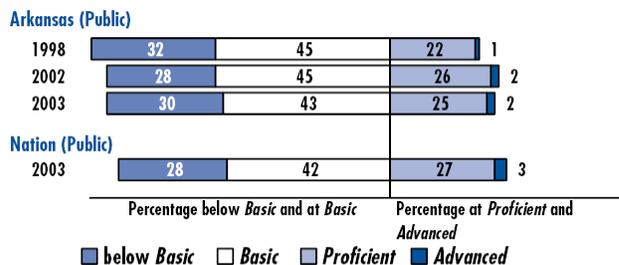


The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assesses reading in three contexts described in the NAEP framework: reading for literary experience, to gain information, and to perform a task. The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500.

Overall Reading Results for Arkansas

- In 2003, the average scale score for eighth-grade students in Arkansas was 258. This was not found to be significantly different¹ from the average score in 2002 (260), and was not found to be significantly different from the average score in 1998 (256).
- Arkansas' average score (258) in 2003 was lower than that of the nation's public schools (261).
- Of the 53 states and jurisdictions² that participated in the 2003 eighth-grade assessment, students' average scale scores in Arkansas were higher than those in 7 jurisdictions, not significantly different from those in 11 jurisdictions, and lower than those in 34 jurisdictions.
- The percentage of students in Arkansas who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 27 percent in 2003. This percentage was not found to be significantly different from 2002 (27 percent), and was not found to be significantly different from 1998 (23 percent).

Student Percentage at NAEP Achievement Levels



NOTE: The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500, with the achievement levels corresponding to the following points: *Below Basic*, 242 or lower; *Basic*, 243-280; *Proficient*, 281-322; *Advanced*, 323 or above.

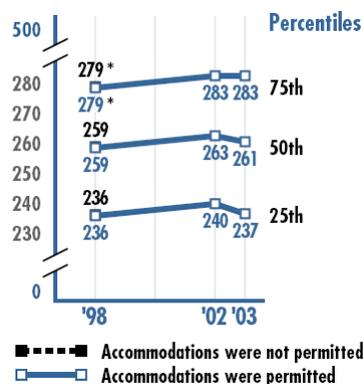
Performance of NAEP Reporting Groups in Arkansas

Reporting groups	Percentage of students	Average Score	Percentage of students at			
			<i>Below Basic</i>	<i>Basic</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
Male	51	254	34	43	22	1
Female	49	263	26	44	28	3
White	73	266	21	46	30	3
Black	22	232	58	35	6	#
Hispanic	3	257	32	43	24	2
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	---	---	---	---	---
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	---	---	---	---	---
Free/reduced-price school lunch						
Eligible	46	250	39	41	18	1
Not eligible	49	267	20	46	32	3

Average Score Gaps Between Selected Groups

- In 2003, male students in Arkansas had an average score that was lower than that of female students (9 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (11 points).
- In 2003, White students had an average score that was higher than that of Black students (33 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (29 points).
- The sample size was not sufficient to permit a reliable estimate for Hispanic students in Arkansas in 1998.
- In 2003, students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch had an average score that was higher than that of students who were eligible (17 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (21 points).

Reading Scale Scores at Selected Percentiles



An examination of scores at different percentiles on the 0–500 NAEP reading scale at each grade indicates how well students at lower, middle, and higher levels of the distribution performed.

The estimate rounds to zero.

--- Reporting standards not met; sample size insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

* Significantly different from 2003.

↑ Significantly higher than, ↓ lower than 2002.

¹ Comparisons (higher/lower/not different) are based on statistical tests. The .05 level was used for testing statistical significance. Performance comparisons may be affected by differences in exclusion rates for students with disabilities and limited-English-proficient students in the NAEP samples and changes in sample sizes. NAEP sample sizes have increased since 2002 compared to previous years, resulting in smaller detectable differences than in previous assessments.

² "Jurisdictions" includes participating states and other jurisdictions (such as the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Dependents Schools). NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding, and because the "Information not available" category for Free/reduced-price lunch is not displayed. Statistical comparisons are calculated on the basis of unrounded scale scores or percentages.

Visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/> for additional results and detailed information.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998, 2002, and 2003 Reading Assessments.