

Tips for Parents

Studies show that parents who are active in their child's learning have long-term positive effects on student performance. Parents who are involved throughout the academic year are better able to offer help during testing. The home environment plays an important role in a child's academic progress. The home environment must contribute to the learning process and offer opportunities for positive feedback. Below are some tips to assist parents with preparing their children for better academic performance.

- ✓ Read with and in front of your child.
- ✓ Provide a variety of books and magazines to expand your child's vocabulary.
- ✓ Maintain open communication with your child's teacher to monitor his/her progress.
- ✓ Reinforce school and classroom rules at home, check homework, and know what is expected of your child.
- ✓ Encourage your child to participate in classroom activities and to work to his/her potential at all times.
- ✓ Make sure your child gets adequate sleep and eats a nutritious meal before taking a test.
- ✓ Check with your child's teacher regarding effective testing strategies to help performance on tests.
- ✓ Emphasize to your child that "cramming" is not a good study habit. Success on standardized tests cannot be accomplished overnight; studying is a continuous process that must be nurtured and developed over time.



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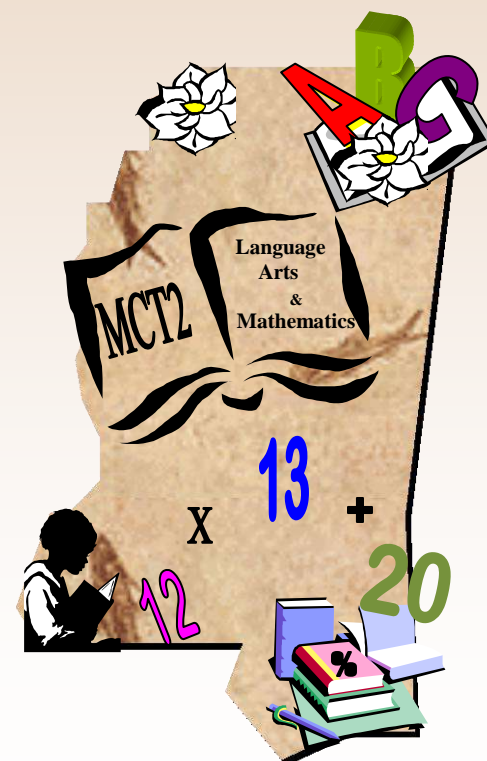
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MISSISSIPPI CURRICULUM TEST, SECOND EDITION

MCT2



"Quality Education for Every Child"

INTRODUCTION

The Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition, (MCT2) is a measure of student achievement in Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 based on the *2006 Mississippi Language Arts Framework - Revised* and *2007 Mississippi Mathematics Framework - Revised*. In addition to being the basis for state accountability in these grades, the MCT2 is designed to meet the federal testing requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), 2001.

The MCT2 contains test questions of varying degrees of difficulty that are aligned to the content, skills, and processes represented by Mississippi's academic content standards as specified in the state curriculum frameworks and the academic performance level descriptors.

The MCT2 is administered annually over a three-day period. The MCT2 Language Arts is composed of two sections. The Reading section is administered on day one, and the Writing section is administered on day two. The MCT2 Mathematics is administered on day three.

Students do not receive a pass or fail score on the MCT2. Rather, students are assigned a performance level based on the students' performance on the assessment. Performance levels are organized into four proficiency levels: Minimal, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced.

For more information on the MCT2:
<http://tinyurl.com/45pxv2t>

To access the MCT2 practice tests:
<http://tinyurl.com/2ajc6t2>

To access MCT2 Performance Level Descriptors:
<http://tinyurl.com/4745d2t>

To access the MCT2 Technical Manual:
<http://tinyurl.com/4eabezp>

ABOUT THE TESTS

The **MCT2 for Language Arts** measures a student's knowledge of grade-level curriculum. The following competencies are measured by the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition:

- **Vocabulary:** The student will use word recognition and vocabulary (word meaning) skills to communicate.
- **Reading:** The student will apply strategies and skills to comprehend, respond to, interpret, or evaluate a variety of texts of increasing length, difficulty, and complexity.
- **Writing:** The student will express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas effectively.
- **Grammar:** The student will apply Standard English to communicate.

The **MCT2 for Mathematics** for grades 3-7 measures a student's knowledge of and skill level in general mathematics and for grade 8 a student's knowledge of and skill level in Pre-Algebra.

- **Numbers and Operations:** Analyze relationships among numbers and the four basic operations. Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.
- **Algebra:** Explain, analyze, and generate patterns, relationships, and functions using algebraic symbols, demonstrate an understanding of the properties of the basic operations, and analyze change in various contexts.
- **Geometry:** Develop mathematical arguments about geometric relationships and describe spatial relationships using coordinate geometry.
- **Measurement:** Develop concepts and apply appropriate tools and techniques to determine units of measure.
- **Data Analysis and Probability:** Formulate questions that can be addressed with data and select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze data. Apply basic concepts of probability.

KEY MCT2 FACTS

- All eligible students in grades 3 – 8 must participate.
- The MCT2 is an untimed, multiple-choice assessment that requires students to bubble in answers on an answer document.
- Students in grades three and four will answer 63 reading/writing items and 55 math items; students in grades five and six will answer 73 reading/writing items and 60 math items; and students in grades seven and eight will answer 83 reading/writing and 60 math items.
- Some math items for all grades will require students to use a ruler. The MDE is recommending that students are familiar with using a 12" lead-in edge ruler with both English and metric measurements.
- Only students in grades seven and eight are allowed to use approved calculators on all math items.
- Students taking the grade 8 MCT2 for Mathematics are provided a formula chart, which can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/2crxjel>.
- Students who score at the Minimal Level on any part of the MCT2 in Grades 3 or 7 will be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST) as part of the State Board of Education Intervention Policy (SBE Code 4300). For more information, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/4go6jl6>.