

# PARENT GUIDE

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

### WHAT DOES THIS REPORT TELL YOU?

The Individual Narrative Report that your child's school has given to you describes your child's performance on the CTP. The report contains three kinds of information about your child's performance:

The **upper part** of the report contains a table showing your child's relative position on each test in one or more groups called "norm groups".

The **middle part** of the report contains a graph showing a "probable range" for your child's relative position on each test in one of the norm groups.

The **lower part** of the report briefly describes each of the tests your child took.

The purpose of this guide is to explain the statistics that describe your child's performance and to provide more information about the tests. To help you understand your child's report, this guide includes a similar report for a fictitious student who took the CTP.

### WHAT IS A NORM GROUP?

A norm group is a group of students with whom your child is being compared— usually other students in the same grade. The sample report includes statistics that compare the student's performance with that of three different norm groups:

The **suburban norm group** consists of students in suburban public schools that use the CTP. For each test that the sample student took, the suburban norm group includes all the same-grade students in those suburban schools who took that test during the three previous years.

The **independent norm group** consists of students in independent schools that use the CTP. For each test that the sample student took, the independent norm group includes all the same-grade students in those independent schools who took that test during the three previous years.

The **national norm group** includes all the students at the appropriate grade level in all schools in the nation— large and small schools; rich and poor schools; urban, suburban, and rural schools. The statistics for the national norm group are estimates based on data from a scientifically selected sample of schools that administered the CTP in a special "national norming" study. For each test that the sample student took, the national norm group

statistics are estimates that show how this student's performance would compare with the scores that would have resulted if all the students in the nation had taken that test in the same grade as the sample student.

### WHAT IS A SCALE SCORE?

Scale Scores are generated using your child's raw score on each test taken. Your child's raw score is based on questions answered correctly and the difficulty levels of these questions in each content area. This raw score is converted to and placed on a standardized scale (hence the name).

Scale scores are useful in that they are the best measure to use when looking at your child's performance in a content area over time. As in this report, scale scores are then converted into percentages and percentiles.

### WHAT IS A PERCENTILE RANK?

A percentile rank is one way of comparing your child's performance with the performance of a norm group. Your child's percentile rank is the percentage of the norm group who had lower scores than your child (plus half the percentage who had exactly the same score as your child). A student who performed better than 70 percent of the norm group but not as well as the other 30 percent would have a percentile rank of 70 **in that norm group**.

## WHAT IS A PERCENTILE RANK?

(continued)

A percentile rank does not indicate the percentage of the questions that your child answered correctly. **The percentile rank is a percentage of students** in a norm group. Look at the sample student's Quantitative Reasoning score percentile rank in the independent norm group. This percentile rank indicates what percentage of students at independent schools the sample student scored higher than on Quantitative Reasoning. The comparison is made against independent school students who took Quantitative Reasoning while they were in the same grade that the sample student is currently in.

Because some norm groups perform better than others, your child's percentile rank will differ from one norm group to another. A student's percentile rank will be lower in a stronger norm group and higher in a weaker norm group. The students in schools using the CTP tend to be an academically strong group in comparison to all students in the nation. Because of this, the sample student's Quantitative Reasoning score has a lower percentile rank in the independent norm group, than in the national norm group.

## WHAT IS A STANINE?

A stanine is another way of comparing your child's performance with the performance of a norm group. Stanines are formed by dividing the students in the norm group into nine subgroups on the basis of their test scores. These subgroups are called "stanines" and are numbered 1 to 9, lowest to highest.

The nine subgroups are not all the same size. The middle stanines include more students; those at either end include fewer students. Stanine 5 is the largest; stanines 1 and 9 are the smallest. The following table shows the percentage of the students in the norm group who are in each stanine. Because these percentages are always the same, each stanine is associated with a range of percentile ranks. Those percentile ranks are also shown in the table.

A student in stanine 5 of a norm group has performed about as well as the average student in the norm group. In general, the middle three categories—stanines 4, 5, and 6— can be considered to represent average performance for that norm group; stanines 1, 2, and 3 can be considered to represent below-average performance for that norm group; stanines 7, 8, and 9 can be considered to represent above-average performance for the norm group.

Because some norm groups perform better than others,

your child's stanine can be different in different norm groups. Typically, your child's stanine will be lower in a stronger norm group and higher in a weaker norm group. The stanine is not a very precise measure. This is because two percentile ranks may be very close to the borderline between one stanine and another stanine, but one may be just below the borderline and the other just at it. Before concluding that a difference between your child's stanines on two different tests is meaningful, look at the percentile ranks. Then look at the table to see if either of the scores was nearly in a different stanine.

Stanine	Percentage of Students	Percentile Ranks
9	4	96-99
8	7	89-95
7	12	77-88
6	17	60-76
5	20	40-59
4	17	23-39
3	12	11-22
2	7	4-10
1	4	1-3