

## **UNDERSTANDING GRADE EQUIVALENTS AND OTHER STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES**

Throughout his or her school life, your child will take a number of standardized tests. These tests are designed to provide you with information related to your child's academic progress. It is important to understand that these tests are based on data from around the nation or the state in which you live, not necessarily your local school district's curriculum. Standardized tests report a student's performance in several different ways.

### **GRADE-EQUIVALENT SCORES**

The Grade-Equivalent score compares your child's performance on grade-level material against the average performance of students at *other grade levels* on that same material and is reported in terms of grade level and months. If your 5<sup>th</sup> grade child obtains a grade-equivalent of 10.5 on a standardized math or reading test, it does not mean that your child is solving math problems or reading at the mid-10<sup>th</sup> grade level. It means that she or he can solve 5<sup>th</sup> grade math problems and read 5<sup>th</sup> grade material as well as the average 10<sup>th</sup> grade student can read and solve 5<sup>th</sup> grade math problems. Your child is performing much better than the average 5<sup>th</sup> grader but most likely would not perform as well if tested using 10<sup>th</sup> grade material as they have not yet been exposed to 10<sup>th</sup> grade material. Caution should *always* be used when interpreting grade equivalents, especially when attempting to use grade equivalents as the basis for a grade placement discussion.

### **PERCENTILE RANKS**

Percentile ranks range from 1 to 99 and compare your child's performance with other students at the *same grade or age level*. A percentile rank of 50 is average (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and means that a student scored higher than 50 out of 100 same-grade or same-aged peers. If your child obtains a percentile rank of 30 on a Science subtest, it means your child scored higher on that test than 30 out of 100 same-grade or same-aged peers. 'Percentile rank' is *not the same* as 'percentage correct.'

### **STANINE**

Stanine is an abbreviation for 'standard nine.' It allows comparison between your child's performance and other students at the same grade level. Stanines range from 1 – 9, with 1 – 3 being Low, 4 – 6 Average, and 7 – 9 High.

### **STANDARD SCORE**

The standard score is an individual performance measure in comparison to same-aged or same-grade peers. Standard scores are a more accurate measure of ability than Grade or Age Equivalents. Standard scores have a designated mean (average) and occur in equal intervals (standard deviation). In general, a standard score has a mean (average) of 100 and goes up or down (deviates) in intervals of 15.