

WHY TEST?

Assessments play a key role in the teaching and learning process.

They answer the questions: "Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?" and "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?"

Different tests serve different purposes.



Formative assessments help teachers gain insight into what students are learning so they can tailor instruction. These may be formal, like chapter tests or screeners, or they may be casual moments where a teacher polls the class to check for understanding.



Summative assessments inform students, teachers, parents, and the community of achievement at a certain point in time in order to celebrate success, plan interventions, help educators improve their practice, and support continued progress.



All assessments help students develop an awareness of how they learn and what they have mastered, so they can take an increased responsibility for their academic success.

Assessment plays a role in supporting student learning. But testing should never dominate a school culture. Instead classrooms should be focused on high quality instruction every day.

WHY WE HAVE STATE TESTS

In every Tennessee classroom, teaching and learning looks different based on the textbooks, curricula, and lessons that school and teacher has chosen. State leaders have a responsibility to make sure these varied learning opportunities are preparing all students for college, career, and life.

Our state tests serve multiple objectives:

- Provide feedback about students' academic progress and how it aligns with grade-level expectations
- Give parents and teachers a big-picture perspective about how a student is progressing compared to peers across the district and state, including a student's strengths and growth opportunities
- Build confidence and transparency about students' readiness for college and the workforce among Tennessee universities and employers
- Help educators strengthen instruction and reflect on their practice
- Hold us accountable to serving all students fairly
- Highlight schools where students are excelling, so we can learn from those who are doing well

