

NECAP Science

2016 Inquiry Task Field Test Information

Background

The Maine Department of Education has agreed to recruit schools to serve as field testing sites to administer NECAP Science Inquiry Tasks in grades 5, 8, and 11. The field tests will occur between November 1 and November 18, 2016. In the NECAP Science assessment, inquiry tasks can either be “hands on” or a traditional paper-and-pencil test session. (“Hands on” means that students work in pairs to conduct an experiment and record their data before responding independently to test questions.) The tasks are always “hands on” at grade 5 and can either be a “hands on” or paper-and-pencil test at grade 8 depending on the task. The grade 11 inquiry tasks are always a paper-and-pencil test. For the field tests this fall, the grade 5 and the grade 8 inquiry tasks are “hands on,” and the grade 11 task is a paper-and-pencil test.

Benefits of Participating

Students will be given the opportunity to engage with science content in a different way than traditional assessments and will be able to provide feedback about their experience. Students will work on the inquiry task in pairs at grade 5 and grade 8. Students in grade 11 will work independently. In addition, schools will be paid \$5.00 per completed test. It is helpful to have more than one classroom within a school participate in the inquiry task field test.

Prior to Administration of the Inquiry Task Field Test

Prior to receiving/viewing any field test materials, all participating test administrators need to sign a nondisclosure form and submit it to Measured Progress.

At grade 5 and grade 8, representatives from Measured Progress will attend the field test administration to record observations during testing. The representatives will be available approximately 30 minutes prior to the field test administration to meet with the designated test administrators to answer any questions they may have about administering the inquiry task field test. Note: The inquiry tasks and administrator instructions will be sent to schools approximately one week prior to the administration date so that the designated test administrators have time to review the materials and read the instructions. Because the grade 11 task is a paper-and-pencil test, participating schools will receive test materials and instructions in the mail, with an agreed upon test window in which to administer the field test and return all the materials.

Amount of Time Needed for Administration

Grade 5 and grade 8 schools will need to set aside approximately 3 hours in a morning or an afternoon to complete the inquiry task field test and follow-up interviews.

At grade 5 and grade 8, the test administrator will need approximately 10 minutes to set up the inquiry tasks prior to the students beginning the test session. The inquiry task

field test is designed to be completed in a minimum of approximately 75 minutes but schools should schedule 120 minutes for testing to ensure that all students complete the test. The breakout of testing time for grade 5 and grade 8 students is shown below:

Directions/Demonstrating Materials /Student Making Predictions	15–30 minutes
Directions/Students Performing the Inquiry Task (in pairs)/Cleaning Up	30–45 minutes
Students Responding to Test Questions (individually)	30–45 minutes

At grade 11, no set-up time is required for the inquiry task. The inquiry task at this grade is designed to be completed in 45–60 minutes, but schools should schedule 60 minutes for students to complete the test.

After Administration of the Inquiry Task Field Test

Grade 5 and grade 8 schools should plan on making students available for approximately 20 minutes following the completion of the field test to speak with a representative from Measured Progress. This representative will solicit feedback from students as a group about their field test experience. In addition, the test administrators will be expected to provide feedback about the administration of the inquiry tasks after testing. Questions for the administrators focus on topics such as clarity of the inquiry task and instructions, level of task difficulty, level of student engagement, ease of inquiry task kit material set-up and use, format of booklet and graphics, and other general comments about the inquiry task. If time does not allow for teacher interviews, this follow-up can be done via email if necessary.

Grade 11 students will be given a short questionnaire to fill out after completing the task. This will be returned to Measured Progress with the other test materials. Administrators will also receive a questionnaire to complete, but administrator responses can be submitted to Measured Progress via email if preferred.

The TOTAL time commitment for participation in the grade 5 or grade 8 field test will be approximately 2 hours of student time and between 2¼ to 2½ hours for test administrator(s). The total time commitment for grade 11 will be approximately 1¼ hours of student time and 1½ hours for test administrators.

If you are interested in having your classroom(s) participate, please contact Stephanie Means at Measured Progress at 800-431-8901 x7158, or at means.stephanie@measuredprogress.org.