

Information for parents/carers of Year 3 students

In May of each year, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 take part in the National Assessment Program – literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN).

NAPLAN helps parents, carers and educators to see if children are meeting important numeracy and literacy standards. It is used to support school improvement processes by enabling teachers to monitor their students' progress over time and to identify areas of strength and development.

NAPLAN provides parents and carers with an individual report, showing their child's results and a national comparison of their child's performance against other Australian students in their year level.

NAPLAN and your child

This will be the first time your child takes part in NAPLAN. The literacy tests include reading, writing and language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation). The numeracy test assesses mathematics skills applied to real life contexts, suitable to the age and knowledge of students. The tests are done at school and are considered as another part of the curriculum.

NAPLAN is not a pass or fail test and is not high-stakes. It simply looks at what level children are achieving in literacy and numeracy, in a school and national context.

ACARA encourages some familiarisation with the test, particularly for Year 3 students, but NAPLAN is not a test that can be crammed for, and students are not expected to do so. What is taught in the classroom ends up being assessed in NAPLAN.

When are the tests?

The tests take place each year in May and are held over three consecutive days. Year 3 students complete four tests:

- language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- writing
- reading
- numeracy.

Each test takes 40–45 minutes to complete.

2015 NAPLAN Year 3 test timetable

2015	Tuesday 12 May	Wednesday 13 May	Thursday 14 May
Year 3	language conventions: 40 minutes writing: 40 minutes	reading: 45 minutes	numeracy: 45 minutes

What format does the testing have?

The tests usually take place in a normal classroom and are usually administered by the teacher. Students do the tests without any assistance from the teacher or other students. Students who currently receive assistance in their classrooms for a range of reasons may be able to apply to have that assistance available for NAPLAN. [You can read more about available assistance on the National Assessment Program \(NAP\) website](#). Teachers are asked to remove from the classroom any charts that may provide answers.

Schools have access to past test papers, which they can use to familiarise students with the types of questions that will be asked. Familiarising students with previous test papers is a good way for teachers to introduce students to the testing procedures and help them feel comfortable about doing the test.

What do the tests demonstrate?

NAPLAN tests provide information to you and the school about your child's learning progress in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. The tests also help you place your child's performance in a school and national context. This information is useful in identifying opportunities to develop students' skills further as it provides further direction for your child's learning.

The tests also help governments and education authorities understand better how schools, school systems and the nation are going in these important areas.

What preparation does my child need to do for the NAPLAN tests?

Students cannot prepare specifically for these tests and are not expected to do so. However, some familiarisation of the NAPLAN tests, particularly for Year 3 students, can be beneficial.

NAPLAN tests skills in literacy and numeracy that are developed over time through the school curriculum. These tests contain questions similar to those that occur in regular classroom learning and assessment. The best way you can help your child prepare for NAPLAN is to reassure them that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program, and to encourage them to simply do the best they can on the day.

You can visit the [NAP](#) website to see example tests for each NAPLAN year group. If you have any questions about your child's preparation for NAPLAN, make a time to speak with their teacher.

When do I get the results?

Results will be available later in the school year. Your child's report will be sent to your school around August–September. The school will notify you when the reports are to be given to you. No one else sees these individual results – they are strictly confidential.

Your school's overall average results will also be available on the [My School website](#) when it is updated around March the following year. Publicly available results never include names or personal details of students.

What if my child fails?

NAPLAN is not pass or fail. It is not high-stakes testing. Children do not progress through schooling as a result of NAPLAN results. NAPLAN tests are designed to provide you with information, rather than a grade result. Your child's results in each area are plotted on a scale that shows their skill level and where they are in relation to the national average for their year level. The report also shows the range for the middle 60 per cent of students in Year 3 and where your child sits in relation to this.

Why does it take so long for results to be available?

The lead time is due to the depth of analysis required to produce reports that draw comparisons across a variety of levels – individual, school, state and national.

This will change when NAPLAN moves online. Your child's school will have an opportunity to opt-in to participate in NAPLAN online from 2017, with all schools expected to be online by 2019. NAPLAN online will provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information. Results from NAPLAN tests taken online are expected to be returned to schools within weeks rather than months. For more information about NAPLAN online, visit the [NAP website](#).

What should I do with my child's results?

If students continue with NAPLAN at each opportunity, parents/carers can see their child's growth across a seven-year schooling period.

The results are just one tool to help you understand your child's learning progress in literacy and numeracy. NAPLAN results should always be considered alongside all the other important information you and your child's teacher have about your child from other assessments.

You can make time to discuss your child's results with your child's teacher if you wish to do so.

Does my child have to take part?

NAPLAN provides important information to parents/carers/teachers that can immediately benefit the instruction students are receiving in the classroom. ACARA encourages all parents/carers to ensure their students participate in NAPLAN tests and benefit from the wealth of information the results provide.

While all students are expected to participate and receive valuable data as a result of participating, you may withdraw your child from the tests due to religious beliefs and philosophical objections to testing. This is a matter for consideration by individual parents/carers. A formal application in the manner specified by each state or territory must be received by a school principal prior to the testing. Your principal can provide further information about the withdrawal process.

It is not appropriate, however, for anyone to place any pressure on you to withdraw your child, regardless of their abilities. NAPLAN is for every child.

Can my school exempt my child from the testing?

All students are expected to participate; however, in special cases, a school principal can submit a formal exemption for students with disabilities and newly arrived migrants to Australia from a non-English speaking background. In both cases, principals and teachers need to discuss the proposed exemption with the student's parent/carer and gain their permission prior to the testing period.

What if my child feels nervous about taking the tests?

Some nervousness is natural – just as your child may find other school events or end-of-term tests a little confronting.

As this is the first time your child will do NAPLAN tests, it is natural if they feel a little nervous. However, it can help students feel less nervous if they understand the process involved and what information will be taken from the tests. As a parent, you can also help your child by reassuring them that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program, and by encouraging them to simply do the best they can on the day. If you are concerned about your child's level of nervousness, please talk to your child's teacher.

Is there more information available about NAPLAN?

If you would like to find out more about NAPLAN, visit the [NAP website](#).