

PART I:

Language Arts

Summary of Changes from CMT 3 to CMT 4

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I. OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL CHANGES

There are significant changes in the Fourth Generation of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). First, the testing window for the CMT will move from a fall administration to an early spring administration in the spring of 2006. Second, students in Grades 3-8 will be tested as a result of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Finally, all CMT 4 test booklets will be consumable. This change means that students will record their answers directly in the test booklets, not on separate answer documents.

Additionally, changes have been made throughout the CMT content areas. These changes address national language arts trends and respond to input from Connecticut educators regarding the creation of a better, more useful assessment. These changes are reflected below:

II. CHANGES IN READING COMPREHENSION

The major changes in the CMT 4 Reading Comprehension Test are as follows:

- In previous generations, reading passages were written specifically to meet the requirements of the CMT. In CMT 4, most reading passages are authentic, published works, but there still may be passages which are written specifically for the test.
- The types of reading passages for the CMT 4 include a new category. In addition to Reading for Literary Experience and Reading for Information, Reading to Perform a Task has been included in Grades 5-8.
- All CMT 4 reading strands have been revised to reflect recent changes to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading framework. Most notably, some of the objectives tested under Demonstrating a Critical Stance are now measured under Making Reader/Text Connections and Examining Content and Structure. The four content strands are listed below:

CMT 3 Content Strands	CMT 4 Content Strands
1. Forming an Initial Understanding	1. Forming a General Understanding
2. Developing an Interpretation	2. Developing Interpretation
3. Demonstrating a Critical Stance	3. Making Reader/Text Connections
	4. Examining the Content and Structure

Reading Comprehension Objectives and Items for CMT 3

	Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 8
# of sessions	1	1	1
# of strands	3	3	3
# reading contexts	2	2	2
# of items	25	23	22

Item Mix: multiple-choice and open-ended

Reading Comprehension Objectives and Items for CMT 4

	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 7 and 8
# of sessions	2	2	2
# of strands	4	4	4
# reading contexts	2	3	3
# of items	32	31	30

Item Mix: multiple-choice and open-ended

III. CHANGES IN THE DEGREES OF READING POWER (DRP®)

The DRP test has been reduced in length from 70-75 minutes (depending on grade) on CMT 3 to 45 minutes for Grades 3-8 on CMT 4.

On CMT 4, third and fourth graders will complete six passages on the DRP, while fifth through eighth graders will complete seven passages. Each passage contains seven multiple-choice items for a total of 42 multiple-choice items for Grades 3 and 4 and 49 multiple-choice items for Grades 5-8.

Degrees of Reading Power (DRP®) for CMT 3

	Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 8
Number of passages	8	11	11
Number of items	56	77	77
Testing time (in minutes)	70	75	70

Degrees of Reading Power (DRP®) for CMT 4

	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 7 and 8
Number of passages	6	7	7
Number of items	42	49	49
Testing time (in minutes)	45	45	45

IV. CHANGES IN EDITING & REVISING

- On CMT 4, each passage will contain both Editing & Revising questions at each grade level. There will no longer be separate editing passages and separate revising passages at any of the grades.
- The structure of the Editing & Revising test has been changed to minimize the need for students to flip back and re-examine the passage when responding to test items. Where appropriate, test items targeting a specific sentence will include a reproduction of that sentence as part of the question.
- For all grades, each sentence will be numbered instead of passages being numbered by line as was done in CMT 3 for Grade 8.
- Changes have been made to some of the objectives tested; tone questions have been removed from Grades 5-6 and sentence combining has been added in Grade 4.

V. CHANGES IN THE DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

The following writing modes will be used:

- Grades 3 and 4 will be narrative;
- Grades 5 and 6 will be expository; and
- Grades 7 and 8 will be persuasive.

The narrative mode includes fictional and personal narrative prompts. The expository mode is a straight explanatory piece or a prompt that includes a compare and contrast element. Persuasive prompts at Grade 7 will look similar to the traditional CMT persuasive prompt of previous generations. At Grade 8, however, students will be given more background information that potentially could be used to support a paper's position. A detailed discussion of the modes and how they are scored holistically is found on pages 246 through 253. Examples of each type of prompt begin at page 255.

VI. CHANGES IN TESTING TIME

Testing Times for the CMT 3

	Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 8
Reading Comprehension	3 passages (One 70-minute session)	3 passages (One 70-minute session)	3 passages (One 70-minute session)
DRP®	8 passages; 70 minutes	11 passages; 75 minutes	11 passages; 70 minutes
Editing and Revising	4 passages; 60 minutes		
Direct Assessment of Writing	1 writing prompt; 45 minutes		

Testing Times for the CMT 4:

	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 7 and 8
Reading Comprehension	2 passages per session (4 passages total); two 45-minute sessions (90 minutes total)		
DRP®	6 passages; 45 minutes	7 passages; 45 minutes	
Editing and Revising	4 passages; 60 minutes		
Direct Assessment of Writing	1 writing prompt; 45 minutes		

