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress

7

A companion guide to the grade 7 Parent Report

M-STEP Parent Report Guide

MICHIGAN Department of Education

August 2025

Thank you for partnering with your school to provide a positive education for your student. As parents and educators working together, we will ensure our children receive an education that prepares them to thrive in a global economy and civic life.

Michigan's Academic Standards (www.michigan.gov/academicstandards) set clear and consistent educational expectations for what students should learn and be able to do at each grade level. A student who follows these standards is ready to succeed in college and the workplace by the time they graduate from high school.

The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress assessment (M-STEP) is one way to measure student progress in grade 7 based on the academic standards in English language arts and mathematics. Results from M-STEP are just one source of information about your child's learning progress. Local tests, classroom work, and report cards can add more insight into how well your child is learning. To learn more, visit the M-STEP web page (www.michigan.gov/mstep).

As you review your child's results, remember these assessments are a snapshot of your student's progress. Something as simple as a student not feeling well on the day of the assessment could affect their performance. This is why your child's school and teachers use a number of tools and strategies—such as projects, classroom activities, and assessments—to identify learning and achievement levels.

We all share the responsibility of helping every child be successful. At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations and helping your child meet them. If your child needs extra support or wants to learn more, work with their teacher to identify resources and opportunities that are appropriate for them. Talk with your child's teacher regularly about how your child is doing and how you can support their learning at home. Building a connection between home and school will greatly improve the impact of your child's learning.

Together as partners, we can ensure success for every child.

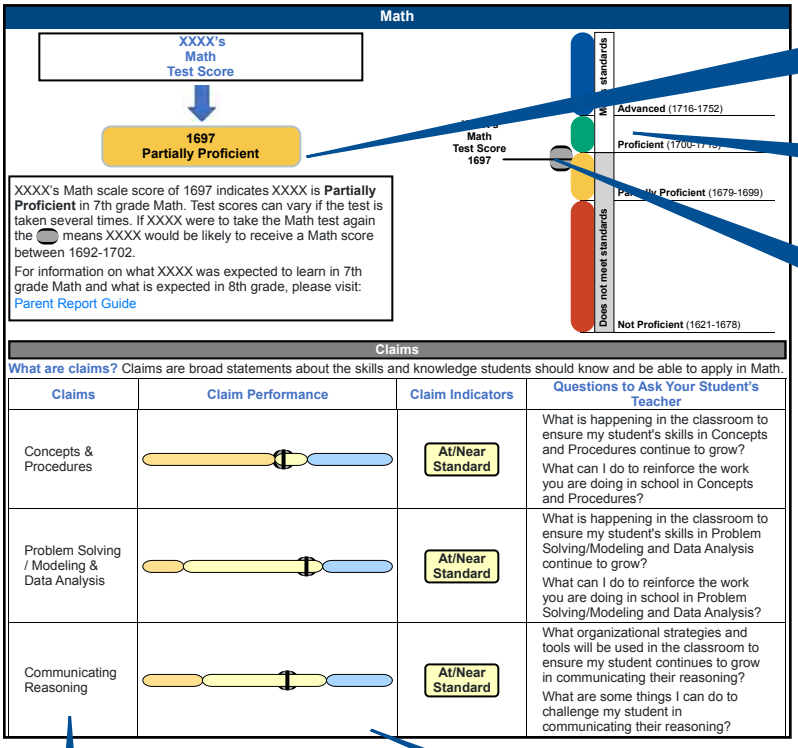
How to Read Your Child's Score Report

Michigan schools assess the progress of seventh grade students on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress, or M-STEP. The M-STEP measures what students know and are able to do in relation to Michigan's academic standards. Students in grade 7 take M-STEP tests in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

M-STEP results are released in late summer to provide parents and teachers with valuable information on where students are doing well and where they might need additional support. Scores also can support instruction by helping educators better align curriculum and instruction to state standards.

Score Report Components

M-STEP results: grade 7 mathematics example



Student Overall Performance Level and Scale Score
Students receive a numerical scale score and, based on that score, are assigned one of four performance levels: Not Proficient, Partially Proficient, Proficient, or Advanced. This section of the report provides your student's numerical score and performance level.

Confidence Interval
Test scores can vary if the test is taken several times; this bar shows the range of scores your child would be likely to receive if they took the test another time.

Claims
Assessments in ELA and mathematics include sub-categories, called claims, which relate directly to Michigan's learning standards for those subjects. This section describes the claims that were assessed.

Claim Performance Indicators
The report shows at a glance whether your student's score on this claim shows above standard, at or near standard, or below standard. The bar chart indicates the range of possible performance within each claim. The black vertical lines indicate your student's performance.

Content Areas on the M-STEP

When you review your child's score report, you will see an overall score as well as other information on how your child is progressing in each content area. The test results, which are aligned to Michigan's Academic Standards, tell you, your child, and your child's teachers how well your student is mastering the standards.

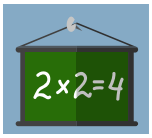
English Language Arts

The English Language Arts (ELA) M-STEP is organized into four areas, or claims:

	Reading	Students can read, understand, and analyze a variety of texts, including stories and nonfiction. This includes identifying main ideas and details, comparing passages, and using content clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words. Students can also draw conclusions and make inferences.
	Listening	Students can understand, evaluate, and respond to information they hear after listening to passages.
	Writing	Students can develop a well organized written response for a variety of purposes and audiences. Their writing must include appropriate detail and evidence to support their main idea, as well as the use of grade-appropriate spelling and grammar.
	Research/Inquiry	Students respond to questions using evidence from multiple passages to support their main idea. This involves being able to identify important information in a text that supports their writing.

Mathematics

The mathematics M-STEP is organized into three areas, or claims:

	**Concepts & Procedures**	Students can understand and use strategies correctly and explain why certain strategies work the way they do.
	Problem Solving: Modeling and Data Analysis	Students can use problem-solving strategies and skills to solve real-world mathematics problems. Students can also identify important information in a word problem and determine how to use it to solve the problem.
	Communicating Reasoning	Students can explain their thinking and draw conclusions when solving a problem.

What Your Child Learned in GRADE 7

English Language Arts

- Citing several pieces of evidence when analyzing a text.
- Comparing and contrasting a written story, drama, or poem to an audio, filmed, or staged version.
- Identifying and evaluating specific claims and arguments in a text.
- Comparing and contrasting various texts, including poems, stories, and historical novels.
- Determining how an author's word choices affect the meaning and tone of a text.
- Producing writing that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- Using technology to produce and publish writing that links to sources.
- Conducting short research projects to answer a question, drawing information from several reliable sources.
- Including multimedia and visuals in presentations to help support their findings.
- Participating in class discussions about various texts and topics in which the student is prepared to refer to evidence in a text when discussing ideas, restating other people's ideas, and understanding other perspectives.

Mathematics

- Applying what is known about rates (such as miles per hour) and ratios (relationships between two numbers) to determine whether two quantities are in a proportional relationship (have equivalent rates or ratios).
- Using proportionality to solve a variety of percent problems, including those involving discounts, interest, taxes, and tips.
- Graphing proportional relationships and understand the unit rate (amount per 1) informally as a measure of the slope (steepness) of the related line.
- Solving multistep word problems by adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative rational numbers in any form (whole numbers, fractions, or decimals).
- Solving real world problems that can be modeled with an inequality such as $x > 8$ or an equation such as $1/4 (x + 5) = 21$ by answering the question: "What number does x have to be to make this statement true?"
- Solving real-world and mathematical problems involving the area (space inside) and circumference (distance around) of a circle, the area of two-dimensional objects such as triangles, and the volume (capacity inside) and surface area (total of all outside space) of three-dimensional objects such as boxes.
- Using and evaluating probability for single (picking a 4 from a deck of cards) and compound events (picking a 5 and then a 2 from a deck of cards).

What Your Child Will Learn in GRADE 8

English Language Arts

- Citing evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of a book, article, poem, or play.
- Analyzing where texts on the same topic disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
- Writing and developing a topic with well-chosen facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information.
- Writing arguments that state a claim, identifying the claim from opposing views, and supporting the claim with reasons and evidence from accurate and credible sources.
- Conducting research projects that use many credible print and digital sources.
- Using technology to produce and publish writing and to work with others on writing.
- Participating in class discussions on various topics, texts, and issues by expressing ideas and building on others' ideas.
- Listening to another speaker's argument and evaluating whether the claims are based on sound reasoning and evidence, and identifying evidence that is irrelevant.

Mathematics

- Developing the understanding that every rational number (such as 1/2, 0.3, 2, or -2) can be written as a decimal, but that the decimal form of an irrational number (such as √(2) or π) is both non-repeating and infinite (goes on forever).
- Using linear equations (y = mx + b), systems of linear equations (two or more equations), and their understanding of slope (rate of change) to model situations and solve problems.
- Comparing the properties of two functions (a special rule) represented in different ways (table, graph, equation, or description).
- Using transformations translations (slides), rotations (turns), reflections (mirror image), and dilations (enlarging or shrinking) to understand congruence (the exact same) and similarity (proportional size).
- Using the Pythagorean Theorem (an equation relating the lengths of the sides of a right triangle: a2 + b2 = c2) to solve problems.
- Solving problems involving the volume (amount that can be held) of cylinders, cones, and spheres.
- Constructing scatterplots (many points on a graph) to examine the relationship between two quantities, for example, arm span and height.

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