

Understanding Your Child’s Standardized Math Test Results: A Practical Guide for Parents

Purpose

This guide helps you understand your child’s standardized math test results and how those scores relate to grade-level expectations. Our goal is to give you confidence that your child is in the right grade and to explain what the numbers mean in clear, practical terms.

Percentile Rank (PR/NPR)

- **What It Is:** Percentile rank shows the percentage of students nationwide who scored **lower** than your child on the same test at the same grade level and time of year.

Band	Meaning
76–99	Above Average — Your child scored higher than 76–99% of students in the same grade; meets or exceeds grade-level expectations.
25–75	Average — Your child is performing similarly to most students nationwide; demonstrates partial to grade-level mastery of grade-level math skills.
1–24	Below Average — Your child scored lower than most students in the same grade; struggles with foundational math skills.

- **Parent Takeaway:** PR is the clearest way to see how your child compares to peers. It’s **not** a pass/fail score—it’s a **comparison**.

Grade Equivalent (GE)

- **What It Is:** GE indicates the grade level of the **average student** who scored similarly to your child on this test at the same time of year (e.g., fall vs. spring).
- **Example:** A GE of **5.2** for a 4th grader means your child’s performance on this test was similar to an **average 5th grader in the second month** of the school year. It **does not** mean your child should skip to 5th grade or that he or she has mastered all 5th-grade math content.
- **Typical Pattern:** Most students’ GE scores cluster around their **current grade** (e.g., a 4th grader’s GE often falls between **4.0** and **4.9**, depending on test timing).

- **Parent Takeaway:** GE is useful context, but it's **not a placement tool**. Use GE for comparing performance to peers.
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Common Misconceptions and What's True

- **Misconception:** “A high GE means my child should move up a grade.”
Reality: GE is a **comparison**, not a placement recommendation. It reflects how your child performed on this test. It does not indicate everything your child knows or can do.
 - **Misconception:** “A low PR means my child is failing.”
Reality: PR shows **where your child sits among peers**, not whether he or she is passing or failing. It's one data point in a bigger picture.
 - **Misconception:** “One test can measure everything my child knows.” **Reality:** A standardized test is just one way of measuring learning and growth and is a snapshot of what your child is learning. It's helpful to **focus on growth** and not just on the score.
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Next Steps for Parents

Look at the **math subtest scores** to see where your child shines or needs support.

If Your Child Scored Below Average

- **Focus on Growth:** One test is just a snapshot; progress matters most. Has your child made progress this year? In what areas have they grown, and how can you note that?
- **Practice Core Skills:**
 - Use everyday activities (e.g., cooking, shopping) to reinforce math concepts like measurement, fractions, and estimation.
 - Use BJU Press's online targeted remediation at <https://afterschoolhelp.com/> to pinpoint and remedy areas of weakness.
 - Use technology, such as the speed drills at <https://afterschoolhelp.com/pages/speeddrills/default.aspx>, to build mastery of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts.
- **Set Small Goals:** Work on one skill at a time (e.g., multiplication facts, word problems).

- **Read Math Problems Together:** Encourage your child to explain his or her thinking out loud. This practice builds confidence, problem-solving skills, and fluency in math terms.
- **Stay Positive:** Praise effort and persistence, not just correct answers.

If Your Child Scored Above Average

- **Deepen Understanding:** Encourage your child to explain *why* math works, not just how to get the right answer.
 - **Apply Math to Real Life:** Encourage your child to participate in a project like budgeting for a family event, building something with measurements, or analyzing sports statistics.
 - **Explore Advanced Topics:** Introduce concepts like basic algebra, geometry puzzles, or coding activities.
 - **Use Enrichment Resources:** Utilize online educational platforms or logic puzzle books.
 - **Encourage Creativity:** Let your child design math problems or create a math game for the family.
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Keeping Tests in Perspective

Remember that every child is uniquely gifted by God and can improve through hard work. Test scores are one way to understand your child's gifts and growth, but they don't define your child's worth or potential. Encourage your child to faithfully steward his or her abilities.

Keep a Growth Mindset: Learning is a lifelong process. Remind your child that perseverance honors God (Galatians 6:9) and that wisdom comes from Him (Proverbs 2:6).

Be Encouraged! Your role is to guide and support, not to compare. Celebrate progress and character as much as achievement.

AI was used for ideation and planning of this document. All AI-assisted content has been substantially revised by a human.