

## Assessment FAQs

**Do the Grade-Level Goals summarize all concepts and skills that are covered each year?**

- No; although the Grade-Level Goals reflect the core of the curriculum at each grade level, they are not comprehensive. They do not capture all the content that is addressed each year. Nor are they a list of activities that are completed each year. Some grade-level content supports future Grade-Level Goals that are not articulated at the given grade level.

**With all these Grade-Level Goals, how will I know when I'm simply exposing students to a concept or skill?**

- The Everyday Mathematics curriculum aims for student proficiency with concepts and skills through repeated exposures over several years. The Teacher's Lesson Guide alerts teachers to content that is being introduced for the first time through Links to the Future notes. These notes provide specific references to future Grade-Level Goals and help teachers understand introductory activities at their grade level in the context of the entire Pre-K–6 curriculum.
- All the content in Everyday Mathematics is important, whether it's being experienced for the first or the fifth time. The Everyday Mathematics curriculum is similar to an intricately woven rug, with many threads that appear and reappear to form complex patterns. Different students will progress at different rates, so multiple exposures to important content are critical for accommodating individual differences. The program was created so it is consistent with how students learn mathematics. It builds understanding over a period of time, first through informal exposure and later through more formal and directed instruction. For students to succeed, they need the opportunity to experience all that the curriculum has to offer in every grade.
- For more information about how Grade-Level Goals are addressed throughout the units, see the unit-specific "Looking at Grade-Level Goals" sections in the Differentiation Handbook.

**There are a lot of lessons in my grade-level materials. Do I have to finish all of them? For example, I teach second grade. Describing and using strategies to measure the perimeter of polygons is not a Grade-Level Goal until third grade. Can I skip the second-grade lessons that cover the perimeter of polygons?**



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- Everyday Mathematics was created to be consistent with how students actually learn mathematics, building understanding over time, first through informal exposure and later through more formal instruction. Because the Grade-Level Goals are cumulative, it is essential for students to experience the complete curriculum at each grade level. Students in Second Grade Everyday Mathematics, for example, participate in many hands-on activities designed to develop an understanding of perimeter. This makes it possible for students to achieve the perimeter goal in third grade.

### Do I need to keep track of progress on Program Goals?

- Program Goals are the threads that weave the content together across grade levels and form the skeleton of the curriculum. The Program Goals are further refined through the Grade-Level Goals. Everyday Mathematics provides a variety of tools you can use to assess student progress on the Grade-Level Goals throughout the year. Because every Grade-Level Goal is related to a Program Goal, you are gathering information at this less-specific level as well. This allows great flexibility in reporting to parents. Depending on how your district requires you to aggregate data, you can look broadly at content strands, more closely at Program Goals, or specifically at Grade-Level Goals using the suggested assessments in Everyday Mathematics.

### What do the authors mean by “adequate progress”?

- Students who are making adequate progress as defined by a Recognizing Student Achievement note are on a trajectory to meet the Grade-Level Goal. Such students have successfully accomplished what is expected up to that point in the curriculum. If students continue to progress expected, then they will demonstrate proficiency with the Grade-Level Goal upon completion of the year.
- The performance expectations described in the Recognizing Student Achievement notes for any given Grade-Level Goal progress developmentally throughout the year. The level of performance that is expected in October is not the same as what is expected in April. The term adequate progress describes the level of competency that the majority of students can be expected to have at a particular time. The authors of Everyday Mathematics chose the Recognizing Student Achievement tasks with the expectation that they majority of students would be successful with them, which is in line with the expectation that the vast majority of students will successfully reach the Grade-Level Goals for their grade level.



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**Do students have to complete all of the Recognizing Student Achievement tasks before I can know whether they are making adequate progress?**

- Each lesson in Everyday Mathematics contains a Recognizing Student Achievement note. These notes highlight specific tasks from which teachers can collect student performance data to monitor and document students' progress toward meeting specific Grade-Level Goals. Each Recognizing Student Achievement note addresses part of a Grade-Level Goal. The suggested assessment tasks build a complete picture over time for each Grade-Level Goal. If students perform well on one or two Recognizing Student Achievement tasks for a goal, that may not provide enough information about the goal in its entirety. Teachers are the experts in their classrooms. If you choose to not do some of the Recognizing Student Achievement tasks, consider collecting similar information from tasks you designate to assemble a complete picture for each Grade-Level Goal.

**Can I use only Math Boxes to collect assessment information? They seem to have all the skills in them.**

- Everyday Mathematics includes a variety of assessment tasks to ensure that all students have sufficient opportunities to demonstrate what they know. Some students best demonstrate their knowledge through pencil-and-paper tasks, some through performance tasks, and some through explanations and demonstrations. The assessment tasks identified in the program provide a variety of ways for students to demonstrate what they know. Using only one tool might limit what you are able to learn about your students.

**I understand that Everyday Mathematics provides a Recognizing Student Achievement task for every lesson. May I choose my own instead of or in addition to the ones designated by the curriculum? If I don't think the results of a particular Recognizing Student Achievement task accurately reflects what a student knows, what should I do?**

- The Recognizing Student Achievement tasks and Progress Check questions occur at carefully chosen points, based on the opportunities for distributed practice that occur throughout the program.



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- Assessment tasks were designed to vary the ways in which students are assessed for each Grade-Level Goal. The Everyday Mathematics authors respect teachers as professionals and expect that teachers will use their professional judgment when assessing students. If a particular Recognizing Student Achievement task does not adequately assess student achievement, the teacher may choose to disregard it. The Everyday Mathematics authors also anticipate that students' performances on tasks that are not identified in Recognizing Student Achievement notes will often provide useful information regarding their progress toward a particular Grade-Level Goal. Teachers should feel free to link such tasks to appropriate Grade-Level Goals and include them in their assessment stories.

### **My district evaluates students by assigning traditional letter grades. How should I evaluate student performance?**

- Because local assessment systems are based on local norms and values, it would be impossible to design a system that would apply universally. But the authors of Everyday Mathematics recognize that many teachers are required by their districts to give traditional grades. And although it is impossible to design a single grading system that will work for everyone, there are some broad principles to follow:
  - Grades should be fair and based on evidence that can be documented.
  - Evidence for grading should come from multiple sources.
  - Grades should be based on content that is important. They should not be based only on the content that is most easily assessed.
  - The grading system should be aligned with both state and local standards and with the curriculum.

### **Suppose a student makes adequate progress on the majority of Recognizing Student Achievement tasks and Progress Check questions for a given Grade-Level Goal throughout the year. At the end of the year, how likely is it that the student will have achieved the Grade-Level Goal?**

- The Recognizing Student Achievement and Progress Check tasks supply a great deal of data on which teachers can base inferences about students' achievement of the Grade-Level Goals. In the case of a consistent pattern of adequate progress on assessment tasks for a given Grade-Level Goal, one can reasonably conclude that the student has, in fact, achieved the given goal. As with any assessment, however, inferences based on positive performance are more straightforward than those based on negative performance. That is, if a student performs well, the most straightforward conclusion is that the student has probably mastered the material; whereas if a student performs poorly, there are many possible explanations, only one of which is a lack of mastery.



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- Teachers should also recognize that inferences about what students know should always be considered provisional, because the inferences are fallible, based as they are on incomplete information, and because students are constantly growing and changing.

### What are some suggestions for using the Progress Check and Open-Response Tasks?

- The Progress Check includes a number of different components including a self-assessment, oral and slate assessments, a two-part written assessment, and an Open Response task. These components can be split up—that is, they do not all have to occur on the same day. In fact, the authors would recommend doing the Open Response task as a separate activity so that students are fresh when they attack these complex problems.
- The written part of the assessment is divided up into Part A and Part B where Part A includes tasks on which students generally should be successful, and Part B includes tasks which are intended to provide formative information. It is possible that students will NOT be successful on many of the tasks in Part B of the written assessment. Teachers score the written assessments in a variety of ways. For example, while some teachers group items for the same Grade-Level Goal together and give them a composite score, other teachers score each item separately on the assessment separately—noting the relative difficulty and complexity of the related tasks. Still other teachers assign points to each item according to the level of difficulty—generally, the more difficult tasks are worth fewer points so that students are not heavily penalized for tasks when they were not expected to be universally successful on those tasks.

### What happened to BDS? Why is it missing from the Third Edition?

- In the second edition of Everyday Mathematics the terms beginning, developing, and secure were used to describe both learning goals and student performance in relation to these learning goals. Feedback from users of the second edition indicated that using the same terms to describe both the curriculum and student performance was confusing.
- Teachers who have used Everyday Mathematics have various understandings of the terms beginning, developing, and secure. Some of these understandings are those that the EM authors intended; others are not. Rather than attempt to redefine existing terminology, the authors have chosen new terms. (Note that the new terminology does not reflect a fundamental change in the Everyday Mathematics approach. The new terminology is intended to clarify that approach and make it easier to implement.)

