

WHAT IS THE VERTICAL SCALE?



PN-GISD

Spring
2010

Introduction

The Vertical Scale (VS) is a scoring scale that is used on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test produced by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The VS is only used for grade levels 3 through 8 and is only used for Reading and Math. All other grade levels and subjects use the older horizontal Scale Score (SS) scoring system. The VS was first utilized in the Spring 2009 test administrations.

Why use a Vertical Scale?

Both a vertical and horizontal scale scores convert the raw score of the number of questions answered correctly into a common unit of measurement that is consistent across test administrations (the number of questions and the difficulty of the questions may vary, but the scale scores adjust for this). Horizontal scales are only comparable within a grade level, but vertical scales can be compared across grades.

The VS ranges from 0 to approximately 1000, while the SS ranges from 1000 to 3000. The scores on the VS, however, are comparable from one grade level to the next while the SS scores are set independent of each other. Thus, a Met Standard score on the SS is always set at 2100 regardless of grade level/subject, while the Met Standard score varies on the VS (see Tables 1 & 2). This allows educators, parents, and students to gauge the amount of educational growth a student may demonstrate from one year to the next on the TAKS test. This kind of analysis is not possible with the SS, as a 2200 SS score in Grade 8, for example, may or may not indicate a higher performance level than a 2175 in Grade 7.

What are the Vertical Scale Met Standard Scores?

Each grade level and subject has a different score that is “passing” or Met Standard. In addition, English and Spanish versions of the test have different scales.

Table 1 TAKS Reading Vertical Scale Scores

Performance Standard	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
English Met Standard	483	554	620	644	670	700
English Commended	659	725	763	797	829	850
Spanish Met Standard	503	555	623	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spanish Commended	657	694	744	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 2 TAKS Mathematics Vertical Scale Scores

Performance Standard	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
English Met Standard	500	554	603	637	670	700
English Commended	640	698	738	783	823	850
Spanish Met Standard	503	555	627	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spanish Commended	649	692	755	N/A	N/A	N/A

Links for More Information

Texas Education Agency:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/vertscales/>