Understanding Your Child's Woodcock-Johnson V Scores

A simple guide for homeschool parents

Because your child is more than a score.

Individual results alone do not define your child. Looking at patterns in learning helps you recognize strengths, understand needs, and plan the next teaching steps.
The ATC Way: As your child's teacher, you continually assess, plan, teach, and evaluate. Use these scores alongside daily observations and work samples to guide instruction and adjust as your child grows.

1. Standard Score (SS): comparison with peers

The center is **100**. The average range is **90-110**. This is not a percentage correct or a report-card grade. [1, 2]

Standard score	Common descriptive label
131 or higher	Very Superior
121-130	Superior
111-120	High Average
90-110	Average
80-89	Low Average
70-79	Low
69 or lower	Very Low

These labels describe the tested performance, not the child. Follow the wording on your actual report. [2]

2. Percentile Rank (PR): position in the group

PR 75 means performance as high as or higher than about 75% of the comparison group. It does **not** mean 75% correct. **PR 50** is the middle. [3]

Check the comparison group

Age norms compare with children the same age; **grade norms** compare with children in the same grade. Check which your report uses. [3]

How difficult might the work feel?

3. Relative Proficiency Index (RPI)

RPI estimates proficiency on similar tasks where average age- or grade-peers demonstrate 90% proficiency. It is not a prediction of a particular curriculum grade or assignment score. [4]

Example: 50/90 predicts about 50% success where average peers achieve 90%. It is not 50 divided by 90, a percentile, or the percentage correct on this test. [4]

RPI range*	Similar peer-level tasks may feel...
0/90 to 3/90	Exceptionally difficult
3/90 to 24/90	Extremely difficult
24/90 to 67/90	Very difficult
67/90 to 82/90	Difficult
82/90 to 95/90	Manageable
95/90 to 98/90	Easy
98/90 to 100/90	Very easy to extremely easy

*Bands share endpoints; follow the classification on your report. Difficulty labels are simplified. See [4, 5].

Two scores can tell different stories

An average SS does not guarantee that work feels easy. SS describes rank; RPI describes proficiency. Read both together. [4]

4. Grade Equivalent (GE) & Age Equivalent (AE)

GE 5.6 means performance comparable to the typical fifth grader in the sixth month on that particular test. **AE 10:6** means 10 years, 6 months. [3, 5]

A grade-equivalent score is not a curriculum grade level or a placement recommendation. It describes performance on one tested skill. It does not mean your child has mastered that grade's curriculum or belongs in that grade. [3]

Homeschool curriculum grade labels vary

Publishers may place skills at different grade levels. Both linear and spiral programs teach skills in sequence; spiral programs systematically revisit them. Consider skills already taught and use publisher placement assessments to help choose a suitable level.

Homeschool Teacher Training Academy members have access to placement guides for popular curricula and guided practice assessments that illustrate how achievement testing works. Angie walks you through what you noticed about your child, then offers curriculum suggestions and ways to adjust your teaching. This supports the ongoing cycle of assessing, planning, teaching, and evaluating. Practice activities do not rehearse actual WJ test items or replace annual standardized testing.

Your score report is individualized to your family's needs. Depending on the tests administered and report format selected, it may not include every score or term described in this guide, such as CALP.

Other report terms & next steps

Term	Plain-language meaning
Raw score	Points earned before conversion; not a percentage. [6]
W score	A skill-development scale useful for tracking growth within the same measure. Not an IQ or a grade. [5]
W Difference (W DIFF)	Child’s W score minus the peer reference W score. Zero is the reference; positive is above, negative below. [3]
Instructional / developmental zone	A range showing where tasks shift from easier to harder. Helps guide teaching. [5]
CALP, if shown	Cognitive-academic language proficiency: a description of language proficiency for learning. [5]
Test / subtest	One specific task; a cluster combines related tests. Available clusters depend on tests administered. [7]

Additional comparison scores, if included

Predicted SS: expected from selected other results. **Difference:** earned minus predicted. **z score:** size of the difference in statistical units. **PR (base rate):** how unusual the difference is; this is not the child’s achievement percentile. A rare difference warrants examination, not a diagnosis by itself. [7]

Use the results in your homeschool

Use scores, daily work, and observations to decide whether to adjust instruction, change curriculum, or both.
Ask yourself:

- Would smaller steps, a checklist, or a worked example help?
- Could I think aloud to show how I plan, solve a problem, and check my work?
- Would discussion or hands-on practice help my child understand?
- Could an oral response show subject knowledge, or is writing the skill being assessed?
- Does my child need a different teaching approach or curriculum?

Try a purposeful change, observe the response, and adjust: assess, plan, teach, evaluate. A similar SS can accompany skill growth because peers also develop. Review progress using comparable measures and your examiner's guidance. [5]

Assessment results are one source of information, not a curriculum prescription. Neither standardized scores nor home practice assessments should determine curriculum choice or placement on their own. Consider daily work, interests, learning needs, skills already taught, and family goals. Publisher placement assessments can help identify a starting point within a program. Sometimes the best next step is adjusting how you teach with the curriculum you have. For individualized help, ATC offers a Comprehensive Learning Analysis & Instructional Plan.

North Carolina families: after testing

An ATC reminder for your homeschool records

ATC recommends reviewing your DNPE homeschool portal after annual testing. Annual enrollment, contact, and testing-log updates are recommended recordkeeping practices, rather than statutory requirements. [8, 9]

Your update-and-save checklist

1. Log in to your DNPE homeschool portal. Review your school information and current contact details.

2. Review and update your student enrollment numbers for the current school year.

3. Enter the name of the standardized test and the date it was administered for each student. Keep the actual scores in your homeschool files.

4. After each update, scroll down and click **Save**. Before leaving, check that the information you entered has been saved.

What North Carolina law requires

G.S. 115C-564 requires annual homeschool testing. G.S. 115C-549(b) and 115C-557(b) require keeping test results available at the school's principal office, at reasonable times, for annual inspection for one year after testing. A duly authorized state representative means the DNPE director or staff under G.S. 115C-563(b). [10]

Portal entries do not replace the actual results or a response to a lawful records request. ATC recommends retaining test reports permanently. [9, 10, 11]

Stay reachable and document your school's work

Keep contact information current, monitor messages, and respond promptly to DNPE. Clarify any questions about your school's operating status directly with DNPE. [12]

ATC believes that lawful operation and clear records demonstrate responsible homeschooling to our community and legislators. Enrollment updates help DNPE report accurate statistics. [8]

Keep records for graduation and beyond

Follow North Carolina law and document academic work. The homeschool administrator issues the diploma and transcript when the student meets the homeschool's graduation requirements. Retain these, registration records, and test reports permanently. Portal entries alone do not establish graduation or guarantee another institution's acceptance of credits or credentials. [11]

Homeschooling in another state?

Each state sets its own homeschool requirements. Review the current rules where you homeschool; do not assume North Carolina's rules apply. Requirements may differ for notification, school age, attendance, required subjects, teacher qualifications, immunizations, testing, and recordkeeping.

The Homeschool Teacher Training Academy course **Homeschooling with Confidence: Ensuring Legal Compliance** and its guided workbook walk you through identifying what your state requires and organizing your records. The workbook helps you create a reference for your own homeschool: What attendance records must I keep? Are there immunization requirements? Must I teach particular subjects? What testing, reporting, or notification is required?

The course is included with Academy membership and is also available for separate purchase. View the course in the Resource Shop. Recheck current state guidance as laws change.

Official guidance & sources

8. DNPE: Home School Annual Report Guidance

9. DNPE: Home School Testing FAQs (portal entries and test records)

10. N.C. General Statutes, Article 39: 115C-549, 557, 563 and 564

11. DNPE: Home School Records Retention & Diplomas FAQs

12. DNPE: Home School Requirements & Recommendations

Guidance checked October 21, 2026. For current requirements, consult DNPE.

5. Confidence Interval (CI) or confidence band

A range around a score acknowledges measurement uncertainty. SS 100, CI 94-106 is an estimate with a range, not an exact fixed number. Read the stated confidence level, such as 90% or 95%. [6]

Sources & reading

1. Riverside WJ V Score Report Interpretation Guide (standard scores and score types).
2. Same guide, p. 5: WJ V standard score interpretation chart.
3. Same guide, pp. 3-4: norms, developmental scores, and relative standing.
4. Riverside: Describing Abilities Using the Relative Proficiency Index (RPI).
5. WJ V Score Report Interpretation Guide, pp. 4-5: proficiency and instructional zones.
6. Same guide, pp. 1-4: report fields and levels of interpretation.
7. Riverside: Understanding Comparison Base-Rate Procedures in the WJ V.

For personal use by ATC testing families. Please do not reproduce, redistribute, sell, or use these materials in another business without written permission from ATC.