



The 
Nation's
Report Card

Reading 2011

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AT GRADES 4 AND 8

 **NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATION STATISTICS**
Institute of Education Sciences

U. S. Department of Education
NCES 2012-457

Contents

- 1 Executive Summary
- 4 Introduction
- 8 Grade 4
- 37 Grade 8
- 66 NAEP Inclusion
- 68 Technical Notes
- 72 Appendix Tables



What Is The Nation's Report Card™?

The Nation's Report Card™ informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time.

Since 1969, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects. NAEP collects and reports information on student performance at the national and state levels, making the assessment an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only academic achievement data and related background information are collected. The privacy of individual students and their families is protected.

NAEP is a congressionally authorized project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible for carrying out the NAEP project. The National Assessment Governing Board oversees and sets policy for NAEP.

Photo Credits:

© Bill Denison Photography; © moodboard/Corbis #42-20450995; © Blend Images/PunchStock #106298293; © Daniel Lafflor/the Agency Collection/Getty Images #109723676; © Shana Novak/Stockbyte/Getty Images #104350042; © EllenMoran/Vetta/Getty Images #108328418; © TongRo Image Stock/Collage/Corbis #42-25867635; © Isajahlove/Dreamtime #12049999; © Fuse/Getty Images #78752853; © moodboard/Corbis #42-20462241; © Daniel Lafflor/the Agency Collection #109722664; © Ocean/Corbis #42-26378350; © Somos/Veer/ #SMP0006581; © 2006 Highlights for Children; © 2006 Highlights for Children; © Ocean/Corbis #42-28148362; © Tetra Images/Getty Images #99275826; © Corbis/Spirit/Corbis Images #42-17173810; © Blend Images/PunchStock #115621634; © Mark Edward Atkinson/Getty #88749777; © Corbis Yellow/Corbis #42-16758880; © Courtesy Library of Congress; © Courtesy Library of Congress; © Courtesy Library of Congress; © Christopher Futcher/CEFutcher/iStock #9229843

Executive Summary

Nationally representative samples of 213,100 fourth-graders and 168,200 eighth-graders participated in the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading. At each grade, students responded to questions designed to measure their reading comprehension across two types of texts: literary and informational.

Students' reading comprehension unchanged from 2009 at grade 4, and improves at grade 8

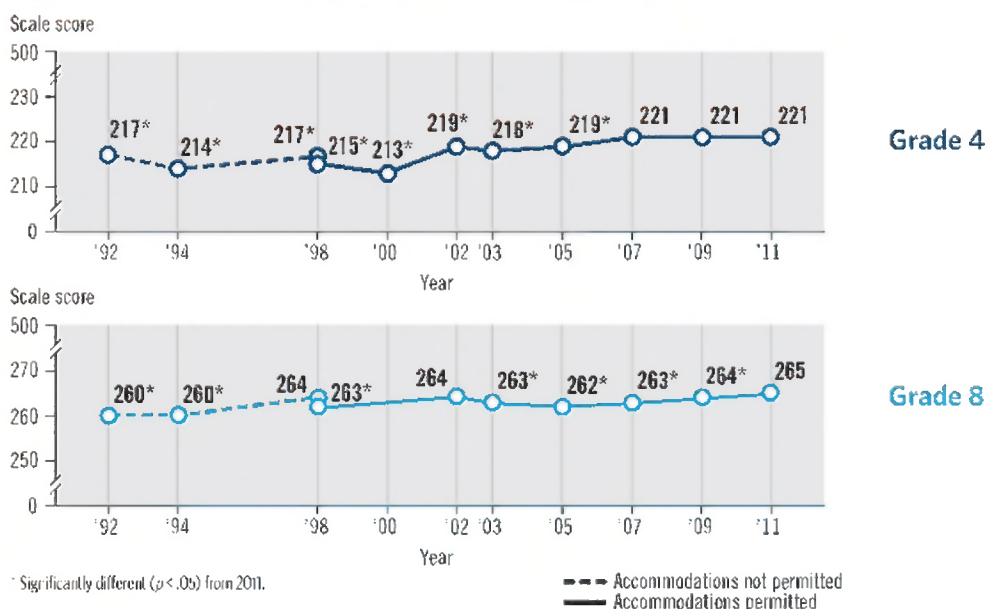
At grade 4, the average reading score in 2011 was unchanged from 2009 but 4 points higher than in 1992 (figure A).

- Scores were higher in 2011 than in 2009 for students from both higher-income families (i.e., students not eligible for the National School Lunch Program) and lower-income families (i.e., students eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch).

At grade 8, the average reading score in 2011 was 1 point higher than in 2009, and 5 points higher than in 1992.

- Scores were higher in 2011 than in 2009 for White, Black, and Hispanic students but did not change significantly for Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaska Native students. While the White - Hispanic score gap was smaller in 2011 than in 2009, there was no significant change in the White - Black gap over the same period.

Figure A. Trend in fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP reading average scores

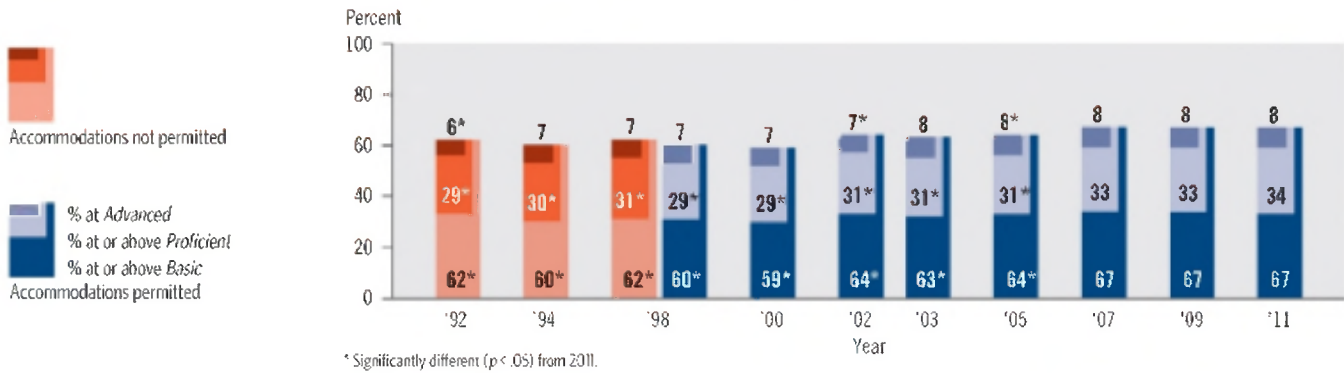


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, 1992-2011 Reading Assessments.

Higher percentage of eighth-graders perform at or above *Proficient* than in 2009

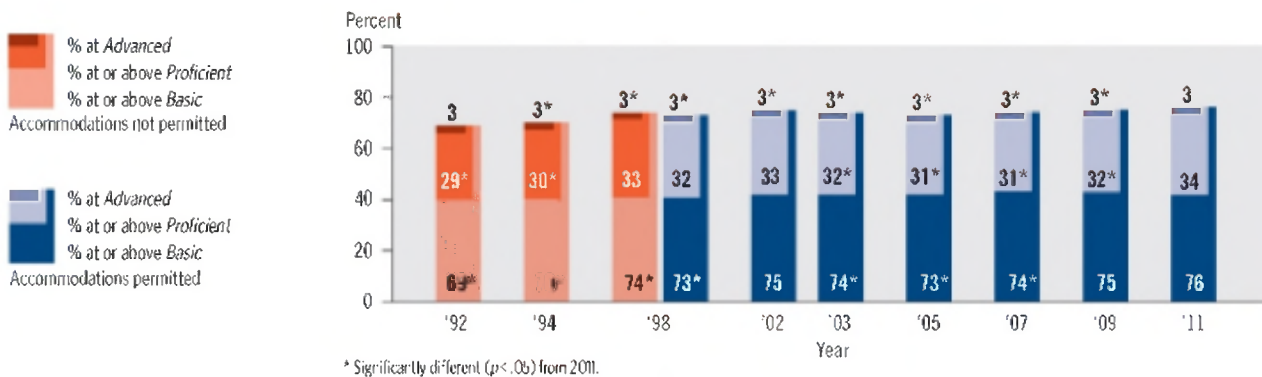
At grade 4, the percentages of students performing at or above *Basic*, at or above *Proficient*, or at *Advanced* did not change significantly from 2009 to 2011 but were higher in 2011 than in 1992 (figure B).

Figure B. Trend in fourth-grade NAEP reading achievement-level results



At grade 8, the percentage of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in 2011 was higher than in 2009 and 1992 (figure C). The percentage of students at *Advanced* in 2011 (3.4) was higher than in 2009 (2.8). The percentage of students at or above *Basic* did not change significantly from 2009 to 2011 but was higher in 2011 than in 1992.

Figure C. Trend in eighth-grade NAEP reading achievement-level results



Examples of knowledge and skills demonstrated by students performing at each achievement level

Basic

- Interpret a character's statement to describe a character trait (grade 4).
- Recognize the main purpose of an informative article (grade 8).

Proficient

- Recognize the main problem that the character faces in a story (grade 4).
- Recognize the main purpose of an informative article (grade 8).

Advanced

- Use story events to support an opinion about story type (grade 4).
- Form an opinion about a central issue in argument text and support with references (grade 8).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, 1992-2011 Reading Assessments.

Scores in 12 states higher than in 2009 at grade 4 or 8 and lower in 2 states

Changes in average reading scores for public school students from 2009 to 2011			
	Both grades	Grade 4 only	Grade 8 only
Higher	Hawaii Maryland	Alabama Massachusetts	Colorado Connecticut Idaho Michigan Montana Nevada North Carolina Rhode Island
Lower		Missouri South Dakota	
Scores were not significantly different from 2009 at either grade in 38 states and jurisdictions.			

Other information presented in this report

- Results in 2011 for **additional racial/ethnic groups**
- Information collected on how often fourth-graders **read for fun** and how frequently eighth-graders have **class discussions** about class reading

Score gaps narrow in some states

At grade 4	
Score gaps between higher- and lower-income students narrowed from 2003 to 2011 in four states. Arizona New Hampshire New York Pennsylvania	Score gaps between higher- and lower-income students widened from 2003 to 2011 in seven states/jurisdictions. Colorado District of Columbia Maine Oregon Vermont Washington West Virginia

At grade 8	
White – Black score gaps narrowed from 1998 to 2011 in 1 of 31 participating states with samples large enough to report results for both student groups. Delaware	White – Hispanic score gaps narrowed from 1998 to 2011 in 2 of 22 participating states with samples large enough to report results for both student groups. California Oregon
Racial/ethnic gaps did not widen from 1998 to 2011 in any of the states that participated in both years.	

NOTE: In NAEP, lower-income students are students identified as eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Higher-income students are not eligible for NSLP.