

GLE Frequently Asked Questions

I. Social Studies

A. 7th – 8th grade Areas of Emphasis (U.S. History –7th, Louisiana History-8th)

- 1. The GLEs indicate that U.S. History should be taught at grade 7 and Louisiana History at grade 8. Was there ever a different recommendation, and if so, why has it been changed back?**

Bulletin 741 indicates that U.S. History should be taught at grade 7 and Louisiana History at grade 8. A recommendation or mandate was never made by LDE to teach Louisiana History at grade 7 and U.S. History at grade 8. Some districts asked whether switching the order was permissible. These districts were informed that this decision would be left to the district. Since the LEAP test was cumulative and given at the end of grade 8, there was no reason to prohibit the practice at that time. As a result, some schools changed the order in which the courses were taught and others did not.

Due to the development of GLEs and assessment requirements, the situation has changed. Assessments at grade 7 will be based on GLEs and the LEAP test at grade 8 will remain a cumulative assessment, as it has been since its inception. The GLEs for grades 7 and 8 were written primarily for U.S. History and Louisiana History, respectively, based upon state policy as found in *Bulletin 741*.

- 2. Is it a requirement that we teach U.S. History at grade 7 and Louisiana History at grade 8?**

Yes. This is the only way that students will be prepared for *iLEAP*, the state's new GLE-based assessment program, which begins in Spring 2006. Districts presently teaching Louisiana History at grade 7 and U.S. History at grade 8 will need to teach U.S. History to both its 7th and 8th graders during the 2004-2005 school year. During the 2005-2006 school year, U.S. History should be taught to 7th graders and Louisiana History taught to 8th graders. Using this process will ensure that students have received the instruction they need (and in the proper order) for the *iLEAP* testing that will occur in spring 2006.

- 3. The 8th grade LEAP test is mostly U.S. History. Why teach Louisiana History in 8th grade and then test students in other areas?**

There is a misconception that American History makes up the majority of the 8th grade LEAP test. In reality, Louisiana History, World History, and U.S. History, *taken together*, comprise 40 percent of the grade 8 LEAP Social Studies test. The remaining 60 percent of the test comes from the remaining strands of Geography, Civics, and Economics. This design is explained in detail in the Social Studies *Teachers Guide to Statewide*

Assessment. The LEAP test is cumulative in nature. No matter what course is taught in 8th grade, the grade 8 test will include more than the material found in the 8th grade course. Because the GLEs at grade 8 are based primarily on teaching Louisiana History at this grade, we recognize that it is important to place more emphasis on Louisiana History than in the past. Within the current test design, the grade 8 LEAP Social Studies test can be more heavily weighted toward Louisiana History prior to the first *i*LEAP assessment in spring 2006.

B. Can we have a review period at 7th and 11th grades in U.S. History or do we have to start with the year given?

The purpose of breaking down U.S. History by time periods for 5th, 7th, and 11th grades is to allow for a more in-depth study of the 20th century during the high school course. Nothing prohibits a review period, but any review period should be short, probably no more than a few weeks, for the process to work correctly.

C. What course is recommended for grade 9 in social studies?

There is no recommendation for any specific course since there is no *i*LEAP test for social studies at grade 9. **GLEs for World Geography were written with the idea that this course would probably be the course taken by most 9th graders.** It is important to note that there are World Geography and World History items on the GEE assessment. Districts need to assure that students will learn the information in other courses if World Geography and World History are not taken before the test is administered in grade 11. Most students take Free Enterprise and Civics in grade 10. The *Teachers Guide to Statewide Assessment* indicates which benchmarks are assessed on GEE.

D. What is on the 4th grade LEAP test in social studies?

The LEAP test for 4th grade has not changed. It is still a cumulative test, with items written to address all strands.

II. Science

A. Will LEAP for 8th grade focus on Earth Science?

LEAP for grade 8 is a cumulative test. All strands are covered, as outlined in the *Teachers Guide to Statewide Assessment* for Science.

B. Will the new *i*LEAP in 2006 focus on Physical Science in grade 6 and Life Science in grade 7?

These are the emphasis areas for each of these grades. There are GLEs written for other strands in these grades, which may also be used to create *i*LEAP items.

C. If grade 8 is LEAP and not iLEAP, why is the focus at grade 8 Earth Science instead of Integrated Science?

LEAP for 8th grade is cumulative and covers all strands. The focus areas for middle school were chosen to aid the development of GLEs. GLEs for other strands are also included in the Earth Science course at grade 8.

D. We purchased Integrated Science books last year. How do the GLEs fit within integrated courses?

We don't think this situation is unique to science or to the use of a particular text. We would expect that districts and teachers determine the alignment of their texts with the GLEs and supplement the texts where needed. Since texts are written for a wide variety of audiences, it is usually necessary to determine which content should be used or omitted in the instructional process. GLEs should assist teachers in this decision.

III. Assessment

A. Will the state develop an end-of-the-year assessment to assess if students have indeed mastered the GLEs?

LEAP in grades 4 and 8 and GEE in grades 10 and 11 will remain as cumulative criterion-referenced tests. LEAP and GEE assessments test specific benchmarks. The GLEs are based on the benchmarks, so there will be good alignment between the GLEs and the LEAP and GEE assessments. A new assessment program called *iLEAP* will begin in spring of 2006 in grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9. The *iLEAP* assessments will be based on GLEs.

B. Will specific GLEs make up at least 50 percent of each CRT grade-level test?

The new *iLEAP Assessment Guides* were delivered to districts for dissemination to schools in early September, 2005. The guides are also posted on the Department's website, www.louisianaschools.net. These grade-level guides present the test design, test content, sample test items, and other helpful information. It is expected that most GLEs will be covered, if not every year, at least on a rotating cycle.

C. Will each GLE-based test reflect only the GLEs identified at that specific grade?

Yes, the *iLEAP* assessments will reflect the GLEs for each grade. However, it should be noted that some skills learned at earlier grades may be needed to answer some test items. For example, students will need to know how to multiply decimals to find the area of a circle. The ability to solve circle problems is a 7th grade GLE, but multiplying decimals is a GLE from an earlier grade.

D. Will *i*LEAP be used as a criterion for promotion?

There is no BESE policy that calls for *i*LEAP tests to be tied to student promotion. However, *i*LEAP test results will be used to determine adequate yearly progress towards the goals established by NCLB.

E. How will assessments in science and social studies change based on GLEs?

LEAP and GEE science and social studies assessments at grades 4, 8, and 11 will not change. In spring of 2006, short criterion-referenced tests based on the GLEs replace the current Iowa Tests in these content areas in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7.

F. Will the *i*LEAP tests be normed?

The *i*LEAP tests are integrated tests that include some criterion and some norm-referenced characteristics. Norm-referenced score reports will be provided for The Iowa Tests. Criterion-referenced scores will be reported according to Louisiana's achievement levels (i.e., Advanced, Mastery, Basic, Approaching Basic, and Unsatisfactory).

G. Why not a GEE test with a World History section and a World Geography section and have the students take the test based the course they took?

This would create end-of-course tests, and students would not be tested on all social studies strands. A student taking World History and not World Geography would never be tested on the World Geography benchmarks.

H. Will there be augmented items in grade 9?

There will be augmented items for English language arts and mathematics only. There will be no social studies or science tests administered in grade 9.

IV. General

A. Why was a vertical alignment not considered for creation of the posters, so all teachers could see what is expected at every grade?

Advantages and disadvantages of a variety of formats were considered. Printing each benchmark and indicating a list of associated GLEs for PreK – grade 12 created documents that were too lengthy for printing on posters and too bulky for teacher handbooks. The format chosen allows a teacher of a particular grade or course to view all the GLEs for that grade or course as a set. Additional materials will be provided to the schools and on the web should a teacher want to know the expectations for another grade or course.

B. Many of the GLEs at the lower grades use verbs that indicate lower level thinking skills. Are we sending the message that students should only be able to *identify*? Shouldn't the expectation be that all students at all grade levels be expected to *analyze, interpret, explain*?

GLEs are indications of core content to be **mastered** at a given grade. Teachers will want to use activities that will allow students to begin to develop higher-level skills at all grades. Some students may be able to master the GLE at a higher level than indicated, but others may not. There are cases in which *explain, analyze* and *interpret* are used in lower grades, but the expectations for those students would not be the same as GLEs with the same verbs in higher grade levels.

C. Will charter school testing requirements change?

Charter schools in Louisiana must participate in all requirements of the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program. Beginning with school year 2005-06, Louisiana's charter schools are no longer required to pretest students at the beginning of the school year because of the transition in 2005-06 to *iLEAP, LEAP* and *GEE*. Instead, there will now be a spring-to-spring comparison of student performance instead of fall-to-spring as in the past. There are no alternate forms of *iLEAP, LEAP* or *GEE* for charter schools who choose to continue to pre-test and post-test students.

D. Why is all the implementation of GLEs and curriculum revisions on such a fast timeline?

The timeline is in response to deadlines from the *No Child Left Behind* act. Testing is mandated for spring 2006. This testing must be based on GLEs.