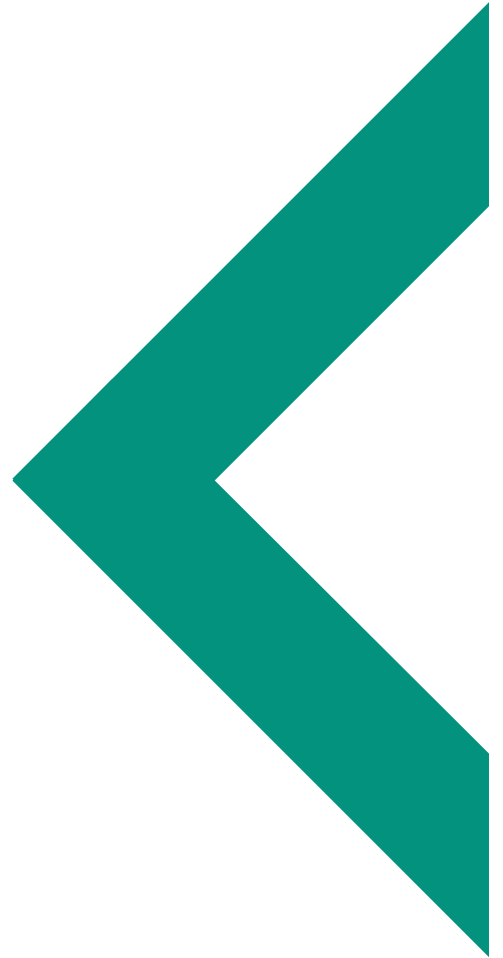


**Evaluation of the
Queensland 1998
Year 3 Test Resource Kit**

Final Report



QUEENSLAND
SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
COUNCIL

September 2000

Acknowledgments

The following officers participated in this evaluation: Christopher Dean (evaluation and survey design, data management, analysis and reporting writing), Andrew Lockhart (creation of graphs) and Kerry Wilson (analysis of the survey's three open-ended questions).

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Executive Summary

In November 1999, a brief evaluation survey was sent to all Queensland state and non-state primary schools that had been sent the Queensland School Curriculum Council's 1998 Year 3 Test Resource Kit earlier in May 1999.

The evaluation asked three major questions. A summary of the responses to these questions, together with the conclusions based on the findings, appears below.

Focus Question 1

To what extent have schools used the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?

Summary

1. Three-fifths (57%) of schools reported that they had administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit. For reasons stated in the report, this proportion may be inflated.
2. Three-quarters (74%) of those schools that reported having administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit indicated that it was administered in August/September 1999, the time of the administration of the 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program.
3. Of those schools that said they had not administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit yet, two-thirds (65%) indicated that they intended to do so in the future, most in 2000. The most frequently mentioned month was August 2000.
4. Of the minority of schools that said they didn't intend administering the Year 3 Test Resource Kit (N=30), the major reasons given were: school has sufficient information; school is concerned about test or testing; test is not considered relevant or valid; and there is insufficient time.

Conclusion 1

Regardless of whether a conservative or optimistic interpretation is applied to the survey data, the Year 3 Test Resource Kit has had a positive impact in terms of school use.

Focus Question 2

How appropriate and effective are the Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials?

Summary

5. Overall, schools rated the Kit materials very positively. For example, between 66% and 82% of schools that had administered the Kit gave a rating of 'good' or 'very good' for the various components of the Kit.
6. Between 63% and 86% of schools that had administered the Kit felt that it was 'generally' or 'completely' clear in assisting teachers to undertake the various tasks required of them to administer the Kit.
7. Aspects of the Kit reported to be less clear than others included marking the Writing task and determining numeracy and literacy raw and scale scores.

8. The most frequently reported school use of student information produced from administering the Kit were: diagnosis of individual student needs (82% of schools administering the Kit) and assistance with teacher program improvement (57%). The least reported use was the provision of individual student reports to parents (16% of schools).
9. Some schools' suggestions for improving the Kit were related to those aspects that were considered to have been less clear than other aspects. These suggestions included: more help with marking (9% of schools administering Kit) and more help with calculating scores (5%). Other suggestions for improvement were about: improving aspects of the test form (15% - the most frequent suggestion), improving the Kit format (4%) and instructions (2%), supplying more copies of the material (2%) and providing parent report templates (2%).

Conclusion 2

Most aspects of the Kit were effective. The suggestions made by schools provide advice on ways in which the Kit could be made more effective.

Conclusion 3

Most aspects of the Kit met the needs of teachers and therefore may be considered to be appropriate. Nevertheless, those aspects of the Kit that were considered less clear than others and which were also the subject of improvement suggestions could be made more appropriate e.g. information about the marking of the Writing task and determination of raw and scale scores. Another suggestion about providing a student report template also warrants consideration.

Conclusion 4

Given the overall appropriateness and effectiveness of the Kit, and the fact that the 2000 Year 3 Test is also sample based, there is merit in considering the following activities in 2000.

- Revise or prepare addenda for the Kit's *Information Guide* and *Technical Compendium* to improve the information about marking the Writing task and scoring the tests;
- Add a student report template for use by schools in reporting to parents, should they so desire.
- Place the Kit on the Council's Web site, incorporating any revisions and additions.
- Promote the use of the existing Kit during 2000 through materials developed for the 2000 Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program, particularly through the Program's *Information for Schools* document. In this respect, the document might include information about:
 - the availability of the Kit on the Council's Web site;
 - the opportunity for new schools commenced in 2000 to obtain a set of the Kit materials until stocks are exhausted. (Approximately 15 complete sets of the Kit remain in stock).
 - the opportunity for all schools to order, at cost, additional or replacement copies of the coloured literacy stimulus booklet. This is because many schools would not have colour printers even though they might have access to the Web. (Approximately 250 stimulus booklets remain in stock.)

Focus Question 3**What are school opinions in relation to future planning in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?****Summary**

10. Despite the positive findings in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit, a preference for a 'sample test and resource kit' was expressed less frequently than a preference for a 'census test' (without resource kit). A 'census test' was the most frequently expressed preferred form of testing (48% for Year 3, 62% for Year 5 and 61% for Year 7). The least favoured was 'no test' and the less favoured was 'sample test and resource kit'.
11. Those schools that had administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit appeared to be more favourably disposed to state-based testing (either sample or census) than those that had not administered the Kit yet.

Conclusion 5

Regarding the 2001 Testing Program, overall, schools prefer a 'census test' over the 'sample test and resource kit' combination; and only a small minority favour 'no test'. This finding is consistent with other Council evaluations.

Conclusion 6

If the 2001 Testing Program contains all census tests, no further resource kit is warranted in 2001.

If the 2001 Testing Program contains a sample test, given the relatively positive reception of the current Resource Kit, there is merit in the Council considering the development of a further resource kit which complements the 2001 sample-based test.

[All activity related to Conclusion 6 would be subject to funding availability.]

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This final report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Queensland 1998 Year 3 Test Resource Kit (hereafter called Year 3 Test Resource Kit or Kit).

The Year 3 Test Resource Kit was designed to complement the sample testing of Year 3 students as part of the 1998 Years 3 and 5 Testing Program in aspects of literacy and numeracy. These aspects are:

- literacy — Reading and Viewing, Writing and Spelling;
- numeracy — Number, Data (including Measurement) and Space.

In recommending sample rather than census testing of Year 3 students, the Queensland School Curriculum Council supported the development of a complementary Year 3 Test Resource Kit.

The Kit allows teachers to administer a form of the Queensland 1998 Year 3 Test in order to assess students against the 1998 Year 3 Test and to compare individual and student performance against the performance of the 1998 state-based sample of Year 3 students.

The Year 3 Test Resource Kit includes:

- an *Information Guide* which gives an overview of the Kit, the test, the tasks required of teachers to administer the test, and details about student exemptions and special considerations;
- a *Test Administration Handbook* which provides detailed instructions on administering the tests;
- a *Technical Compendium* which provides information on each item of the test and marking and scoring instructions;
- tests materials, which comprise a master copy of the Aspects of Literacy Test and Aspects of Numeracy Test, and class sets of the colour stimulus magazine *Take a Look* to be used in conjunction with the Aspects of Literacy Test.

1.2 Evaluation Focus

The overall purposes of the evaluation were to provide information on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit.

In fulfilling these purposes, the evaluation asked the following focus questions:

1. **To what extent have schools used the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?**
2. **How appropriate and effective are the Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials?**
3. **What are school opinions in relation to future planning in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?**

1.3 Evaluation Approach

The evaluation elicited responses from schools that had been sent the Year 3 Test Resource Kit.

In November 1999, a brief evaluation survey was sent to all Queensland government and non-government primary schools that had been sent the Council's Year 3 Test Resource Kit earlier in May 1999.

The survey was sent several months after the Kit as it was felt that schools would have had an opportunity, should they so desire, to use the Kit and would therefore be able to provide valuable feedback to the Council on its utility.

One survey form was sent to each school that had been sent the Kit (N=1364), and a total of 396 surveys were returned, an approximate 29% response rate.

An analysis of the postcode origin of the surveys (the only identifier used) indicates that there was a fair representation of responses from across the state. Given the minority response rate, however, it is wise to be cautious in interpreting the survey findings. While the very clear trends in the survey responses to Focus questions 2 and 3 would suggest that these trends would likely have been somewhat similar if all surveys had been returned, it is not possible to be as confident in relation to Focus Question 1 (extent of use of the Kit). Details are provided later in the report.

A copy of the survey is contained in Appendix 1.

1.4 Evaluation Reporting

An interim report of this evaluation was presented to the April 2000 meeting of the Queensland School Curriculum Council.

This is the final report of the evaluation. The remainder of the report comprises the following:

- Section 2 (Focus Q 1);
- Section 3 (Focus Q 2);
- Section 4 (Focus Q 3).

A succinct summary of the evaluation is provided in the Executive Summary.

2 Extent of Use

Focus Question 1

To what extent have schools used the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?

In answering this question, the survey asked questions about:

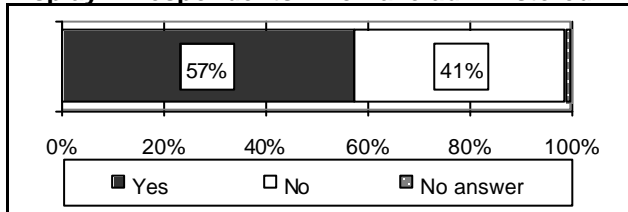
- past use;
- proposed use.

2.1 Past Use

Survey responses indicated that most (96%) schools returning the survey had Year 3 students enrolled at the school. They were therefore in a position to administer the Year 3 Test Resource Kit to Year 3 students.

Display 1 summarises responses to the question 'Has the school administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit yet?'

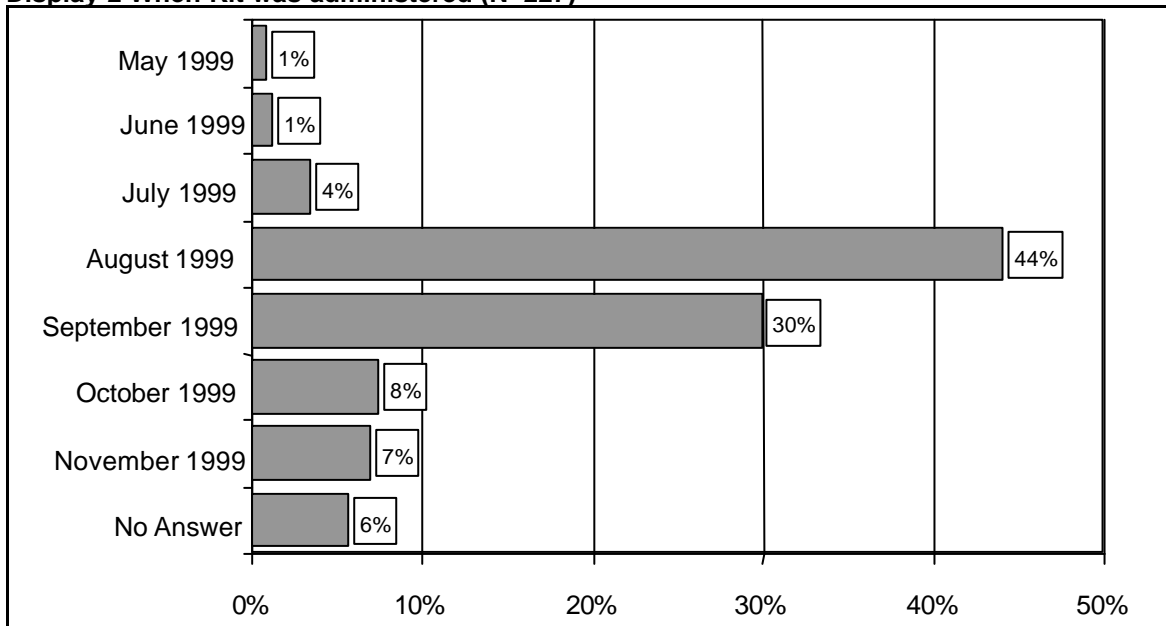
Display 1 Respondents who have administered Kit (N=396)



Although approximately three-fifths of respondents (N= 227 schools) reported that their school had administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit, it should be noted that this percentage may be inflated. This aspect is discussed further in section 2.3

Display 2 indicates when the Kit was administered.

Display 2 When Kit was administered (N=227)



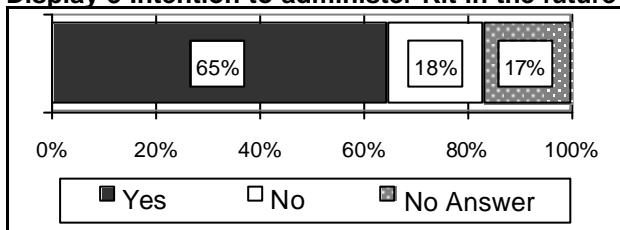
As can be seen, the majority (74%) of schools that reported administering the Kit did so in August/September 1999, that is, at around the same time as the administration of the 1999 Testing Program. This is in keeping with Council's advice to schools to administer the Kit at this time in order to make valid comparisons of school results with 1998 statewide results. The advice stated:

The 1998 statewide sample completed the tests in early September; therefore it is recommended that schools administer the tests in late August or early September to ensure comparability. (See 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program: Information for Schools, page 48.)

2.2 Proposed Use

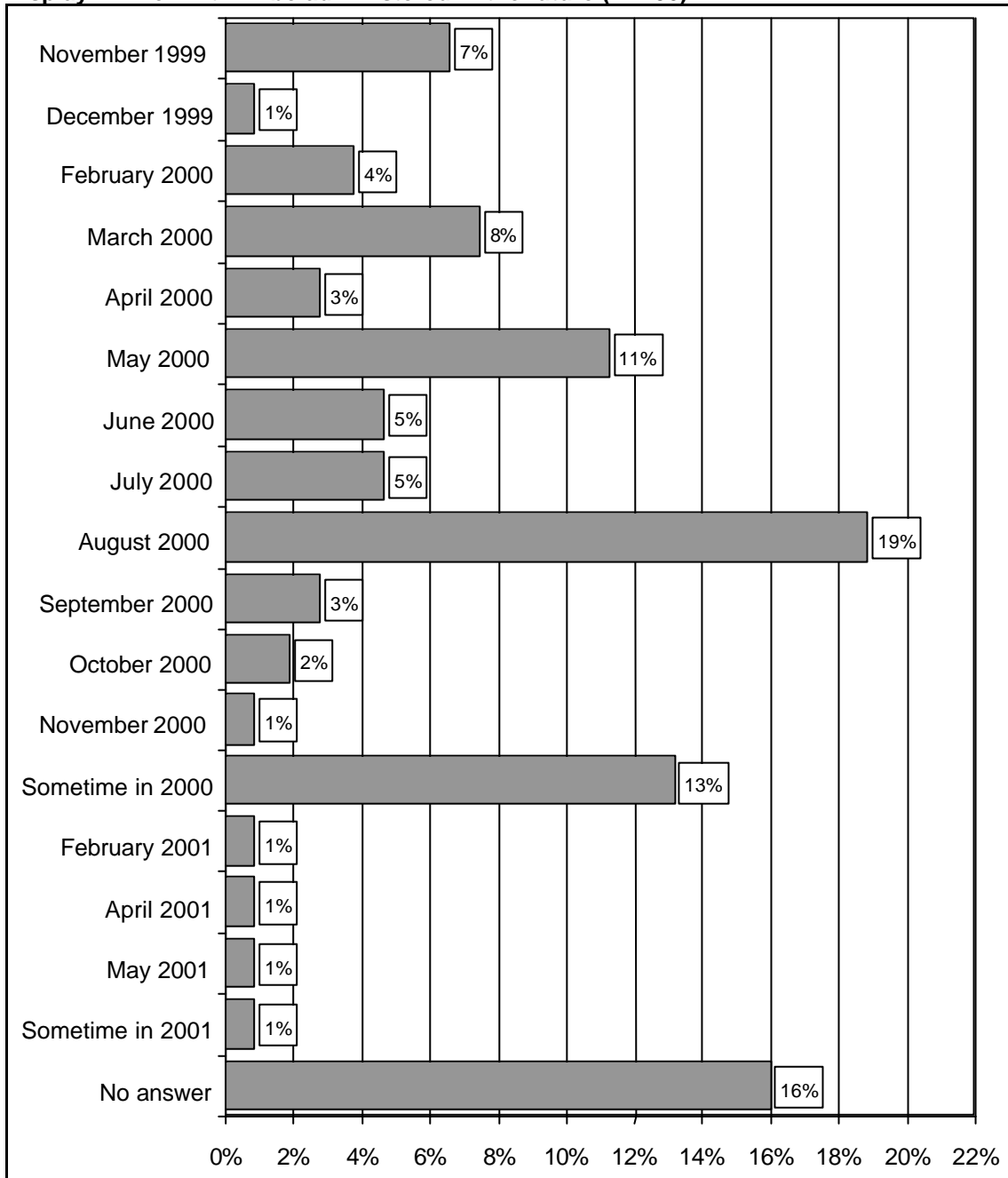
Those who reported that they had not administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit yet (N=164) were asked if the school intended administering the Kit in the future. Display 3 summarises the responses.

Display 3 Intention to administer Kit in the future (N=164)



As can be seen two-thirds (N=106) of those schools, that reported not having administered the Kit yet, indicated that that they intended to do so in the future. Display 4 summarises when these schools intended to administer the Kit.

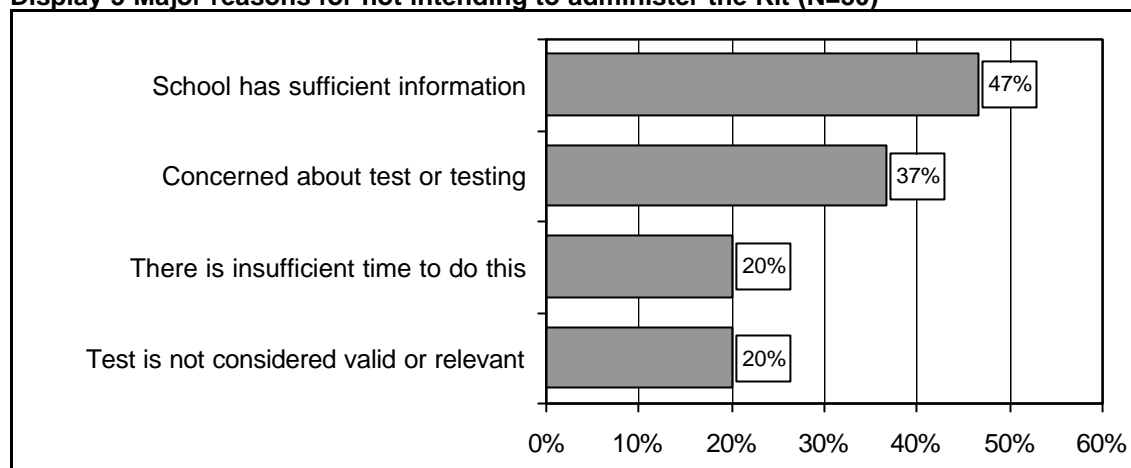
Display 4 When Kit will be administered in the future (N=106)



As can be seen most of those schools who reported not having administered the test indicated that they intended to do so in 2000. The most frequent month was August 2000, the month of the administration of the 2000 Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program.

The minority of schools who indicated that they did not intend administering the Kit at all (N=30 schools) gave a number of reasons for this decision. These are summarised in Display 5.

Display 5 Major reasons for not intending to administer the Kit (N=30)



2.3 Summary, Discussion and Conclusions Regarding Focus Question 1

Focus Question 1

To what extent have schools used the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?

Summary

In response to Focus Question 1, the evaluation found the following:

- Three-fifths (57%) of schools reported that they had administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit. For reasons given below, this proportion may be inflated.
- Three-quarters (74%) of those schools that reported having administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit indicated that it was administered in August/September 1999, the time of the administration of the 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program.
- Of those schools that said they had not administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit yet, two-thirds (65%) indicated that they intended to do so in the future - most in 2000. The most frequently mentioned month was August 2000.
- Of the minority of schools that said they didn't intend administering the Year 3 Test Resource Kit (N=30), the major reasons given were: school has sufficient information; school is concerned about test or testing; test is not considered relevant or valid; and there is insufficient time.

Discussion and conclusion

Although three-fifths (57%) of schools that had returned the survey indicated that they had administered the Kit, if we are to infer this finding to all relevant Queensland schools, it is likely that this proportion is inflated. This is because only three-tenths of all these schools returned the survey and it is probable that schools that had not administered the Kit yet were less likely to return the survey than those schools that had already administered it.

Exploring a more conservative use estimate, we know from the survey data that 227 schools reported that they had administered the Kit. This amounts to approximately one-fifth (17%) of the total number of schools (N=1364) that were sent the Kit. If we then add the 106 schools that reported intending to administer it in the near future, the proportion would rise to one-quarter (24%) of all schools. This percentage is not an insignificant minority given the recency of the Kit, and the number of competing educational interests and resources available in schools.

Taking the above into consideration, the following conclusion may be made.

Conclusion 1

Regardless of whether a conservative or optimistic interpretation is applied to the survey data, the Year 3 Test Resource Kit has had a positive impact in terms of use.

3 Appropriateness and Effectiveness of Kit Materials

Focus Question 2

How appropriate and effective are the Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials?

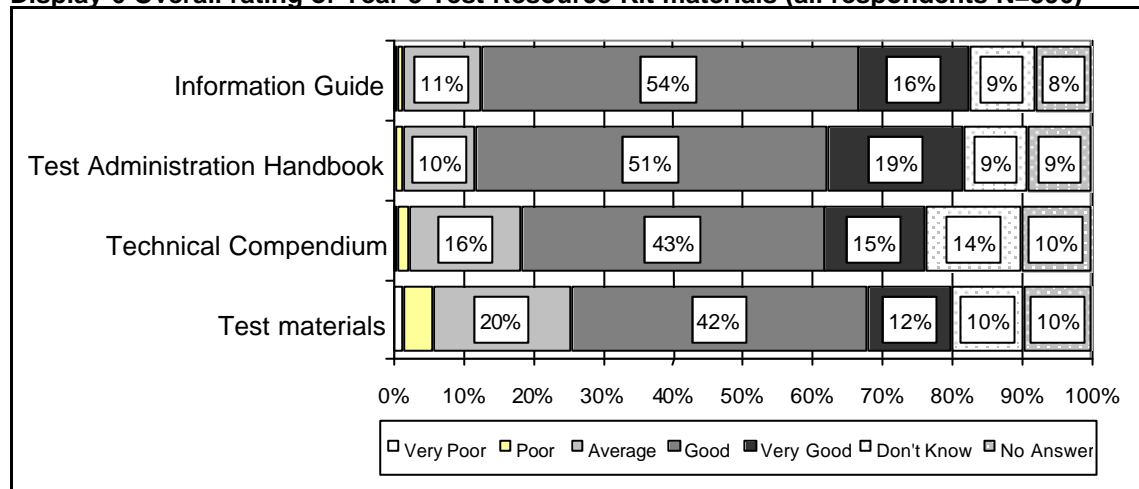
The survey asked a number of questions to gauge the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Kit materials. Data were sought on:

- overall ratings of the Kit materials;
- the clarity of the materials in assisting teachers;
- the use of the student information generated from the Kit;
- suggestions for improving the Kit.

3.1 Overall Ratings

Display 6 provides a summary of respondent ratings of the four components of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit. As can be seen, mainly positive ratings were received.

Display 6 Overall rating of Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials (all respondents N=396)

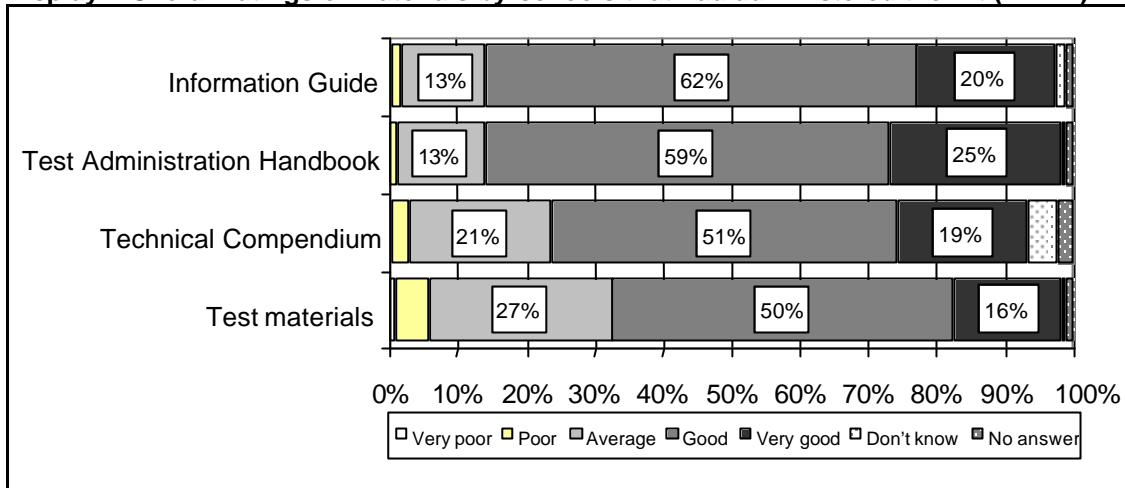


* Percentages of the most frequent responses are also provided.

The percentages reported in Display 6 are ratings of all respondents, regardless of whether they had or had not administered the Kit (Q4). Display 7 provides a summary of the ratings provided by those schools who reported having administered the Kit (N=227). It could be argued that these ratings are informed ones as they are from schools that have experienced the Kit first-hand.

As can be seen, these ratings reported in Display 7 were even more positive than the overall ratings presented in Display 6. For example, 82% of user respondents considered that the *Information Guide* was 'good' or 'very good' compared to 70% of all respondents.

Display 7 Overall ratings of materials by schools that had administered the Kit (N=227)



* Percentages of the most frequent responses are also provided.

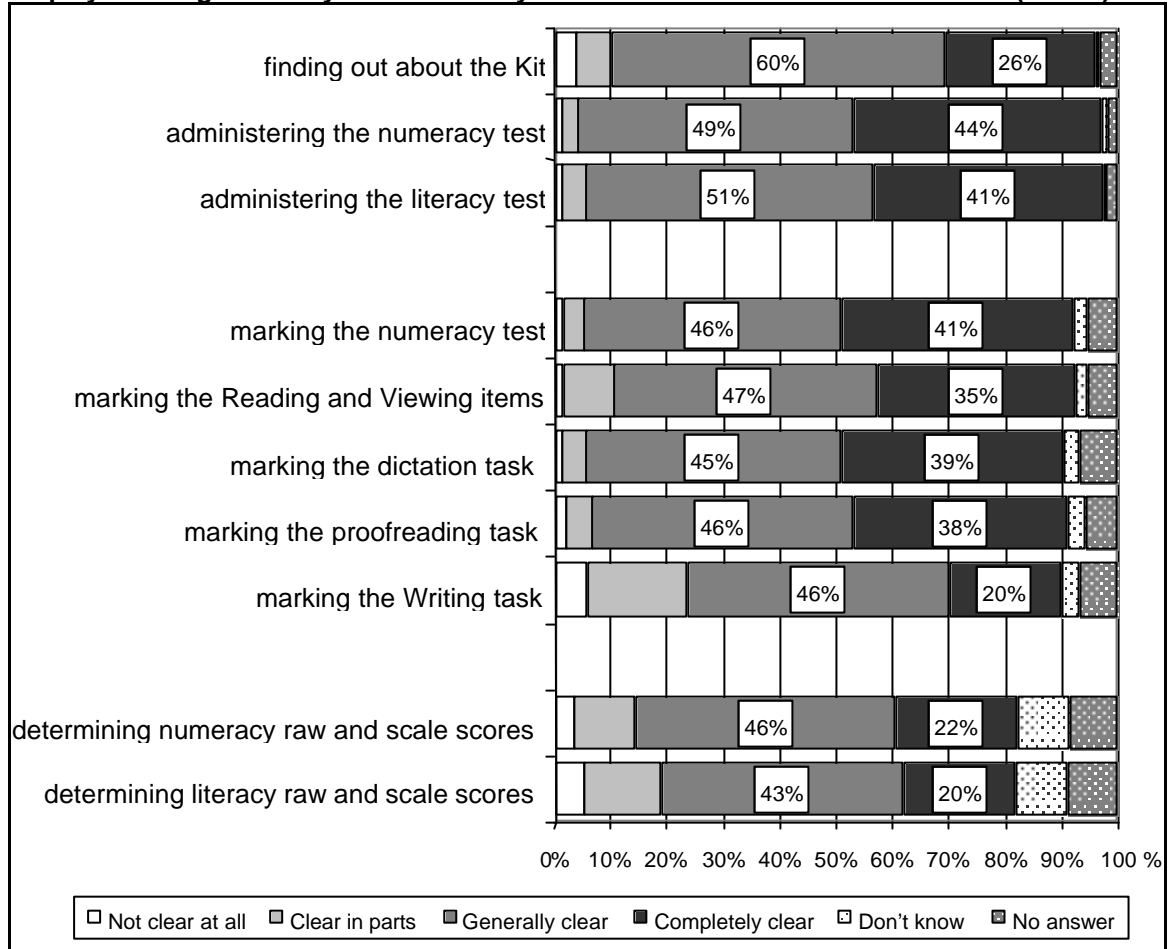
3.2 Clarity of Materials

Schools that had administered the Kit (N=227) were asked to indicate how **clear** were the Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials in assisting teachers to undertake various tasks required of them to administer it. Display 8 provides a summary of responses.

As can be seen, in general, the majority of respondents who had administered the Kit felt that it was either 'generally' or 'completely clear'.

Greater clarity appeared to be related to the tasks of administering the tests, marking the numeracy test, and marking the Reading and Viewing and dictation components of the literacy test. There appeared to be comparatively less clarity, however, related to the marking of the writing task and determining literacy and numeracy raw and scale scores.

Display 8 Rating on clarity of materials by schools that had administered the Kit (N=227)

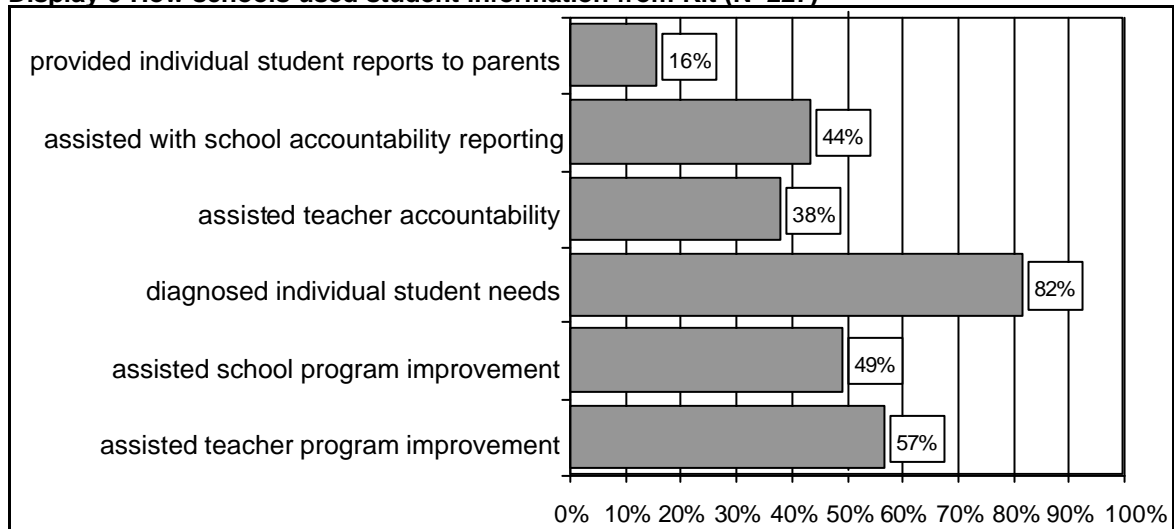


* Percentages of the most frequent responses are also provided.

3.3 Use of Student Performance Information

Display 9 presents a summary of how schools reported that they used the student information produced as a result of administering the Year 3 Resource Kit.

Display 9 How schools used student information from Kit (N=227)



Display 9 shows that individual student diagnosis was almost a universal (82%) use for the Kit, while the majority (57%) also indicated teacher program improvement to be a use. Interestingly, only a small minority used the Kit for reporting to parents.

3.4 Suggestions for Improvement

Schools that had administered the Kit (N=227) were asked how the Kit might be improved. About one half (49%) offered suggestions for improvement. A categorised summary of the responses is presented in Display 10 and the full list is contained in Appendix 2.

Display 10 Suggestions for improvement of Kit (N=227)

Suggestions about the Year 3 Test form	15%	Suggestions here were quite varied, and were very similar to those already reported in the Council's report <i>Evaluation of the 1998 Queensland Years 3 and 5 Testing Program</i> .
More help with marking	9%	Most suggestions focused on more assistance with marking the writing task or alternatively, to simplify the marking scheme for Writing.
Positive comments rather than suggestions	6%	Most comments were similar to 'It was great'; 'I found it user friendly'; 'OK as is'; 'It was very good, helped provide for future needs and showed clearly where children fitted with other Year 3 children'.
More help with calculations/scores	5%	Most suggestions requested more assistance, some wished the process to be simplified while others wished to have information on the meaning of the raw and scale scores.
Improve aspects of the kit format	4%	Suggestions included combining the literacy and numeracy booklets, including statewide means in the Technical Compendium, putting all spelling tasks together, combining components into a smaller package.
Supply more copies of materials	2%	Suggestions included supplying test booklets for all students and providing more copies of stimulus materials and more copies of teacher booklets.
Improve instructions	2%	Suggestions focused mainly on the need to have simpler instructions which took less time.
Provide a parent report proforma	2%	Suggestions were made to include a parent report or a computer program to generate parent reports similar to those used for census tests.
Other	5%	Other comments covered a number of areas including the Council testing program, greater promotion of the Kit, and training of teachers to administer the Kit.
No suggestion for improvement given	52%	Just over one half of schools that have administered the Kit didn't respond to request for improvement suggestions.

The suggestions summarised above are consistent with many of the opinions and ratings provided earlier in this report. For example:

- Display 8 showed that information on the marking of the writing task and the determining of literacy and numeracy raw and scale scores were comparatively less clear than other aspects of the Kit. These areas were prominent amongst the suggestions for improvement;
- Display 9 indicated that only a minority of schools had provided individual student reports to parents. Suggestions related to the inclusion of parent report templates would facilitate this activity.

3.5 Summary, Discussion and Conclusions Regarding Focus Question 2

Focus Question 2

How appropriate and effective are the Year 3 Test Resource Kit materials?

Summary

In response to Focus Question 2, the evaluation found the following:

- Overall, schools rated the Kit materials very positively. For example, between 66% and 82% of schools that had administered the Kit gave a rating of 'good' or 'very good' for the various components of the Kit.
- Between 63% and 86% of schools that had administered the Kit felt that it was 'generally' or 'completely' clear in assisting teachers to undertake the various tasks required of them to administer the Kit.
- Aspects of the Kit reported to be less clear than others included marking the Writing task and determining numeracy and literacy raw and scale scores.
- The most frequently reported school use of student information produced from administering the Kit were diagnosis of individual student needs (82% of schools administering the Kit) and assistance with teacher program improvement (57%). The least reported use was the provision of individual student reports to parents (16% of schools).
- Some suggestions for improving the Kit were related to those aspects that were considered to have been less clear than others. These suggestions included: more help with marking (9% of schools administering Kit), and more help with calculating scores (5%). Other suggestions for improvement were about: improving the test form (15%, the most frequent suggestion), improving the format (4%) and instructions (2%), supplying more copies of the material (2%), and providing parent report templates (2%).

Discussion and conclusions

The summary findings reported above offer advice on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit.

In respect of effectiveness, the high positive ratings given the Kit (particularly by those who had administered it) and the various ways in which the student information was used leads to the following conclusion.

Conclusion 2

Most aspects of the Kit were effective. The suggestions made by schools provide advice on ways in which the Kit could be made more effective.

In respect of appropriateness, the generally high ratings given on the clarity of the Kit leads to the following conclusion.

Conclusion 3

Most aspects of the Kit met the needs of teachers and therefore may be considered to be appropriate. Nevertheless, those aspects of the Kit considered less clear than others and which were the subject of improvement suggestions could be made more appropriate e.g. information about the marking of the Writing task and determination of raw and scale scores. Another suggestion about providing a student report template also warrants consideration.

The overall appropriateness and effectiveness of the Kit and the suggestions made to improve it lead to the following conclusion.

Conclusion 4

Given the overall appropriateness and effectiveness of the Kit, and the fact that the 2000 Year 3 Test is also sample based, there is merit in considering the following activities in 2000.

- Revise or prepare addenda for the Kit's *Information Guide* and *Technical Compendium* to improve the information about marking the Writing task and scoring the tests;
- Add a student report template for use by schools in reporting to parents, should they so desire.
- Place the Kit on the Council's Web site, incorporating any revisions and additions.
- Promote the use of the existing Kit during 2000 through materials developed for the 2000 Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program, particularly through the Program's *Information for Schools* document. In this respect, the document might include information about:
 - the availability of the Kit on the Council's Web site;
 - the opportunity for new schools commenced in 2000 to obtain a set of the Kit materials until stocks are exhausted. (Approximately 15 complete sets of the Kit remain in stock).
 - the opportunity for all schools to order, at cost, additional or replacement copies of the coloured literacy stimulus booklet. This is because many schools would not have colour printers even though they might have access to the Web. (Approximately 250 stimulus booklets remain in stock.)

4 Future Planning

Focus Question 3

What are school opinions in relation to future planning in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?

4.1 Preferred Form of Testing

In the survey, a final question was asked about what form of literacy and numeracy testing schools favoured for Years 3, 5 and 7, **in 2001**.

The question was prefaced with the following information to assist each school's response:

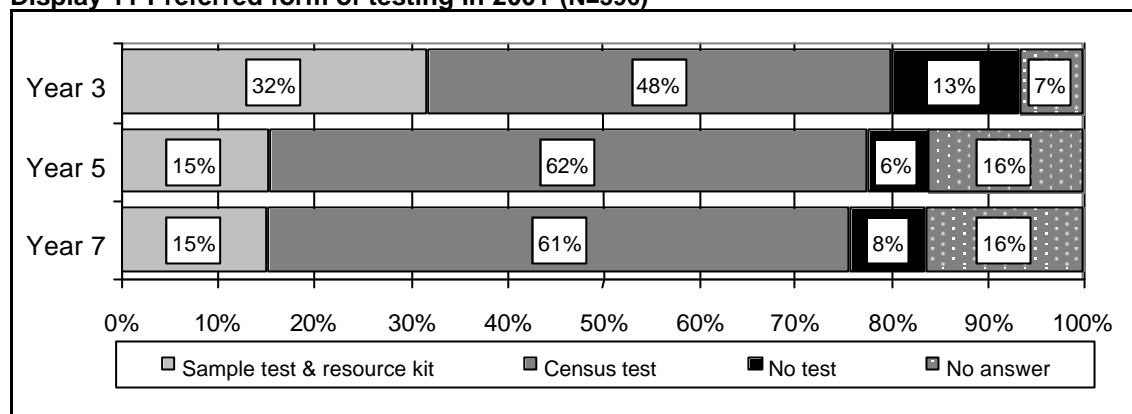
A census test involves all students (notwithstanding valid exemptions). It allows test developers to generate individual student, class, school and state-based reports;

A sample test involves a small number of students and allows test developers to generate state-based reports only. The 1998 and 1999 Year 3 test were sample tests and the Queensland Year 3 Test Resource Kit was developed to allow schools to administer a Year 3 test themselves and to mark and score their own students;

In 2000, the Government has decided that there will be a sample Year 3 Test, a census Year 5 Test and a census Year 7 Test but no decision has been made yet about the 2001 Testing Program.

Display 11 presents a summary of the form of testing favoured by all responding schools for 2001 (N=396). As can be seen, the most frequently expressed preference was for a 'census test'. Only a minority wanted 'no test'.

Display 11 Preferred form of testing in 2001 (N=396)



An analysis was undertaken of any differences of opinion regarding the preferred form of testing between those schools that had administered the Kit and those that had not administered it yet. Interestingly, overall:

- those schools that had administered the Kit favoured 'no test' far less than those schools that had not administered the Kit yet e.g. in respect of Year 3, 9% compared to 23%;
- those schools that had already administered the Kit favoured 'sample test and resource kit' more than those schools that had not administered the Kit e.g. in respect of Year 7, 21% compared to 15%;
- in respect of 'census test' opinion, although the differences were not as large as those for 'sample and resource kit' option, those schools that had administered the Kit tended to favour 'census test' a little more than those schools that had not administered the Kit, e.g. in respect of Year 5, 75% compared to 72%.

Schools were asked the main reasons for their preferred forms of testing. About 70% (N=279) of respondents gave at least one reason.

Respondents who preferred 'sample test and resource kit' gave reasons such as: availability of data with a minimum of fuss; the value of a resource kit; avoidance of school comparisons, and flexibility.

Respondents who preferred 'census tests' gave reasons such as: good accountability exercise; provision of comparative data; provision of valuable information about individual students; assistance with intervention; assistance with school planning; and convenience in terms of marking and reporting.

Respondents who preferred 'no test' gave reasons such as: inappropriateness of testing and provision of nothing new.

Those who specifically preferred 'no test' or 'sample test and resource kit' for Year 3 students gave reasons such as the young age of the student and the closeness to the Year 2 Diagnostic Net. Those who specifically preferred 'no test' or 'sample test and resource kit' for Year 7 gave reasons such as the lateness in arrival of the 1999 Year 7 census test results and respondents' consequent inability to use the individual student results before they left school.

4.2 Summary, Discussion and Conclusions Regarding Focus Question 3

Focus Question 3

What are school opinions in relation to future planning in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit?

Summary

In response to Focus Question 3, the evaluation found the following:

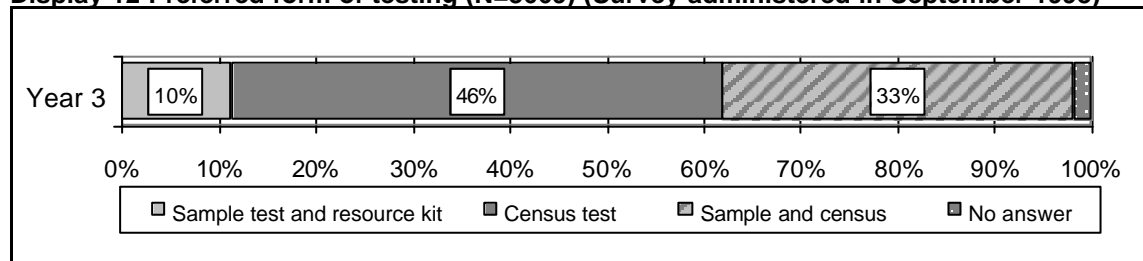
- Despite the positive findings in respect of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit, a preference for a 'sample test and resource kit' was expressed less frequently than a preference for a 'census test' (without resource kit). A 'census test' was the most frequently expressed preferred form of testing (48% for Year 3, 62% for Year 5 and 61% for Year 7). The least favoured was 'no test' and the less favoured was 'sample test and resource kit'.
- Those schools that had administered the Year 3 Test Resource Kit appeared to be more favourably disposed to state-based (either sample or census) than those who had not administered the Kit yet.

Discussion and conclusions

The finding in relation to census tests continues a trend which has been reported in previous evaluations. It is helpful to be reminded of these findings.

In the evaluation of the **1998** Queensland Years 3 and 5 Testing Program, principals and teachers were asked 'Given the fact that it is Government policy to conduct statewide testing programs, overall, what form of statewide testing do you favour?' Display 12 provides a summary of principal and teachers responses (N=3669).

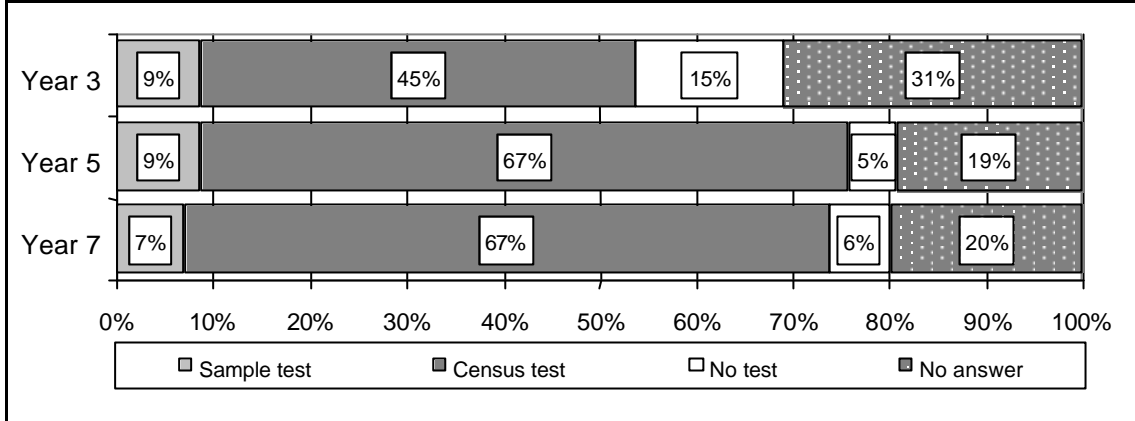
Display 12 Preferred form of testing (N=3669) (Survey administered in September 1998)



Ref: Queensland School Curriculum Council 1999, *Evaluation of the 1998 Queensland Years 3 and 5 Testing Program: Results of principal and teacher surveys*

Furthermore, in the evaluation of the 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing program, schools were asked 'Given the fact that it is Government policy to conduct state-based literacy and numeracy testing programs, overall, what primary year levels should be included in testing programs (only Years 3, 5 and 7 were listed) and what form of testing do you favour?' Display 13 provides a summary of school responses (N=870).

Display 13 Preferred form of state-based testing (N=870)(Survey administered in August 1999)



Ref: Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000, *Evaluation of the 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program: Final Report (in preparation)*

As can be seen, the results from three surveys (for this current evaluation and the two reported above) have revealed that the most frequently preferred form of testing has been census. This is despite the different wording and format of the questions that were asked.

These findings lead to the following conclusion.

Conclusion 5

Regarding the 2001 Testing Program, overall, schools prefer a ‘census test’ over the ‘sample test and resource kit’ combination; and only a small minority favour ‘no test’. This finding is consistent with other Council evaluations.

These findings have some bearing on future planning related to the use of resource kits and also on the future direction of literacy and numeracy testing programs themselves.

It should be noted that the reason for the development of the Year 3 Test Resource Kit was that the Year 3 Test has been a sample test. Given this fact, the Kit allows all schools to assess their Year 3 students and to compare individual and student performance against the performance of the 1998 state-based sample of Year 3 students.

While it could be argued that the Kit would be a valuable resource regardless of the existence of a sample or census test, if the Year 3 Test were to become a census test, the prime reason for the development of the Kit in the first place would no longer exist.

While this evaluation has concluded that the Kit has had an impact in terms of use (Conclusion 1) and in general has been found to be appropriate and effective (Conclusions 2 and 3), its utility would be decreased if the Year 3 Test were to become a census test.

If the Minister were to make a decision on the Year 3 Test in line with the dominant view of schools, the 2001 state-based Testing Program would include a Year 3 census test. If, on the other hand, the Minister wishes the Year 3 Test to remain a sample test, the need for a resource kit, particularly a new one, would be increased. This situation leads to the following conclusion.

Conclusion 6

If the 2001 Testing Program contains all census tests, no further resource kit is warranted in 2001.

If the 2001 Testing Program contains a sample test, given the relatively positive reception of the current Resource Kit, there is merit in the Council considering the development of a further resource kit which complements the 2001 sample-based test.

[All activity related to Conclusion 6 would be subject to funding availability.]



QUEENSLAND SCHOOL CURRICULUM COUNCIL

EVALUATION OF THE QUEENSLAND YEAR 3 TEST RESOURCE KIT SCHOOL SURVEY

Dear **Principal**

In late May 1999, the Council forwarded the Queensland Year 3 Test Resource Kit to your school.

The Year 3 Test Resource Kit allows schools to administer items from the 1998 Queensland Year 3 Test in aspects of literacy and numeracy for the purpose of obtaining information similar to that obtained through state-based census tests.

The purpose of this brief survey is to gather information on the Resource Kit for purposes of future planning. The survey covers: overall opinions of the Test Resource Kit, school use of the Kit if any, and aspects connected with future planning.

The survey is a short one and I would appreciate it if you were to take the time to complete it by ticking the appropriate box/es or by writing on the lines provided.

All survey data will be treated confidentially and no individual survey will be identified in the survey report. Results will be posted on the Council's Web site early in 2000. The Council's Web site is located at <http://www.qscc.qld.edu.au>.

Please return the survey in the envelope provided or return to the address listed on the other side of the survey **by Monday 29 November 1999**.

Your assistance in helping the Council in its planning is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

J E Tunstall
Director
1 November 1999

BACKGROUND

- In what postcode area is your school located? _____
- Are there Year 3 students enrolled at your school? Yes No

OVERALL OPINIONS ON QUEENSLAND YEAR 3 TEST RESOURCE KIT

- Overall**, how do you rate the following aspects of the Queensland Year 3 Test Resource Kit?
(Tick one box for each.)

	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good	Don't
know						
<i>Information Guide</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Test Administration Handbook</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Technical Compendium</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCHOOL USE OF KIT

4. Has the school administered the Year 3 Resource Kit yet? Yes No

If you answered 'Yes' above, please answer Questions 5, 6, 7 and 8, and then go to Question 11.

If you answered 'No' above, please answer Questions 9 and 10, and then go to Question 11.

5. (If Yes to Q 4) When did the school administer the Kit? Please indicate the month number (eg 09, 10). _____ / 1999

6. (If Yes to Q 4) How **clear** were the materials in assisting teachers to undertake the following tasks?

(Tick one box for each.)

	Not clear at all	Clear in parts	Generally clear	Completely clear	Don't know
finding out about the Kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
administering the numeracy test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
administering the literacy test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marking the numeracy test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marking the <i>Reading</i> and <i>Viewing</i> items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marking the dictation task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marking the proofreading task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marking the <i>Writing</i> task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
determining numeracy raw and scale scores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
determining literacy raw and scale scores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. (If Yes to Q 4) How did the school use the student information from the Kit? (Please tick the appropriate box/es.)

provided individual student reports to parents

diagnosed individual student needs

assisted with school accountability reporting

assisted school program improvement

assisted teacher accountability

assisted teacher program improvement

8. (If Yes to Q 4) How might the Kit be improved? _____

9. (If No to Q 4) Does the school intend administering the Kit at all in the future? Yes No

10. (If Yes to Q 9) When does the school intend administering the Kit? Please indicate month number and year. _____ / _____
or

(If No to Q 9) Why does the school not intend administering the Kit in the future?

FUTURE PLANNING

In answering Question 11 below, please note that:

- a census test involves all students (notwithstanding valid exemptions). It allows test developers to generate individual student, class, school and state-based reports;
- a sample test involves a small number of students and allows test developers to generate state-based reports only. The 1998 and 1999 Year 3 test were sample tests and the Queensland Year 3 Test Resource Kit was developed to allow schools to administer a Year 3 test themselves and to mark and score their own students;
- in 2000, the Government has decided that there will be a sample Year 3 Test, a census Year 5 Test and a census Year 7 Test but no decision has been made yet about the 2001 Testing Program.

11. In 2001, what form of literacy and numeracy testing does the school favour in each of the following year levels? (Please tick one box for each.)

Year 3 sample test and resource kit

census test

no test

Year 5 sample test and resource kit

census test

no test

Year 7 sample test and resource kit

census test

no test

What is the main reason for your response to Q 11?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Please use the reply-paid envelope or return to Reply Paid 317, Attention Christopher Dean, Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, PO Box 317, Brisbane Albert Street Q 4002 by 29 November 1999.

Appendix 2: List of Suggestions for Improvement

Responses regarding suggested improvements to the Year 3 Test Resource Kit

Please refer to Display 10 for summary

Suggestions about the Year 3 test form [N=32]

Divide strands more clearly in literacy and numeracy tests.

Match the test materials with the curriculum.

Some questions especially in maths did not completely follow the syllabus.

24 children in Year 3/4/5 commenced the test. Only 3 of this 24 did not give up. Most baulked before the writing test. Too hard, too long.

Very general. The test gives no indication of mathematical thinking. Too many bits of paper. Inappropriate testing procedure for Year 3. Bears no relation to where we are in our Program.

Make the literacy materials on the practice kit the same format as the actual test.

Maths should correspond with Queensland syllabus, some questions are more advanced than those taught.

Reconsider time allocation for some tasks e.g. writing.

Some questions were too difficult in both literacy and numeracy.

Literacy - more time is required to complete proof reading task.

Test was of little use as a great deal of it was inappropriate and too difficult. More appropriate questions required.

More realistic expectations, more appropriate questions required.

Too many instructions and some items seemed too hard.

The literacy test was quite a challenge for the children.

Less able students couldn't read the instructions unaided.

More consideration for ESL students.

Instructions on administration of practice material needs to be clearer.

Make the testing more comprehensive and more intervals in between.

Make your questions and language suitable to the needs of ATSI students too.

Questions more relevant to the students.

More time is required for writing task.

Timing of literacy is too long.

Practice questions for R&W need to be included.

Some materials are not in curriculum and are too hard.

Delete questions irrelevant to the curriculum.

Give closer attention to Year 3 development and learning by August when the test is administered.

It needs to correlate with the Year 3 syllabus in Qld.

The literacy testing is far too broad for Year 3 in Qld.

Don't test work for the whole of Year 3 when there are still 4 months to go.

Relate more to the Year 3 Qld syllabus.

Set questions at Year 3 standard.

Too little time is allowed for 8 year olds to do the reading and viewing tasks.

More help with marking, particularly the writing task [N=21]

Further examples are required to support assessing writing.

More user friendly marking criteria required for the writing task.

Clearer points needed to mark writing task.

A simplified method of decoding written tasks is required.

Writing marking scheme needs simplifying.

Writing task needs to be compatible with other marking process.

It needs a simplified literacy marking system.

We need assistance in marking and giving levels for writing task. I found this very difficult.

Update yearly sample content. Improve writing tasks and simplify framework for marking writing.

The marking of the writing task and determining of raw scores is too complex.

Easier marking for writing is required to ensure consistency.

We found marking using the given criteria very difficult.

More assistance in marking the writing task is required by including additional detail in the criteria for each level.

More help with marking, particularly the writing task [N=21] CONTINUED

We'd like to be able to send our tests away for marking. This took considerable time and I have concern about our consistency in marking the writing.

Cross-marking across schools is required to make sure that everyone marked the same way (like net validation).

All items need to be marked simply.

We need flow chart for marking process.

For ease of marking all space, measurement etc. place all questions together.

Make allowances made in writing criteria for those from other cultures.

You can mark the work.

We need better answer sheets; marking work was a headache.

Positive comments [N=13]

It was fine.

No main concern at all.

Generally acceptable.

It was great.

I found it user friendly.

Satisfied with current form.

Found the Kit good to use in its present form.

Kit was very good in present form.

OK as is.

It was very good. It helped provide for future needs. Showed clearly where children fitted with other Year 3.

Generally OK in all areas.

Was effective and user friendly.

All OK.

Give more help with calculations/scores [N=12]

We needed some support with raw score.

What do the raw scores mean?

Scale scores usage was not clear at all and required much investigation through PEO performance measurement to decode and use.

Give more information about the interpretation of scale scores.

Make the scores easier to work out.

The score ratings/markings need to be included from the year of the test e.g. 50 means what?

Relevancy of statistics needs to be more clearly stated.

More explanation of score conversions is required.

Scale scores to graphing - this aspect was missing and came much later.

Norms of interpretive data for scaled scores required.

Assistance required with determining scale scores.

Have the mean averages available earlier.

Improve aspects of Kit format [N=8]

Make the literacy booklets more similar.

All the information in one booklet and the resource kit as opposed to the test kit needs to be more clearly defined.

Class profile sheet is required indicating exactly what is being tested.

Put all spelling items together.

Have a copy of the students' book combined within the instruction booklet.

Combine into one book.

Combine into smaller kit.

1998 Year 3 statewide mean scores and graphical presentations should have been in the Technical Compendium.

Supply more copies of materials [N=4]

More copies of the books for teachers are required.

Supply materials for all students e.g. test booklets for all students.

Larger numbers of stimulus materials required.

How about enough books to cover all Year 3.

Improve instructions [N=5]

Make it simpler, less time consuming for teachers.

Less reading, less time.

Very wordy explanations re steps involved.

Give clear instructions.

Administration handbook needs to be clearer.

Provide a parent report proforma [N=4]

Provide a possible report format for parents.

Include program which produces a parent report similar to that produced originally.

Provide a one page report format of the raw and scale scores.

Parent report proformas/information.

Evaluation and Review Report Series

1997 Year 6 Test: Report on School Survey

Evaluation of 1998 Queensland Years 3 and 5 Testing Program: Results of Principal and Teacher Surveys

Evaluation of 1998 Queensland Years 3 and 5 Testing Program: Results of Principal and Teacher Surveys (Inclusivity Issues)

Evaluation of 1999 Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing Program: Final Report

Evaluation of the Queensland 1998 Year 3 Test Resource Kit: Final Report

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 Technology Curriculum Development Project: Report 1

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 Technology Curriculum Development Project: Report 2

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 Technology Curriculum Development Project: Report 3

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 The Arts Curriculum Development Project: Report 1

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 The Arts Curriculum Development Project: Report 2

Evaluation of the Years 1 to 10 The Arts Curriculum Development Project: Report 3

Review of Queensland Literacy and Numeracy Testing Programs, 1995 to 1999 (Issues Paper)

Review of Queensland Literacy and Numeracy Testing Programs, 1995 to 1999

Review of the Form and Nature of the Queensland Year 3 Test

Copies of these reports are available from the Queensland School Curriculum Council website:
<http://www.qscc.qld.edu.au>