

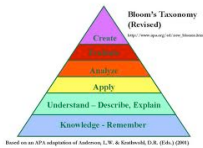
ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue 4 March 2011

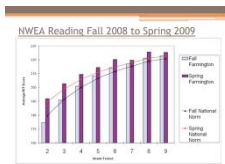
Assessment ~ Which MAP resources...?

Page 1



MAP Normative Data Chart and Glossary of Terms

Page 2



DesCartes Quick Guide

Instructions for accessing...
Page 3



In Our Schools

Oaxacan Art
Page 3



In Our Schools

Wild Kratts, PBS program asks for student feedback...
Page 4 & 5



21st Century Skills

Digital tools in a digital age...

Page 5



Assessment: Which MAP resources do you use to help define student progress?

As educators, we all use assessment to inform instruction. Assessment is key in guiding us towards an understanding of what students know, what they should know, and what they will need to

learn next. Creating an instructional plan for students which ensures that they are being exposed to content at their instructional level is paramount. It is every teacher's hope that students can apply, deepen and broaden their understanding of concepts and skills. This surely marks the path towards mastery. As you prepare to issue report cards for students in your class, you will have to take into



consideration an array of formal and informal testing results and data you have collected for each student. There are several resources which you might find helpful in reviewing, summarizing and updating each student's academic profile.

[2008 Normative Data Chart](#)

This chart can also be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

[NWEA Glossary of Terms](#)

Key terms can be found on page 2.

2.

2008 READING STATUS NORMS (RIT VALUES)
2008 MATHEMATICS STATUS NORMS (RIT VALUES)

Grade	Beginning-of-Year		Middle-of-Year		End-of-Year		Grade	Beginning-of-Year		Middle-of-Year		End-of-Year	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean		Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
K	146	147.6	151	152.4	155	156.3	K	148	149.5	152	153.1	158	158.1
1	160	160.2	167	166.5	173	171.9	1	164	163.4	171	169.9	178	176.7
2	179	179.7	186	186.0	190	189.6	2	179	179.5	186	186.5	191	190.0
3	192	191.6	197	196.3	200	199.0	3	192	192.1	199	198.0	203	202.4
4	201	200.1	205	203.7	207	205.8	4	203	203.0	208	207.6	211	211.4
5	208	206.7	211	209.6	212	211.1	5	212	211.7	216	216.0	220	219.2
6	213	211.6	215	213.8	216	214.8	6	219	218.3	222	221.4	225	223.8
7	217	215.4	219	217.3	219	217.9	7	225	224.1	228	226.4	230	228.3
8	220	219.0	222	220.6	223	221.2	8	230	229.3	232	230.9	234	232.7
9	222	220.9	223	221.9	224	222.6	9	233	231.6	234	232.5	236	234.0
10	226	223.9	227	224.9	228	225.4	10	237	235.2	238	235.9	239	237.1
11	227	225.2	228	225.6	227	225.6	11	239	237.1	240	238.5	241	239.8

Achievement vs. Ability

NWEA's tests measure a student's academic achievement, not his or her ability. Achievement is evidence of what a student has learned and can do. NWEA assessments measure a student's achievement in a subject area. NWEA's mission relates to improving this achievement. Ability describes a student's capacity to learn, independent of what has been achieved. NWEA's tests do not measure ability.

Comparative Data to Inform Instructional Decisions

This document is provided to help educators make informed decisions about what instructional programs or optional strategies might be used to help kids learn. These data should be used as one of many data points for instructional decisions rather than as the only single placement guide. They are applicable to a variety of instructional programs and instructional decisions.

DesCartes: A Continuum of Learning

DesCartes translates test scores into skills and concepts students may be ready to learn. It orders specific reading, language usage, mathematics, and science skills and concepts by achievement level. For reading, language usage, and mathematics, the skills and concepts align to the goal structures and content of a state's standards. For science, the skills and concepts align to national standards for the two domains of science: *Concepts & Processes* and *General Science*. For easy reference, the skills and concepts are grouped along the continuum according to the RIT measurement scale.

RIT

Tests developed by NWEA use a scale called RIT to measure student achievement and growth. RIT stands for Rasch unit, which is a measurement scale developed to simplify the interpretation of test scores. The RIT score relates directly to the curriculum scale in each subject area. It is an equal-interval scale, like feet and inches, so scores can be added together to calculate accurate class or school averages. RIT scores range from about 100 to 300 depending upon the scale and test season. They make it possible to follow a student's educational growth from year to year.

RIT Point Growth Norms

RIT Point Growth Norms are tables that allow educators to get a more realistic look at growth across various starting RIT scores at each grade level. These norms establish typical student growth relative to other students in the NWEA norming study who started with the same RIT score in the same grade.

RIT Range

The RIT range reflects the rounded range of scores that is one standard error of measure around the student's RIT score.

RIT Score

See *RIT*.

Are you interested in finding out more about how to use the Descartes Continuum of Learning?

The following steps will help you to access the data tool ~ DesCartes.

*Login to MAP with your correct username and password.

*You will see a menu/bar or tabs on the left.

*Select ~ **Instructional Resources**

*Select ~ Class by RIT if you want to view a class Breakdown Report.

*Go to ~**Data Tools**

~**Select DesCartes** if you want to work with the Continuum of Learning.

To use DesCartes:

1. Select the subject in the left column.
2. Select the goal area in the middle column.
3. Select the RIT range in the right column.

The requested page will display.



MAP Resources for Teachers

There are several resources for teachers which will be of use in trying to put your MAP data to work.

www.lexile.com

[Scholastic Lexile-Leveled Library](#)



Pictured above: Ms. Patashnick working with individual fifth grade students

A GarageBand Project Worth Singing About

Fifth grade teachers at Hosmer and Sara Patashnick, music teacher, are beginning a collaborative project. Students will be composing a graduation song. Initially, the students will be writing lyrics guided by classroom teachers. During music, Ms. Patashnick will encourage students to explore GarageBand

and come up with tracks in ABA form which ultimately may be used on their fifth grade graduation day. The students are currently working individually on the melody and sharing their work with each other. The next step will be to combine loops as they move towards composing a song for each class. Once this step is complete, elements of the three songs will be fused into a single graduation song. Part of this work will include the development of a bulletin board by Ms. Patashnick where she will post student interviews regarding struggles they face while developing loops and how they will overcome these. The creativity, collaboration and critical thinking that is fused into this project is evident by watching the level of engagement in students during music.

Live Webcast for Kids in Grades 3-6

On Tuesday, April 6, Scholastic will present a live webcast exploring the six traits of writing and featuring writing expert Ruth Culham and the authors of *The 39 Clues*. To sign up for this webcast and to download an Educators Guide, please visit:

[Decoding Writing with the 39 Clues](#)



Creative Collaboration at Cunniff

Jessica Gillooly (art teacher) and Christine Rono, (grade 2 teacher) at the Cunniff have been working on a cross-curricular project. During art the students have been creating fantastic animals inspired by Mexican "Oaxacan" woodcarvers. These images are used during Writer's Workshop so that the students can write about their imaginary animals.

Pictured above:

Mrs. Gillooly with Mrs. Rono's second grade art class, Oaxacan images created by students, and Christina proudly displaying her fantastic animal.



Researching the New Year Around the World

Erin Sees, instructional technology teacher at the Cunniff, has been working with students in grades



3,4, and 5. Small group projects are the focus in order to encourage students to work collaboratively. Mrs. Sees has decided to select a topic of interest namely New Year Celebrations Around the World. During their weekly visits and in teams of three, the students have been busy researching a country and how this country celebrates the New Year. To reinforce their findings, the students are also collecting photos from Google Life Photo Archive which will be used as well. The finished products will be displayed through a variety of applications: Glog-[Glogster/](#) (grade 3), [Prezi](#) (grade 4), iMovie (grade 5).

Picturing Writing

Maggie Mattson, third grade teacher at Hosmer, has been using Picturing Writing, a strategy for fostering literacy through art with her students. Recently, the students invited their parents in for a showing of their first publication which featured their field trip to and study of Plimoth Plantation. [Life at Plimoth Plantation by Delaney](#) is an example of student work this has



been

published using the application [ISSUU](#). Delaney is a student in Mrs. Mattson's class.

Life at
Plimoth Plantation



Delaney Dunn

PBS Wild Kratts Looks for Hosmer Second Grade Input

Mrs. Suarez and a group of her second graders (10) at Hosmer recently participated in an evaluation of a new educational PBS Kids television show and website, [Wild Kratts](#). This project was part of a class on formative evaluation at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In this series, the Kratt brothers provide science education with fun and adventure while ...



Pictured Above: Wild Kratts Review Team - Grade 2, Ms. Suarez

Wild Kratts contd.

traveling to different animal habitats around the globe.

Here is what students thought about this experience. [Ride on Remora](#) was among the students' favorite game. Here students ride sharks to earn creature powers. Fun and exciting are words coined to describe this game. They also felt that you had to be quite smart to get through the various

challenges. [Go Nuts](#), another favorite, asks the player to collect and store tasty acorns for the winter faster than the Blue Jays do. Lily loved the different levels in this game and her classmates agreed. Many of the challenges are timed and Cooper felt that this made the games all the more exciting and hard. All of the students agreed that controlling multiple keys at the same time was by far quite a skill that you needed to excel in.

Mrs. Suarez felt that this was an enriching experience for her ...

students. She was enthusiastic about her participation and this quality was easily noted in her students as well.

Getting "In the Zone" at the Lowell

Kevin Shpritzer, third grade teacher at the Lowell challenges his students to phase out the rest of the world and get "into the zone" while they are reading or writing. To get students to know exactly what he is referring to, he asks them what it feels like to watch a really good movie. Mr. Shpritzer challenges students to strive for that same level of interest, feeling or engagement when reading a book or during writing time. Oftentimes, after this independent reading or writing time, Mr. Shpritzer asks his students if they got "into the zone" and if so, to describe what this felt like. As teachers, we hope all our students understand what it means to get "in the zone".

Summer Reading Logo Contest

The Watertown Public Schools and the Watertown Public Library are sponsoring a logo contest which will help to kick off the summer reading program for students in the Watertown Public Schools.

We're looking for a student to come up with a logo that defines the importance of stopping to read during the summer months. Please see [Logo Contest Guidelines](#) for additional details or see the FirstClass General Conference posting.

21st Century Skills

Schools, skills and learning are changing to meet the needs of students. Our world is being transformed by technological advances and this must be taken into consideration when we think and talk about how children learn. An NEA article written by Tim Walker nicely summarizes the role of teachers and students living in a digital world. [Turning the Page: Students live in a digital world. Are schools ready to join them?](#)

A healthy toolkit of good practices, resource and skills is what we as teachers strive to use as we encourage students to work creatively, think critically, communicate and collaborate. This truly marks the path towards 21st Century teaching and learning.

