



## Middle Childhood

# GENERALIST

## Assessment at a Glance

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*National Board Certification  
Promotes Better Teaching,  
Better Learning, Better Schools*

## Choosing the Right Certificate

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The National Board Certification® process offers experienced teachers the professional development opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and practices against high and rigorous standards. Candidates pursue certification by completing two major assessment components: a portfolio of classroom teaching practice and an assessment of content knowledge administered at a computer-based testing center.

The Middle Childhood/Generalist certificate is appropriate for teachers who teach students ages 7–12 and who know the range of the middle grades curriculum: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and history, the arts, and health. Some Generalists are assigned to teach a single subject while others are assigned multiple subjects, for example, humanities teachers or mathematics/science teachers. Some focus in their teaching on interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary lessons while others may use such curricular approaches only occasionally. However, all Generalists, without regard to their assignment, practice in a manner designed to advance student learning in two or more subjects. Read this document to learn the content and pedagogical knowledge you will be required to demonstrate for this certificate area and to measure your readiness to pursue National Board Certification.

Below is a set of questions to ask yourself about your teaching practice. If you answer “yes” to these questions, you are ready to apply. For eligibility requirements and application instructions, read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site ([www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)).

If you answer “no” to one or more of these questions, you may need to discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, a National Board Certified Teacher®, your faculty support group, or a local-level administrator who is directing a National Board program.

### **For the portfolio, will you be able to:**

- demonstrate that your teaching practice meets the Middle Childhood/Generalist Standards?
- have access to a class of at least 6 students, in which 51% of the students are ages 7–12 during the 12 months prior to the submission of your portfolio entries?
- submit student work samples and video recordings in English and/or Spanish showing your interactions with your students?
- explain how you use a topic in writing to develop students' thinking and writing skills for different audiences through the use of narrative and expository student work samples?
- show how you create a climate that supports students' emerging abilities to understand and consider perspectives other than their own and to assume responsibility for their own actions through a social studies topic?
- discuss how you help students better understand a “big idea” in science using relevant science and mathematics knowledge, and engage students in work that helps to enrich their understanding of the interdisciplinary areas?
- present evidence of how you impact student learning through your work with students' families and community and through your development as a learner and as a leader/collaborator?

### **For the assessment center, will you be able to demonstrate content knowledge in:**

- reading skills?
- mathematics?
- science?
- social studies?
- health?
- the arts?

## Reviewing the Standards

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The requirements for National Board Certification in the field of Middle Childhood/Generalist (MC/Gen) are organized into the following Standards. The ordering of the Standards is designed to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities.

**I. Knowledge of Students**

Accomplished teachers draw on their knowledge of child development and their relationships with students to understand their students' abilities, interests, aspirations, and values.

**II. Knowledge of Content and Curriculum**

Accomplished teachers draw on their knowledge of subject matter and curriculum to make sound decisions about what is important for students to learn within and across the subject areas of the middle childhood curriculum.

**III. Learning Environment**

Accomplished teachers establish a caring, inclusive, stimulating, and safe school community where students can take intellectual risks, practice democracy, and work collaboratively and independently.

**IV. Respect for Diversity**

Accomplished teachers help students learn to respect and appreciate individual and group differences.

**V. Instructional Resources**

Accomplished teachers create, assess, select, and adapt a rich and varied collection of materials and draw on other resources such as staff, community members, and students to support learning.

**VI. Meaningful Applications of Knowledge**

Accomplished teachers engage students in learning within and across the disciplines and help students understand how the subjects they study can be used to explore important issues in their lives and the world around them.

**VII. Multiple Paths to Knowledge**

Accomplished teachers provide students with multiple paths needed to learn the central concepts in each school subject, explore important themes and topics that cut across subject areas, and build overall knowledge and understanding.

**VIII. Assessment**

Accomplished teachers understand the strengths and weaknesses of different assessment methods, base their instruction on ongoing assessment, and encourage students to monitor their own learning.

**IX. Family Involvement**

Accomplished teachers initiate positive, interactive relationships with families as they participate in the education of their children.

**X. Reflection**

Accomplished teachers regularly analyze, evaluate, reflect on, and strengthen the effectiveness and quality of their practice.

**XI. Contributions to the Profession**

Accomplished teachers work with colleagues to improve schools and to advance knowledge and practice in their field.

Read the Standards on the NBPTS Web site to ensure that you will be able to demonstrate your accomplishments and confidently satisfy the defined expectations for National Board Certification.

# Demonstrating Your Teaching Practice and Content Knowledge

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This section describes the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises for the MC/Gen certificate area.

## Portfolio Entries

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You will be required to submit four portfolio entries. One entry is based on student work samples, and two entries feature video recordings of student–teacher interactions in the classroom. The fourth entry relates to your accomplishments outside of the classroom—with families, the community, or colleagues—and how they impact student learning.

Following is a description of each portfolio entry.

**Entry 1:  
Writing: Thinking  
through the Process**

In this entry, you demonstrate your use of writing to develop students' thinking and writing skills for different audiences and purposes. You provide evidence of your planning and teaching, and your ability to describe, analyze, and use student work to reflect on your practice. You submit a Written Commentary, two assignments/prompts, and instructional materials, and four student responses.

**Entry 2:  
Building a  
Classroom  
Community through  
Social Studies**

In this entry, you demonstrate your ability to describe and illustrate how you sustain a classroom environment that supports students' growth, learning, social and emotional development, and emerging abilities to understand and consider perspectives other than their own through a social studies/history theme, issue, or topic. You also display your ability to observe and analyze the interactions in your classroom. You submit a Written Commentary, a 15-minute video recording, and two instructional materials.

**Entry 3:  
Integrating  
Mathematics  
with Science**

In this entry, you demonstrate how you help students better understand a "Big Idea" in science using relevant science and mathematical knowledge. You engage students in the discovery, exploration, and implementation of these science and mathematics concepts, procedures, and processes by integrating these two disciplinary areas. This entry is designed for you to provide evidence of your ability to plan, describe, illustrate, assess, and reflect on your teaching practice. You submit a Written Commentary, a 15-minute video recording, and three instructional materials. **Entry 3 is the preselected *Take One!* portfolio entry.**

**Entry 4:  
Documented  
Accomplishments:  
Contributions to  
Student Learning**

In this entry, you illustrate your partnerships with students' families and community, and your development as a learner and collaborator with other professionals by submitting descriptions and documentation of your activities and accomplishments in those areas. Your description must make the connection between each accomplishment and its impact on student learning.

Read the *Portfolio Instructions* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements for preparing, developing, and submitting the portfolio component of your assessment.

## Assessment Center Exercises

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This assessment is composed of six exercises that examine content knowledge specified in the NBPTS Standards. You are given up to 30 minutes to respond to each exercise.

Following is a description of each assessment center exercise.

- Exercise 1:  
Supporting Reading Skills** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to analyze and interpret student errors and patterns of errors in reading. You are asked to analyze and interpret a transcript of a given student's oral reading of a given passage. You are also asked to identify and justify appropriate strategies to address the identified student's needs.
- Exercise 2:  
Analyzing Student Work** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to identify mathematical misconceptions/errors in a given student's work, to identify concepts/skills necessary for student understanding of the math problem, and to provide appropriate strategies with a rationale to assist the student's understanding of the identified concepts or skills.
- Exercise 3:  
Knowledge of Science** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to identify and understand fundamental concepts and principles in science. You are asked to respond to a student's inquiry about a real-world phenomenon by identifying scientific concepts and principles that are related to the real-world phenomenon. You are also asked to describe an appropriate learning experience with a rationale that will provide student understanding of a concept/principle that relates to the real-world phenomenon.
- Exercise 4:  
Social Studies** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to identify and interpret social studies/history information within a given graphic. You are asked to identify a cause-and-effect relationship based on the information in the given graphic. You are also asked to describe a learning experience/activity that develops student understanding of a real-world connection related to the identified cause-and-effect relationship.
- Exercise 5:  
Understanding Health** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to identify and address health-related needs of a given student. You are asked to read a student profile and determine the particular health issues related to the identified student. You are asked to identify and justify appropriate steps and resources/materials used in meeting the needs of the student.
- Exercise 6:  
Integrating the Arts** In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to use the arts to develop student understanding of concepts in another discipline. You are asked to identify concepts in a given subject area and describe an arts-focused learning experience that will establish a connection for students' understanding of an identified concept and provide multiple paths of access for student learning of that concept. You are asked to justify how the arts-focused learning experience will enable students to develop a deeper or broader appreciation of the arts.

Read *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines* on the NBPTS Web site for more information about the assessment center component of the certification process. To locate an assessment center, visit the NBPTS computer-based testing Web site ([www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/](http://www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/)).

### **Selected Assessment Center Exercises**

The following sections contain selected exercises administered in a previous assessment cycle. These exercises present information that candidates saw on screen at the assessment center and include instructions for using the computer, stimulus materials (if applicable), and prompts requiring responses. These exercises have been included to help you become familiar with the structure of assessment center exercises and to help you understand the scoring rubrics. The exercise prompts in this section **do not** represent actual prompts candidates will see at assessment centers in the future.

Please note that assessment center exercises cover the **entire** age range of the certificate. Be aware that you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate content across the full range of your certificate.

## Sample Exercise 1: Supporting Reading Skills

Exercise 1: Supporting Reading Skills - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

### Introduction

In this exercise, you will use your content and pedagogical knowledge of reading to analyze and interpret a transcript of a given student's oral reading of a given reading passage; and to identify and justify appropriate strategies to address the student's needs. You will be asked to respond to four prompts.

### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the following:

- a sound understanding of reading development as demonstrated through a thorough and accurate identification of a given student's patterns of error in oral reading;
- an ability to describe developmentally appropriate and effective instructional strategies to assist in developing the given student's skills in reading; and
- a thorough and appropriate rationale for strategies selected to address the needs of the student.

### Directions

You may preview all of the prompts by clicking the "Next" button. The "Previous" button will enable you to return to any of the prompts in order to compose or revise your response in the space provided.

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### Preparation

Read both the written passage and the transcription of a student's oral reading of that passage. Identify student's errors and/or patterns of errors in reading and provide instructional strategies to develop the student's reading skills. (For the purpose of this exercise, all errors or patterns of errors are related only to the student's reading ability.)

### Scenario

You are teaching Reading to a group of third-grade students of mixed ability. You have provided a passage for a student in your class to read. Below are both the passage and the transcribed version of the student's reading of the passage.

### Stimulus

#### PASSAGE

Honey is a sweet, thick liquid that is made by honeybees. Honeybees fly from flower to flower collecting nectar. Nectar is a watery liquid found inside the blossoms. The bees sip the nectar from the flowers and store it in their honey bags inside of their bodies. While the nectar is inside the honey bag, it changes into two kinds of sugars. Next, the honeybees deposit the nectar into their hives. While it is there, most of the water evaporates leaving sweet, thick honey inside the honeycomb. Honey collectors usually remove the combs and then sell the sweet, delicious honey.

#### STUDENT'S READING

Honey is a sweet, thick likid that is made from honeybees. Neectar is a water likid found in the blooms. These bees sip the neectar from the flowers and store it in their honey bags inside of sugars next the honeybees deposit the neectar into their hive. While it is there. Most of the water evaporates leaving sweet, thick honey in the honeycum. Honeybee coltors usually remove the honeycum and then sell the sweet, honey.

**Retired Prompt 1**

*Identify two errors or patterns of errors evident in the student's reading.*

**Retired Prompt 2**

*Cite examples from the text to support your response.*

**Retired Prompt 3**

*Describe two instructional strategies you would use to address one of the student's errors or patterns of errors in Prompt 1.*

**Retired Prompt 4**

*For each instructional strategy, give a rationale for its use, relating it to the need of the student.*

## Sample Exercise 5: Understanding Health

Exercise 5: Understanding Health - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

### Introduction

In this exercise, you will use your knowledge of health education to identify a student's physical, mental/emotional, and social issues or concerns and explain how to meet the needs of the student profiled. You will be asked to respond to three prompts.

### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the following:

- an accurate identification of physical, mental/emotional, and social issues or concerns of the student profiled;
- an identification and thorough explanation of three steps used to meet the needs of the student profiled in the context of the whole class;
- an appropriate rationale to justify the steps used in meeting the needs of the student;
- sound curricular and instructional choices that are informed by knowledge of middle childhood students; and
- a variety of resources and materials to meet the instructional needs of all students.

### Directions

You may preview all of the prompts by clicking the "Next" button. The "Previous" button will enable you to return to any of the prompts in order to compose or revise your response in the space provided.

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### Scenario

Assume that you are the teacher of a group of sixth-grade students. Among the members of your class is the following student:

### Student Profile

Marissa is a popular 11-year-old student who is a perfectionist. She is a straight A student who puts tremendous pressure on herself. She has recently lost weight. Yet, you hear her complain about being fat. You rarely see her eating at lunchtime. The girls in the class look up to her and she often talks about the boys calling her at home.

### Retired Prompt 1

*Identify the physical, mental/emotional, and social needs of the student profiled.*

**Retired Prompt 2**

*What three steps would you take to address the needs (physical, mental/emotional, and social) of the student individually, as well as with the entire class? Include any resources, activities, and/or support persons you would use.*

**Retired Prompt 3**

*Why are these steps appropriate to meeting the needs of the student? Make sure to address the physical, mental/emotional and social well-being of the student.*

## Understanding the National Board Scoring Process

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All portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are scored by teachers practicing in the same content area as the assessment they are scoring. The National Board's carefully trained assessors use scoring rubrics to evaluate candidate responses. The rubrics clearly articulate the criteria that are to be applied in the evaluation of your responses. These criteria reflect the Standards that the entry is designed to measure.

Assessors use a four-level rubric to score each candidate's response as shown below.

| Rubric Level | Score Range | Quality of Evidence               |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Level 4      | 3.75–4.25   | Clear, consistent, and convincing |
| Level 3      | 2.75–3.74   | Clear                             |
| Level 2      | 1.75–2.74   | Limited                           |
| Level 1      | 0.75–1.74   | Little or no                      |

The Level 4 and Level 3 score ranges represent accomplished teaching practice. You do not have to receive Level 4 or Level 3 scores for every entry and exercise. A high score on one may compensate for a lower score elsewhere. Read the *Scoring Guide for Candidates* on the NBPTS Web site for your assessment.

### Your Total Weighted Scaled Score

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When your portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are completed and scored, your Total Weighted Scaled Score is computed. This is done by applying a set of weights to each of your entry and exercise scores.

For the MC/Gen certificate, these are the weights:

- 16% for each of the three classroom-based portfolio entries
- 12% for the Documented Accomplishments portfolio entry
- 6.67% for each of the six assessment center exercises

Your weighted scaled score for each entry or exercise is calculated by multiplying the raw score by the appropriate weight, shown above. Your Total Weighted Scaled Score is the sum of the weighted scaled scores for all entries and exercises plus a 12-point uniform constant. For example, if your weighted scaled score is 263, you would receive a 12-point uniform constant score, and your Total Weighted Scaled Score would be 275. This number is then compared to 275, the performance standard established by the NBPTS Board of Directors.

A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score is 275 or greater is recognized as an accomplished teacher and is awarded National Board Certification. A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score does not meet 275 is not yet certified and for the following two years has the opportunity to retake certain portfolio entries or assessment center exercises in order to meet the performance standard of 275.

## Things to Keep in Mind

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The National Board Standards for the MC/Gen certificate area are addressed within the portfolio and assessment center process. Therefore, you should keep the following in mind:

- Although the portfolio entries address many of the Standards, they may not address all of them. Standards the portfolio does not address may be included in the assessment center portion of the certification process.
- Each entry is scored independently of the others. When an entry asks for background or contextual information, be complete, since an assessor for one entry will not see your other entries.
- At each of the four levels of the scoring rubric, the same Standards-related criteria are applied. However, each level of the scoring rubric represents a difference in the quality of evidence demonstrated by the entry or exercise. For example, if “Knowledge of Students” is a Standard measured by an entry, the Level 4 rubric will refer to “clear, consistent, and convincing” evidence of that Standard while the Level 2 rubric will refer to “limited” evidence of the same Standard.
- One of the fundamental principles underlying the evaluation is that responses are scored only on what candidates are specifically asked to do. For example, if the directions specifically ask you to demonstrate how to use assessment in the featured instructional sequence, evidence supporting your use of assessment will be evaluated based on the scoring rubric. Conversely, if an entry does not require you to demonstrate how to use assessment, it will not be evaluated.

## Beginning Your Journey toward National Board Certification

The first step on this journey is to make a commitment, but what does this commitment involve? First-time candidates apply and complete their assessments in an initial candidacy period as shown in the timeline below. For candidates who are not successful in their first try, there is a 24-month window, following the receipt of scores, in which to retake assessments and/or resubmit portfolio entries in order to achieve certification.

You may wish to start with the *Take One!* program that requires submission of a single portfolio entry for scoring. The preselected portfolio entry required for *Take One!* is identified as part of the portfolio entry descriptions on page 3. You can choose to transfer your *Take One!* score to National Board Certification within three years of completing the *Take One!* process. Read *Becoming a Take One! Participant* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements.

If you choose to pursue National Board Certification, there is also a financial commitment for which support is available. Visit the NBPTS Web site to learn about federal, state, and/or local funds available to support National Board Certification and *Take One!* fees. Be sure to check with your local, district, or state educational officials for incentives (such as salary increases and bonuses) that may be offered for achieving National Board Certification.

The following timeline provides a snapshot of your schedule of commitments. Read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site for complete information.

### Certification Planner

| Step | To Do  | Year 1           | Year 2           | Year 3           | Year 4           |
|------|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1    | <b>Send forms and fees to NBPTS:</b>   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>application</li> <li>nonrefundable initial fee (\$500)</li> <li>all eligibility forms</li> <li>balance of full fee (totaling \$2,500)</li> </ul>                                  | Jan. 1 — Dec. 31 |                  |                  |                  |
| 2    | <b>Develop portfolio entries and submit them to NBPTS:</b>   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive portfolio box <b>after</b> submitting initial fees.</li> <li>Submit all four portfolio entries at once <b>after</b> submitting all fees and eligibility forms.</li> </ul> | Jan. 1 — Mar. 31 |                  |                  |                  |
| 3    | <b>Schedule your assessment center exercises:</b>  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>after</b> submitting all fees and eligibility forms</li> <li>at least 30 days <b>before</b> the test date</li> </ul>   |                  | Jan. 1 — Jun. 15 |                  |                  |
| 4    | <b>Obtain your scores online:</b>  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access <i>My Profile</i> to learn about your scores and certification status.</li> </ul>  |                  | Dec. 31          | Dec. 31          | Dec. 31          |
| 5    | <b>Continue the journey:</b>   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you did not achieve certification, decide whether to retake assessment center exercises and/or portfolio entries.</li> <li>Submit retake application and fees.</li> </ul>      |                  |                  | Jan. 31          | Jan. 31          |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retake selected assessment center exercises.</li> <li>Submit selected portfolio entries.</li> </ul>   |                  |                  | Jan. 1 — Jun. 15 | Jan. 1 — Jun. 15 |
|      |  |                  |                  | Jan. 1 — Apr. 15 | Jan. 1 — Apr. 15 |

Having made the commitment, many teachers who pursue National Board Certification become role models and leaders in their schools and districts, earning a greater voice in what happens and having a very positive effect on their students' experiences. On your journey, you will benefit directly from your candidacy, taking part in what many have described as the best professional development experience of their lives.

Produced for the



by

**PEARSON**



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