

**Performance Level Descriptors and Cut Scores  
for  
Alternate Portfolio Assessment  
for  
Students with Disabilities  
for  
Science Portfolio (Grades 5 and 7)**

**July 2007  
Standard Setting Results**

## Performance Levels and Descriptors for the Grade 5 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System for Students with Disabilities

Performance Level	Definition
Not Evident	Fifth-grade students with disabilities at the Not Evident Level demonstrate no evidence of performance toward the science skills being assessed.
Emergent	<p>Fifth-grade students with disabilities at the Emergent Level do not sufficiently demonstrate the science skills needed to attain the supported independence level. They are just beginning to show understanding or use of these skills; however, they are unable to perform these skills accurately without extensive support and assistance.</p> <p><i>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>identify various animal or plant structures;</i></li> <li>• <i>list examples of plants and animals found in a particular ecosystem;</i></li> <li>• <i>examine physical characteristics using everyday objects;</i></li> <li>• <i>examine various simple machines; and</i></li> <li>• <i>distinguish between various earth materials (e.g., rocks, mineral, soil) and organic matter.</i></li> </ul>
Supported Independence	<p>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at the Supported Independence Level are attempting to meet authentic, age-appropriate challenges but have limited success. They demonstrate a partial or minimal ability to apply science skills and require considerable prompting or support. They make errors but occasionally perform these skills accurately. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>create models of various animal and plant structures;</i></li> <li>• <i>make generalizations about the types of organisms in a particular ecosystem;</i></li> <li>• <i>list physical characteristics of various substances;</i></li> <li>• <i>list examples of simple machines; and</i></li> <li>• <i>make simple observations about various samples of rocks, minerals, and soil.</i></li> </ul>

## Performance Levels and Descriptors for the Grade 5 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System for Students with Disabilities (continued)

Performance Level	Definition
Functional Independence	<p>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at the Functional Independence level frequently meet authentic, age-appropriate challenges. They demonstrate reasonable performance in multiple settings and are prepared for more challenging tasks. They can apply established science skills to real-world situations but may require minimal prompting or support. They perform these skills accurately in most instances but make occasional errors. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>compare various animal and plant structures;</i></li> <li>• <i>categorize organisms found in a particular ecosystem;</i></li> <li>• <i>compare the physical characteristics of various substances;</i></li> <li>• <i>classify simple machines; and</i></li> <li>• <i>compare the characteristics of various rocks, minerals, and soil types.</i></li> </ul>
Independent	<p>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at the Independent Level demonstrate performance well beyond the Functional Independence Level. They demonstrate mastery of authentic, age-appropriate, and challenging tasks in multiple settings. They can apply established science skills to real-world problems on their own. They can generalize learned skills to solve new challenges. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Fifth-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>compare and contrast various animal and plant structures and their functions;</i></li> <li>• <i>compare the roles of various organisms within a particular ecosystem;</i></li> <li>• <i>categorize substances according to their physical properties;</i></li> <li>• <i>demonstrate the use of various types of simple machines; and</i></li> <li>• <i>conduct investigations of various rocks, minerals, and soil types.</i></li> </ul>

**Percentage of Students within Five Performance Levels  
for the  
Grade 5 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System  
for  
Students with Disabilities**

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Performance Levels</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>
0–287	Not Evident	22.17
288–325	Emergent	15.80
326–335	Supported Independence	10.14
336–351	Functional Independence	19.58
352–360	Independent	32.31

## Performance Levels and Descriptors for the Grade 7 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System for Students with Disabilities

Performance Level	Definition
Not Evident	Seventh-grade students with disabilities at the Not Evident Level demonstrate no evidence of performance toward the science skills being assessed.
Emergent	<p>Seventh-grade students with disabilities at the Emergent Level do not sufficiently demonstrate the science skills needed to attain the Supported Independence level. They are just beginning to show understanding or use of these skills; however, they are unable to perform these skills accurately without extensive support and assistance.</p> <p><i>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>identify one or more systems in the human body;</i></li> <li>• <i>examine the life cycles of various organisms;</i></li> <li>• <i>explore a variety of commonly-occurring compounds;</i></li> <li>• <i>identify objects and/or picture symbols as having potential or kinetic energy;</i></li> <li>• <i>examine various factors that affect climate and weather; and</i></li> <li>• <i>identify, using a model, the rotation and tilt of the Earth.</i></li> </ul>
Supported Independence	<p>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at the Supported Independence Level are attempting to meet authentic, age-appropriate challenges but have limited success. They demonstrate a partial or minimal ability to apply science skills and require considerable prompting or support. They make errors but occasionally perform these skills accurately. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>identify some of the organs belonging to a particular human body system;</i></li> <li>• <i>identify examples of sexual and asexual reproduction in plants and animals;</i></li> <li>• <i>identify a variety of commonly-occurring compounds;</i></li> <li>• <i>demonstrate potential or kinetic energy using common objects;</i></li> <li>• <i>list various factors that affect climate and weather; and</i></li> <li>• <i>examine the causes of the day/night cycle and seasonal change.</i></li> </ul>

## Performance Levels and Descriptors for the Grade 7 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System for Students with Disabilities (continued)

Performance Level	Definition
Functional Independence	<p>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at the Functional Independence Level frequently meet authentic, age-appropriate challenges. They demonstrate reasonable performance in multiple settings and are prepared for more challenging tasks. They can apply established science skills to real-world situations but may require minimal prompting or support. They perform these skills accurately in most instances but make occasional errors. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>identify specific organs within two or more human body systems;</i></li> <li>• <i>compare life cycles and methods of reproduction in plants and animals;</i></li> <li>• <i>list the elements that form simple commonly-occurring compounds;</i></li> <li>• <i>model activities that demonstrate the use of potential and kinetic energy;</i></li> <li>• <i>compare various factors that affect climate and weather; and</i></li> <li>• <i>model the effects of the Earth's rotation and tilt.</i></li> </ul>

## Performance Levels and Descriptors for the Grade 7 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System for Students with Disabilities (continued)

Performance Level	Definition
Independent	<p>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at the Independent Level demonstrate performance well beyond the Functional Independence Level. They demonstrate mastery of authentic, age-appropriate, and challenging tasks in multiple settings. They can apply established science skills to real-world problems on their own. They can generalize learned skills to solve new challenges. Students may be unable to perform these skills without extensive support and assistance due to physical disabilities.</p> <p><i>Seventh-grade students with disabilities performing at this level may be able to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>organize various organs according to the appropriate human body system;</i></li> <li>• <i>label the life cycles and reproductive systems of plants and animals;</i></li> <li>• <i>compare the properties of compounds with the properties of the elements of which they are composed;</i></li> <li>• <i>conduct investigations to identify various types of potential and kinetic energy;</i></li> <li>• <i>chart and compare climate and weather conditions in various regions of the country; and</i></li> <li>• <i>describe the relationship between the Earth's rotation and the day/night cycle. Additionally, describe the relationship between the Earth's tilt and the seasons.</i></li> </ul>

**Percentage of Students within Five Performance Levels  
for the  
Grade 7 Science Alternate Portfolio Assessment System  
for Students with Disabilities**

<i>Raw Score</i>	<i>Performance Levels</i>	<i>Percentage of Students</i>
0–268	Not Evident	16.02
269–295	Emergent	13.27
296–320	Supported Independence	12.59
321–342	Functional Independence	17.85
343–360	Independent	40.27