

**Science**  
**Student Background Questionnaire**

---

**2009**  
**Grade 8**

## DIRECTIONS

In the next two sections, you will be asked questions about yourself and your education. The choices for some questions will be written across the page as shown. Fill in the oval for the best answer.

### Example 1

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
1. How often do you watch movies on TV?	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D

You should have filled in the oval below the answer that best tells how often you watch movies on TV.

The choices for some questions will be written down the page as shown. Now read Example 2 and indicate your answer.

### Example 2

2. Which event would you prefer to attend?
<input type="radio"/> A basketball game
<input type="radio"/> B car show
<input type="radio"/> C concert
<input type="radio"/> D play

Make your answer mark clear and dark in the oval. If you make a mistake or want to change your answer, be sure to completely erase any unwanted marks.

Do not go past the  sign at the end of each section until you are told to do so.

If you finish before time is called, go back and check your work on that section only. Use your time carefully. Do as much as you can in each section.



# SECTION 4

## Section 4

In this section, please tell us about yourself and your family. The section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet.

VB331330

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

- Ⓐ No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- Ⓑ Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- Ⓒ Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- Ⓓ Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- Ⓔ Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

VB331331

2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

- Ⓐ White
- Ⓑ Black or African American
- Ⓒ Asian
- Ⓓ American Indian or Alaska Native
- Ⓔ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Section 4

For the rest of the questions in this section, fill in only **one** oval for each question.

3. Does your family get a newspaper at least four times a week? VB331333
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
4. Does your family get any magazines regularly? VB331334
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
5. About how many books are there in your home? VB331335
- (A) Few (0–10)
- (B) Enough to fill one shelf (11–25)
- (C) Enough to fill one bookcase (26–100)
- (D) Enough to fill several bookcases (more than 100)
6. Is there a computer at home that you use? VB331336
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
7. Is there an encyclopedia in your home? It could be a set of books, or it could be on the computer. VB331337
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
8. About how many pages a day do you have to read in school and for homework? TB001101
- (A) 5 or fewer
- (B) 6–10
- (C) 11–15
- (D) 16–20
- (E) More than 20
9. How often do you talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family? VB331339
- (A) Never or hardly ever
- (B) Once every few weeks
- (C) About once a week
- (D) Two or three times a week
- (E) Every day



VB331447

10. How many days were you absent from school in the last month?

- Ⓐ None
- Ⓑ 1 or 2 days
- Ⓒ 3 or 4 days
- Ⓓ 5 to 10 days
- Ⓔ More than 10 days

VB330870

11. How far in school did your mother go?

- Ⓐ She did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ She graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ She had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ She graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB330871

12. How far in school did your father go?

- Ⓐ He did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ He graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ He had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ He graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB331451

13. How often do people in your home talk to each other in a language other than English?

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once in a while
- Ⓒ About half of the time
- Ⓓ All or most of the time



# SECTION 4

## Section 4

This section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet. Fill in only **one** oval for each question.

1. In your science class this year, which of the following topics have been covered? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

VC304978

	Yes	No	
a. Life science (for example, biology, the human body, or ecology)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304982
b. Physical science (for example, energy, physics, or chemistry)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304983
c. Earth and space science (for example, geology or astronomy)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304984
d. Engineering and technology (for example, designing solutions to problems)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304985

2. In your science class this year, have you done hands-on activities or projects with any of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

VC304986

	Yes	No	
a. Living things (for example, plants, animals, bacteria)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304988
b. Electricity (for example, batteries and light)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304989
c. Chemicals (for example, mixing or dissolving sugar or salt in water)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC304991
d. Rocks or minerals (for example, identifying types)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC305007
e. Magnifying glass or microscope (for looking at small things)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC305008
f. Thermometer or barometer (for making measurements)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC305009
g. Simple machines (for example, pulleys and levers)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VC305012



VC720622

5. In your science class this year, how often do you do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Once every few weeks	About once a week	Two or three times a week	Every day or almost every day	
a. Identify questions that can be addressed through science experiments	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720623
b. Design a science experiment	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720634
c. Talk about measurements you took for your science project or activity	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720635
d. Talk about the results of your science project or activity	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720636
e. Watch your teacher do a science experiment or activity	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720638
f. Make graphs or charts of the results from your science project or activity	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720639
g. Write a report on your science project or activity	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC720641



6. In this school year, how often have you been asked to write long answers to questions on tests or assignments for science?

VC315289

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day or almost every day

7. In this school year, how often have you talked with your teacher about how you are doing in science?

VC546453

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day or almost every day

8. In this school year, how often have you used library resources for science?

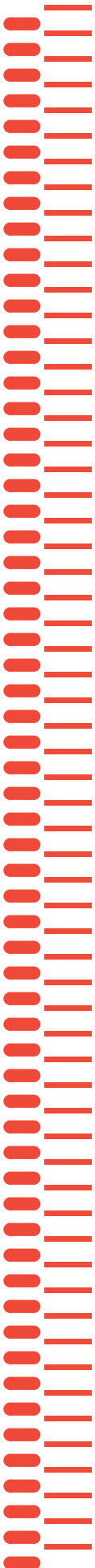
VC315266

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day or almost every day

9. In this school year, how often have you used computers for science?

VC546463

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day or almost every day



VC305330

10. Please indicate how much you DISAGREE or AGREE with the following statements about science. Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
a. I do science-related activities that are not for schoolwork.	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC720594
b. I like science.	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC305350
c. Science is one of my favorite subjects.	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC305351
d. I take science only because I have to.	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC305352
e. I take science only because it will help me in the future.	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC305353

VB595182

11. How hard was this test compared to most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- A Easier than other tests
- B About as hard as other tests
- C Harder than other tests
- D Much harder than other tests

VB595184

13. How important was it to you to do well on this test?

- A Not very important
- B Somewhat important
- C Important
- D Very important

VC034559

12. How hard did you try on this test compared to how hard you tried on most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- A Not as hard as on other tests
- B About as hard as on other tests
- C Harder than on other tests
- D Much harder than on other tests

