



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND INFORMATION

The Student Assessment Unit

The Primary Exit Profile (P.E.P)

What is PEP?

The Primary Exit Profile (PEP) is a series of assessments that will replace the existing Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT).

Why is PEP replacing GSAT?

Coming out of the 2004 Task Force on Educational Reform Report, it was recommended that the Jamaican Education System embark on radical competencies that will give them a competitive advantage in the global market place. Policymakers and educators have identified a number of approaches to reforming Jamaica's education system seen through the implementation of Education System Transformation Programme (ESTP). Since 2012 the Core Curriculum Unit of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Information (MoEYI) along with a team of consultants embarked on a revision of the national curriculum for grades one through to nine. Out of this revision, the National Standards Curriculum was developed and implemented in Grades 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9 in September 2016. The new standards established by the NSC require a richer and far more rigorous experience, cognitively, for student learning. One of the primary focus of this curriculum is to develop competencies in students that will enable them to function effectively in society. As such, greater emphasis is placed on developing the 21st century skills in students that is critical thinking, creativity,

collaboration and communication. In addition to that there is now a shift towards a student-centered approach to learning.

The 2004 Task Force Report also recommended a review of several of the assessment tools which the Ministry of Education has since acted on. There has since been a review of the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT), which started in 2009. The Primary Exit Profile (PEP) will replace the Grade Six Achievement Test. PEP measures the achievement of students over the last three years of primary education, providing a profile of what students know and can-do vis-a-vis NSC objectives and standards

transformation process so as to equip its citizens with the necessary skills and

What is the difference between PEP and GSAT?

PEP will assess students' knowledge in addition to placing increased emphasis on assessing students' demonstration of the 21st century skills (e.g. critical thinking, communication)

Unlike GSAT where the students are given a single opportunity to sit a test over a two-day period covering three years' work that is content from Grades 4, 5 & 6. PEP will be done at different times: Grade Four, Grade 5 and at Grade 6. So no longer will the student need to sit and remember content over three years they will be assessed at the end of three years. Of great significance also is that the Curriculum Based test being done at Grade 6 will only be on the Grade 6 Curriculum and will not have as many questions that the GSAT now has.

What are some of the purposes of PEP?

- It will be used to generate an academic profile of each student
- It will provide more detailed information about students' knowledge, abilities, and skills and across several subject areas
- It will measure students' readiness for grade 7.
- It will function as a means of placing students in secondary schools.

What are the components of PEP? Explain how each will contribute to the profile.

PEP comprises three components that will be used to generate each student's profile. This profile will help in determining the pathway for students as they transition to their secondary education and allow for targeted learning based on their individual needs.

The Primary Exit Profile (PEP) will comprise a Curriculum Based Test (CBT), an Ability Test and Performance Tasks.

1. What is the Curriculum Based Test?

The Curriculum Based Test (CBT) will sample content in the grade 6 curriculum only. Subjects to be assessed are: Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. These tests will have the following item types:

A. **Selected-response items** prompt students to select one or more responses from a set of options. These are:

- i. Single selected response
- ii. Multiple selected response
- iii. Table Grid
- iv. Order Match

B. **Constructed-response questions** prompt students to produce a text or numerical response in order to collect evidence about their knowledge or understanding of a given assessment target. These are:

- i. Short constructed response
- ii. Extended constructed response (Full Write)

2. What is the Ability Test?

The Ability Test will **NOT** be based on the curriculum but on analytical reading and quantitative reasoning.

3. What is the Performance Task?

Performance tasks are extended activities that measure a student’s ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple standards—a key component of readiness. Performance tasks will be used to better measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with selected-or short constructed-response items. The performance tasks will take one to two class periods to complete. The Performance Tasks will be administered in grades 4, 5 and 6 and will require students to use a variety of skills to complete a task. It designed by the MoEYI – Student Assessment Unit and will be administered during specific time throughout the school year by class teachers.

The components for PEP at the different grades are:

Grade	Performance Task	Ability Test	Curriculum Based Test
6	✓	✓	✓
5	✓		
4	✓		

PEP is said to be implemented on a phased basis. What does this mean?

Students who are currently in Grade 5 will be the first PEP cohort. They will do only the Grade 6 components in 2019

Students who are currently in Grade 4 will do their Grade 5 Performance Task in 2019 and in 2020 they will do the Grade 6 components.

Students who are currently in Grade 3 will be the first cohort that will have a complete profile generate, they will do:

- Grade 4 PT in 2019
- Grade 5 PT in 2020
- and ALL grade 6 components (PT, CBT and AT) in 2021

How will PEP affect students' placement in secondary school?

The placement mechanism remains the same. Students will still be given 7 choices; 5 from anywhere on the island choices 6 and 7 from secondary schools in close proximity to the primary level institutions.

How will PEP affect students' performance in secondary education?

It must be noted that the NSC is currently at Grades 7 through 9. The curriculum is written in a spiral way so as to give the students the ability to build on previous knowledge. PEP will be looking at students' performance at three different levels; at Grade four, Grade Five and at Grade Six; after each assessment a report on the students' performance will be communicated to the school as well as to the parents. Based on the performance, where there is a need for intervention at Grades 4 & 5) that will be done before the student gets to Grade 6. Therefore, instead of students being given a single opportunity to sit a test for placement they are now given three different opportunities thus making them more prepared to receive the curricula at the secondary level. Of significance also is that at the end of Grade 6 a complete profile will be done for each child showing not only what the child knows but also what the child can do. This information will be used to determine the secondary pathway to which students will be assigned to receive the targeted intervention that they need.

How is the Ministry preparing the system for PEP?

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information has trained teachers at the different grade level in curriculum implementation as we continue to prepare for the full implementation of the Primary Exit Profile in 2019.

This is a continuous monitoring of the curriculum implementations and workshops done with groups where deficits are seen.

Assessment Workshops have been held with:

- Over 10,000 Teachers at Grade 4 and 5 have been trained in assessing the 21st Century Learner. Here teachers were taken through activities on identifying the evidence that students are displaying these skills. Teachers were also trained in developing tasks to elicit these skills in students.
- Assessment Coordinators; these are the teachers at the school level who are being given the necessary skills to drive the assessment within their schools. They have been trained in evaluating the 21st Century Learner and are currently being trained in writing assessment tasks, at the different cognitive levels.
- Principals have been trained in all regions except 4 and 5 on how to lead the assessment at the school level.
- Through partnership with the Core Curriculum Unit of the MoEYI, the Student Assessment Unit conducted training exercises for members of the Book Industry Association of Jamaica. Participants were trained on how to develop material to adequately cater to the National Standards Curriculum, NSC. The workshops which were carried out in late February also focused on how the NSC will be assessed. The presentations focused on the subjects that will be assessed at P.E.P, mathematics, language arts, social studies and science.

The ministry has developed a comprehensive training plan to cater to the needs of different stakeholder groups and this will continue into October.

A point must be made that the Ministry will be putting a team of Quality Assurance Officers into the regions to give support to schools in the area of assessing the NSC. The QAOs are to act as a point of contact for queries and requests for advice about the National Assessment Programme (in particular, the Primary Exit Profile).

Does the Ministry plan to do any more consultations with parents?

The Student Assessment Unit of the MoEYI successfully completed a series of town hall meetings in 2017 in all 6 regions. Fourteen town hall meetings were held at various venues where presentations were made by the SAU to parents and teachers about P.E.P. While we believe the parents are critical stakeholder groups we now need to focus at the implementation stage. There is section on the Ministry of Education website that has information that parents can interface with. There is a WhatsApp number available for questions and suggestions. The communication plan for this New Assessment will be in full swing with advertisement etc. So, although we will not be meeting the parents we will be providing information and responding to their questions.

I heard that there will be a mock test in June. What is it about?

A national mock trial of the performance task will be fully administered to all schools to all grade 4 and 5 students in June 2018. This, in an effort to familiarize students and teachers with item types from the Performance Task. *The mock exams will only focus on the Performance Task.*