

USER GUIDE FOR FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT (FSA) ITEM-LEVEL REPORTS (Reading, Writing, and Numeracy)

The purpose of this guide is to assist educators in interpreting and understanding the incorrect responses made by Grade 4 and Grade 7 students on their FSA reading, writing, and numeracy tests. FSA test questions (items) are designed to measure students' skills in these three important areas.

There are two types of FSA test questions: multiple choice and written response.

I. Multiple-Choice Test Items

Test Items

Multiple-choice test items are designed to target a specific content area while giving the student a number of choices to select as the *correct response*. *Incorrect responses*, also known as 'distractors', are designed to represent plausible errors in students' understanding at the level of content or process knowledge. If more than 20% of students select a specific plausible error, teachers and administrators know that this is an area of concern that may need attention.

Item-Level Presentation

The following item-level information is presented in all multiple-choice item-level reports:

- **Foundation Skills** – the area of instruction that develops basic skills, such as reading and numeracy
- **Content Area** – the specific set of skills developed through sub-topics
- **Number of Students Who Responded to the Item**
- **Percentage of Students Who Answered Incorrectly**
- **Specific Curricular Aspect That Needs Attention** – this section identifies specific misconceptions for each item when more than 20% of students selected an incorrect response. This may indicate either an error or a lack of focus and/or attention in pedagogy.

How to Read an Item-Level Report – Multiple Choice Questions

FSA Item-Level Response Reports, whether at the provincial, district, or school level, contain information on all incorrect responses made by students. Each row in the report represents an item and each column represents a characteristic of that item.

- Column 1 (left): the *content area* according to FSA classification
- Column 2: the test item number

- Column 3: the total number of students who responded to the item (this may be lower than the total number of students who took the test)

- Column 4: the percentage of students who answered the item incorrectly

- Column 5: a description of students' common misconceptions with regard to the content or process knowledge corresponding to the item in question.

An example of report layout is provided in the table below.

Grade 4 Numeracy: An Item-Level Analysis (District Level)

School District Mincode: N/A FSA May/2004

Content Area	Item #	Number of Students who Responded to the Item	Percentage of Students who Answered Incorrectly	Specific Curricular Aspect that Needs Attention [>20% selected incorrect response]
Number	3	403	39	*
Number	1	404	16	N/A
Shape and Space	26	384	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students subtracted a number of minutes from an end time incorrectly on a 12-hour clock in trying to find the start time
Statistics and Probabilities	10	392	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were unable to interpret a bar graph and calculate the difference in two sets of data

Notes: (1) '*' indicates that there was no single curricular aspect that needed attention.

(2) 'N/A' indicates that there were fewer than 20% of the students who incorrectly answered the item; hence, no curricular note is reported.

II. Written Response Test Items

Test Items

Written response test items are designed to target a specific content domain while giving the student the opportunity to elaborate on the strategy chosen to address the question. Correct responses are classified under five score levels (0 to 4) that are designed to determine the level of content or process knowledge. The higher score corresponds to the appropriate strategy and the correct answer (for numeracy), or a clear, accurate, well-supported and complete response (for reading and writing).

Item-Level Presentation

The following item-level information is presented in all written response item-level reports:

- **Foundation Skills** – the area of instruction that develops basic skills, such as reading, writing, and numeracy
- **Content Area** – the specific set of skills developed through sub-topics
- **Number of Students Who Responded to the Item**

• **Number and Percentage of Students Who Answered the Item at Levels 0 to 4**

• **Score Description of Item(s)** - For each item, a score description is provided that allows teachers and administrators to identify areas of concern and specific curricular aspects that may need attention.

How to Read an Item-Level Report – Written Response Questions

FSA Item-Level Response Reports, whether at the provincial, district, or school level, contain information on all incorrect responses made by students. Each row in the report represents an item and each column represents a characteristic of that item.

- Column 1 (left): the *content area* according to FSA classification
- Column 2: the test item number
- Column 3: the total number of students (% in brackets) who responded to the item (this may be lower than the total number of students who took the test)
- Columns 4-8: the total number and percentage of students who answered the item at specific score levels

An example of report layout is provided in the table below.

Grade 4 Reading: An Item-Level Analysis (District Level)

School District Mincode: N/A FSA May/2004

Content Area	Item #	Number (%) of Respondents	Number (%) of Score 0	Number (%) of Score 1	Number (%) of Score 2	Number (%) of Score 3	Number (%) of Score 4
Interpret texts	12	3486 (100%)	6 (0%)	631 (18%)	1994 (57%)	793 (23%)	62 (2%)
Analyze texts	35	3535 (100%)	1 (0%)	807 (23%)	2118 (60%)	574 (16%)	35 (1%)

A separate table contains score descriptions for written response items.

Score Description
Score 0 – response is totally inaccurate, demonstrates no understanding of the passage or reading task, no aspects of the question are adequately addressed, all information is irrelevant.
Score 1 – response is largely inaccurate and unsupported, demonstrates limited understanding of the passage or the task, many aspects of the question are inadequately addressed, often vague and incomplete, may include a great deal of irrelevant material, response is literal rather than interpretive.
Score 2 – response is partially accurate and supported, demonstrates understanding of the gist of the passage and the task on a literal level, aspects of the question are addressed, may be unclear, incomplete or lack detail, may include simplistic interpretation or irrelevant material, may include simple inferences.

Score 3 – response is generally accurate and clear with some supporting details, demonstrates a general understanding of the key elements of the passage and the task, most important aspects of the question are addressed, may show some interpretation and insight, but may miss subtle or complex ideas, may include simple inferences and extend information.

Score 4 – response is accurate, clear, complete, and well-supported with specific text-based examples, demonstrates a thorough understanding of the passage and of the task, important elements of the question are addressed, may show interpretation and insight, may include inferences and extend information.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT EDUDATA

Provincial-level reports of FSA 2004 item-level results can be found on the **Edudata Canada** website.

Districts and schools may download FSA Item-Level Response Reports from the **Edudata Canada** website at no cost. All reports are in English. Item-level reports for schools within District 93, Conseil Scolaire Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique, are available in French.

Custom Tabulations Reports

Customized reports may be purchased from **Edudata Canada**. Examples of customized FSA Item-level Response Reports for schools or districts include:

- Gender
- French Immersion
- Aboriginal
- ESL

Reports are not available for school populations of less than five students. If you are interested in purchasing a customized FSA item-level report, please contact Edudata.

Telephone: 604-822-2338

Fax: 604-822-8818

Email: edudata.canada@ubc.ca