

Providing a quality education to our children is the key to a brighter future in the Sunshine State. The only way to know if we are making progress is to measure. — We measure because we care. The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) measures student performance on selected benchmarks in reading, mathematics, writing, and science that are defined by the Florida Sunshine State Standards (SSS). The SSS were developed to articulate challenging content that Florida public schools are expected to teach, and students are expected to know and be able to perform.

When a student takes FCAT reading and mathematics, the student receives a developmental scale score that ranges from 0 to about 3000. Because students are tested in reading and mathematics at each grade level, developmental scale scores are used to help parents and others understand students' year-to-year progress. Based on a student's developmental scale score, the student is assigned one of five Achievement Level Classifications ranging from 1 to 5, with Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5 being the highest. The Achievement Level Classifications provide a method of comparing progress over time and allow schools, districts, and the state to monitor changes in the percentages of students in each achievement level.

Developmental Scale Score Achievement Level Definitions	
Level 5	This student has success with the most challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A student scoring in Level 5 answers most of the test questions correctly, including the most challenging questions.
Level 4	This student has success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A student scoring in Level 4 answers most of the test questions correctly, but may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content.
Level 3	This student has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards, but performance is inconsistent. A student scoring in Level 3 answers many of the test questions correctly, but is generally less successful with questions that are the most challenging.
Level 2	This student has limited success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.
Level 1	This student has little success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.

Note: Level 3 is considered on grade level for reading and mathematics.

Source: Florida Department of Education, May 2006

