

How Do 7th Graders Who Take the ACT® Test Score as 11th or 12th Graders?

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Each year, some 7th graders take the ACT test, primarily as part of talent search programs. Many of these students go on to take the ACT again in 11th or 12th grade (the typical time for most to take this assessment). This brief explores how ACT Composite scores earned by 7th graders compare to ACT Composite scores earned by the same students four to five years later.

We considered students who took the ACT and were projected to complete high school in 2013, 2014, or 2015. ACT test records from 11th or 12th grade were matched to ACT test records from 7th grade. Students must have tested between 48 months (four years) and 60 months (five years) apart.

The sample consists of 74,003 students. The sample breakdown by gender is 51% male and 49% female. By race/ethnicity, the sample is 76% Caucasian, 7% Hispanic, 5% African American, 4% Asian, 3% two or more races, and 1% Native American. The remainder either did not respond or did not specify a race/ethnicity.

The average grade 7 ACT Composite score was 18.0, with standard deviation 3.3; the average grade 11/12 ACT Composite score was 27.4, with standard deviation 4.2. On average, students had an ACT Composite score gain of 9.4 points across the four- to five-year period. Average gains were lowest for students who scored near the top of the ACT Composite scale as 7th graders (Figure 1). The correlation of grade 7 score with grade 11/12 score was 0.74.

Table 1 shows summary statistics (sample size, mean, 25th percentile, median, and 75th percentile) for ACT Composite score earned in grade 11 or 12, by grade 7 ACT Composite score. Students who earned an ACT Composite score of 12 in 7th grade scored at the national mean (an ACT Composite score of 21¹), on average, in grade 11 or 12. For 7th grade scores of 20 or higher, median scores for grades 11/12 are 30 or higher. For 7th grade scores of 28 or higher, median scores for grades 11/12 are 35 or higher. ■

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Notes

1 According to *The ACT Profile Report—National: Graduating Class 2015*, the mean ACT Composite score for the 2015 ACT-tested graduated class was 21.0. More information can be found at <http://forms.act.org/newsroom/data/2015/pdf/profile/National2015.pdf>.

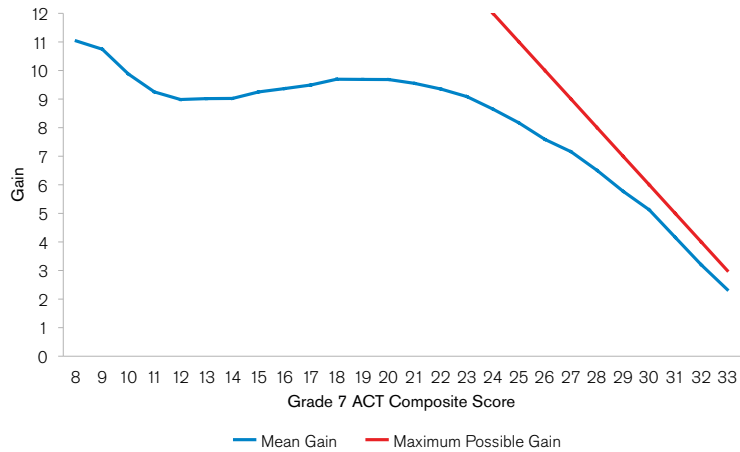


Figure 1. Mean gain in ACT Composite score from grade 7 to grade 11/12, by grade 7 ACT Composite score

Table 1. Grade 11/12 ACT Composite Score Statistics, by Grade 7 ACT Composite Score

Grade 7 ACT Composite Score	Grade 11/12 ACT Composite Score				
	N	Mean	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
1–7	7	—	—	—	—
8	29	19.0	17	18	22
9	55	19.7	17	19	23
10	139	19.9	17	20	22
11	427	20.3	18	20	22
12	1,223	21.0	19	21	23
13	2,761	22.0	20	22	24
14	4,875	23.0	21	23	25
15	7,005	24.3	22	24	26
16	8,628	25.4	23	25	27
17	9,182	26.5	24	26	28
18	9,331	27.7	26	28	30
19	8,061	28.7	27	29	31
20	6,614	29.7	28	30	32
21	5,085	30.5	29	31	32
22	3,664	31.4	30	32	33
23	2,491	32.1	31	32	34
24	1,701	32.7	32	33	34
25	1,056	33.2	32	33	34
26	707	33.6	33	34	35
27	438	34.2	33	34	35
28	248	34.5	34	35	35
29	136	34.8	34	35	36
30	64	35.1	35	35	36
31	37	35.2	35	35	36
32	25	35.2	35	35	36
33	9	35.3	35	36	36
34–36	5	—	—	—	—

Note: Statistics not given for score points with sample sizes of less than 5.