

Should Instruction Be Measurement-Driven?: A Debate

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Measurement-driven instruction occurs when an achievement test has such serious consequences for teachers or students that the test determines what is taught. Examples are grade-to-grade promotional tests or standardized tests used to rank schools in the local newspaper. In coining the phrase, Popham took a long-standing complaint against accountability tests, that tests drive the curriculum, and turned it into a virtue. If the learning goals represented by the test are central and important, then there is no harm in forcing teachers to teach to it, or so the argument goes.

of the high-stakes that are a defining characteristic of
the present test score gains cannot be believed.

... as told for example

Then we have materials designed to improve students test taking skills. For example, Random House offers a different version of Scoring High tailored to each of the

five major standardized test batteries. In a symposium of the National Council on Measurement in Education earlier today, Mehrens and Kaminski (1988) reported on their content

of Scoring High along with other commercial

Perhaps the best evidence of the limited generality of
~~trustee tests comes from the~~ an advocate for

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the test results were retested a week later: 70%

the lion's share of remarkable test score gains is more

increased an average of 5.4 point in mathematics

theories, learning is facilitated when knowledge is broken down into its constituent bits and then taught bit by bit. As many critics of MDI have said, this conception leads to fragmentation and narrow skill development at the expense of conceptual understandings. In support of this conclusion,

(1985) and Goodlad (1983). In community college settings Richardson found students copying bits of information from chalkboards and skimming textbooks to find other bits of information that would answer questions in study guides. The study guides in turn prepared students to answer what Bracey calls "bits-of-information" (multiple-choice) tests. The following quotation from Goodlad (1983) illustrates the "bitting" of knowledge present in elementary and secondary

classrooms:

Children listened; they responded when called on to do so; they read short sections of textbooks;

two weeks' lessons, the teacher provided another, more complex version of the formula that students helped derive through lab activities.

11. The next school teachers would

achievement gains of 30 months to compensate for the negative effects of being made a year too old.

For teachers the effect of measurement-driven instruction, is to rob them of their role as professionals and force them to read from longer and longer scripts:

~~We will now begin to begin work on the first test~~

This is a vocabulary test like the practice test we just studied. Find the sections for Test V: Vocabulary on your answer sheet (Pause.) Now place your answer sheet beside page 4 of your test booklet. (Pause.) We will read the directions at the top of page 4 to remind you of what you are to

~~do. Please read them aloud.~~

They say:

In each exercise, you are to decide which one of the four answers has most nearly the same meaning as the word in heavy type above it....

Mohamed ...

Fact and Opinion: Distinguish between fact and opinion.

This objective requires the student to distinguish between facts and opinions.

- C. Some people reported using procrastination because they feared they would fail.
- D. Putting things off until the last minute may create stress and anxiety.

Test Questions

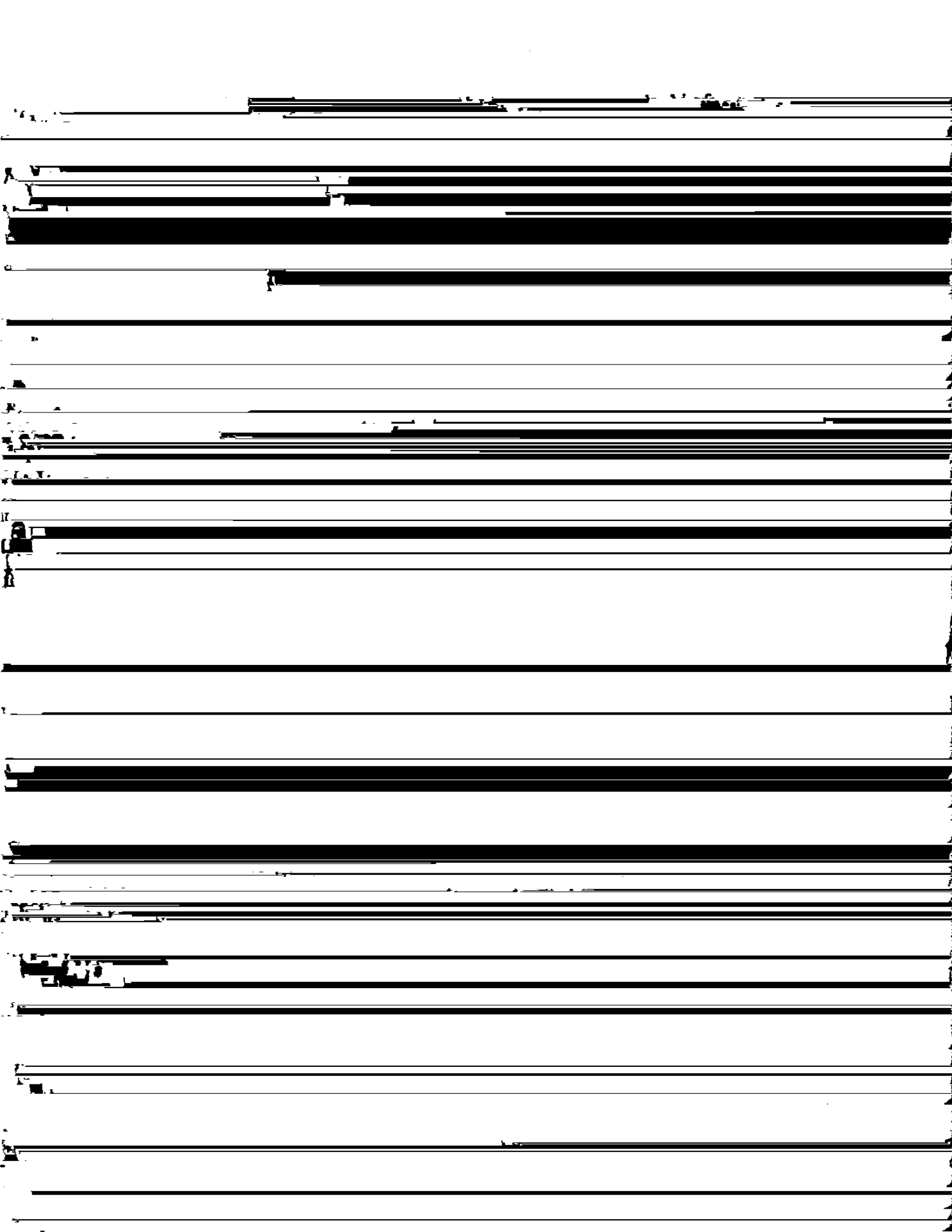
- 1. A test item will consist of a reading selection followed by the question, "Which of the following statements is a FACT presented in the selection?" or "Which of the following is an OPINION presented in the selection?"

Answer Choices

- 1. For items requiring identification of a fact:

the reading selection.

-- Irrelevant Opinion: A statement of opinion that introduces information not included in the selection. Although irrelevant, this type of answer choice must include at least one of the following:



Daniel Defoe wrote Robinson Crusoe.
(fact)

Jane will probably be here by 5:00.
(opinion--clue words: will probably)

Mark was the first to arrive at the party.
(fact)

Texas is definitely the best state in the country.
(opinion--clue words: definitely, best)

Have students work independently, underlining clue words
and labeling each sentence as fact or opinion.

statement and discuss what makes it a fact or an opinion.
Try to have students think of facts or opinions that are
identifiable without clue words, for it is possible that, in
a given TEAMS test item, no clue words will be present.

Assertions

Ask students to write 10 sentences, five under the heading
"I think..." and five under the heading "I know..."

three acceptable paraphrases of the original statement.
Show how a sentence can be paraphrased by rearranging the
substituting different words having the

To provide further practice in paraphrasing, have all
students read the same selection. Call on a student to give
a paraphrase of one sentence in the selection. Ask the rest
of the class if they can identify the sentence that was
taken the statement as a fact or an opinion.

Find the Fact

Select a short article from a textbook, magazine, or newspaper, and give the students a multiple-choice question. The question requires the student to identify a fact that

include one factual statement which is irrelevant to the article, one factual statement which is contradictory to the information presented in the article, and one opinion statement. Discuss the correct answer and incorrect answers with students after they have attempted to answer the question.

Find the Opinion

magazine article or newspaper editorial that students are to read. The questions ask students to identify an opinion supported by the selection. The distractors should include: an opinion statement which contradicts what is in the selection, an opinion statement which contains one concept from

This objective requires students to identify, based on a reading selection, the first or last event.

Incorrect answer choices will be either of the following

types:

- a. Incorrect Event: An event from the reading selection that does not answer the question.
- b. Irrelevant Event: An event not contained in the reading selection that appears to answer the question.

1. Answer choice A is correct because the last action that

2. Answer choice B is irrelevant. Splashing water out of the pool is not described in the selection.

3. Answer choice C is an incorrect detail. Swimming across the pool is the first thing that

All data were twice sent to the State Departments of Education for verifi-

Total % of Students % of Districts

COLORADO
APRIL 1986

IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS
FORM G NATIONAL NORMS

IDAHO
MARCH-APRIL 1986

IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS
FORM G NATIONAL NORMS

Total % of Students % of Districts

MAINE 1985-86 MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT (State Developed Test)
Matrix Sampling and Common Testing 16 Different Tests

NEW HAMPSHIRE
OCTOBER 1986

CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST
FORM E NATIONAL NORMS

Number of Schools Social % of Students % of Districts % of Students % of Districts

4 14,012 +13.5 +6.9 +0.4 +2.2 N/A N/A

4 11,381 65 61 61 62 62.7% 100%

**NORTH DAKOTA
SEPTEMBER 1986
(Both SRA and ITBS Used in North Dakota)**

**IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS
FORM G NATIONAL NORMS**

**PENNSYLVANIA
MARCH 1987**

**TESTING FOR ESSENTIAL LEARNING AND
LITERACY SKILLS (TELLS)
Equating Study with ITBS**

Grade	Number Tested	Reading	Language	Math	Total Battery	% of Students Above Average	% of Districts Above Average
2	214	77	83	71	77	N/A	N/A
3	2,774	67	65	60	65	N/A	N/A
4	694	69	66	59	64	N/A	N/A

Grade	Number Tested	Reading	Language	Math	Total Battery	% of Students Above Average	% of Districts Above Average
3	105,564	79.4*	N/A	84.6*	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	100,724	78.3*	N/A	81.6*	N/A	N/A	N/A

More Districts Above Average

TENNESSEE
SPRING 1987

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST
7th EDITION NATIONAL NORMS

WASHINGTON
OCTOBER 1986

METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST
6th EDITION NATIONAL NORMS

TENNESSEE				STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST			WASHINGTON				METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST				
SPRING 1987				7th EDITION NATIONAL NORMS			OCTOBER 1986				6th EDITION NATIONAL NORMS				
Number	Total	% of Students	% of Districts	Number	Reading	Language	Math	Total	% of Students	% of Districts					
2	62,456	64	86	86	N/A	N/A	82.9%	4	52,779	56	52	53	56	N/A	65.1%
5	57,717	52	66	68	N/A	N/A	61.9%	Median National Percentile Rank							

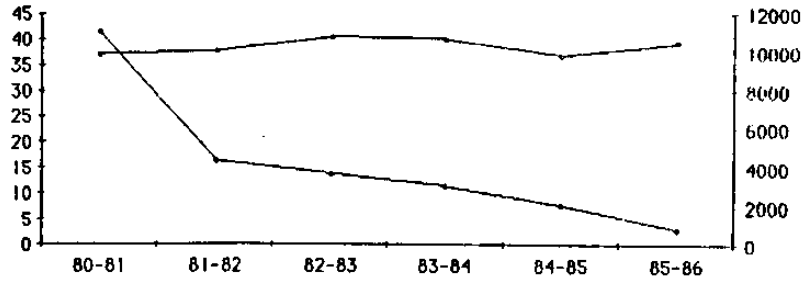
Group Percentile Rank of the Mean Scaled Scores

SOURCE: Washington Statewide Assessment Grades 4, 8, 10-Fall 1986

TABLE 1.
Improvements in Student Achievement
Associated with Measurement-Driven Instruction

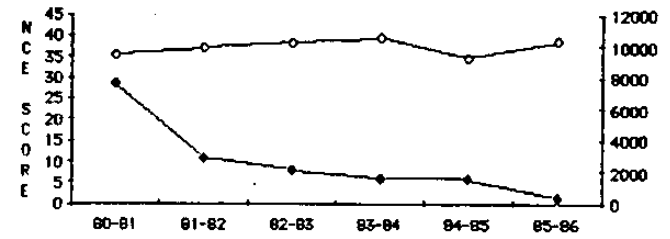
Level	Subjects	Grade(s)	Design	Improvement(s)
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ALABAMA GRADE 2 READING & MEMBERSHIP



ALABAMA GRADE 3 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

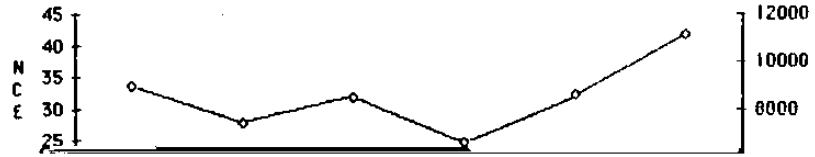
ALABAMA GRADE 5 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



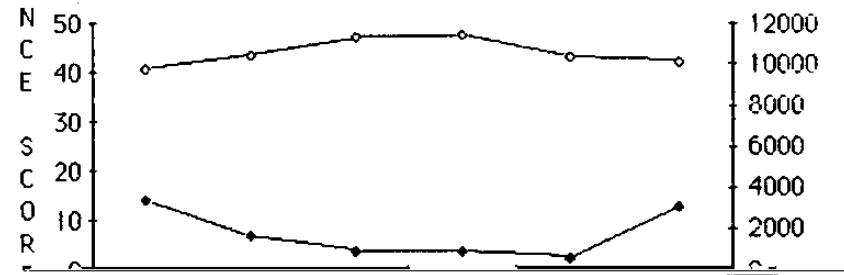
ALABAMA GRADE 6 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



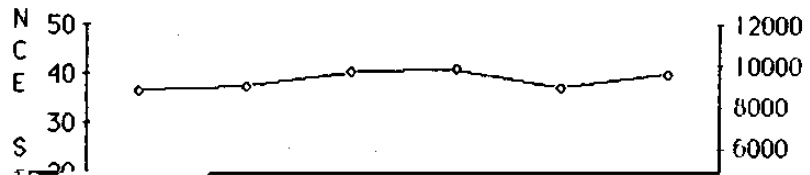
ALABAMA GRADE 8 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



ALABAMA GRADE 2 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



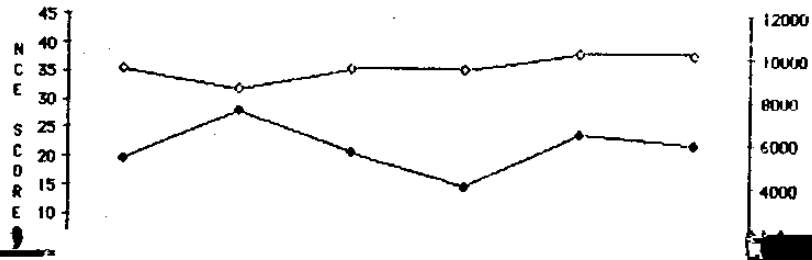
ALABAMA GRADE 5 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



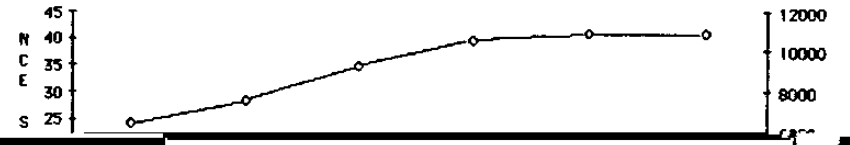
ALABAMA GRADE 8 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



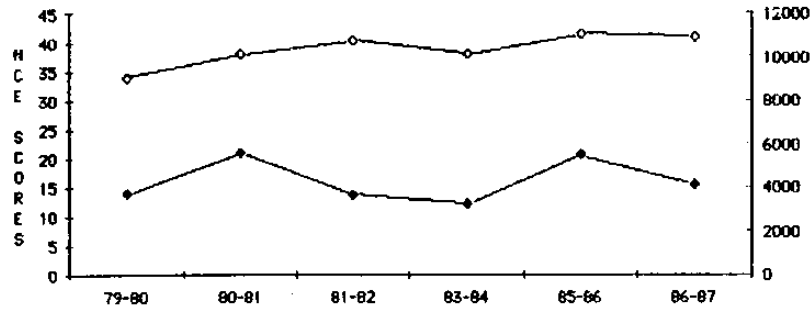
MARYLAND GRADE 2 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



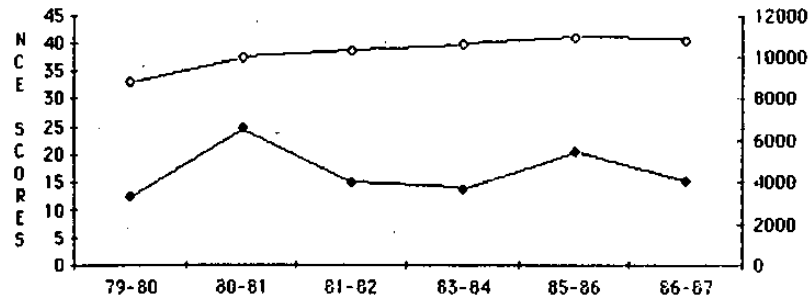
MARYLAND GRADE 5 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



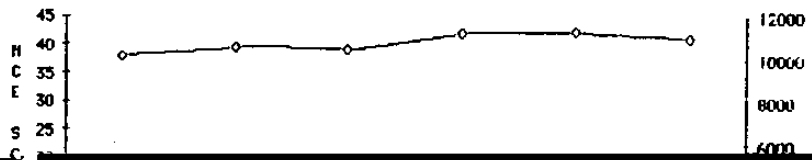
MARYLAND GRADE 2 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



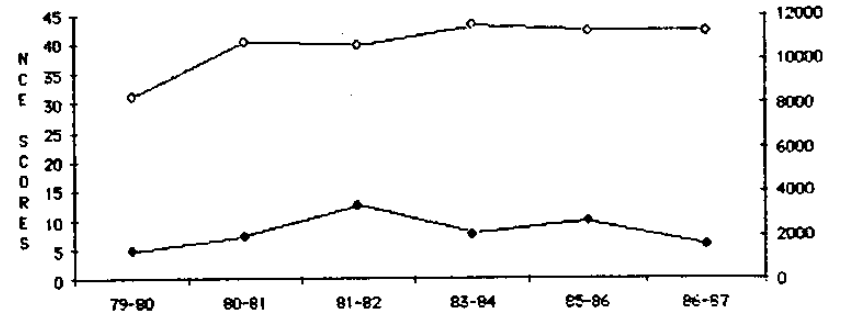
MARYLAND GRADE 3 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



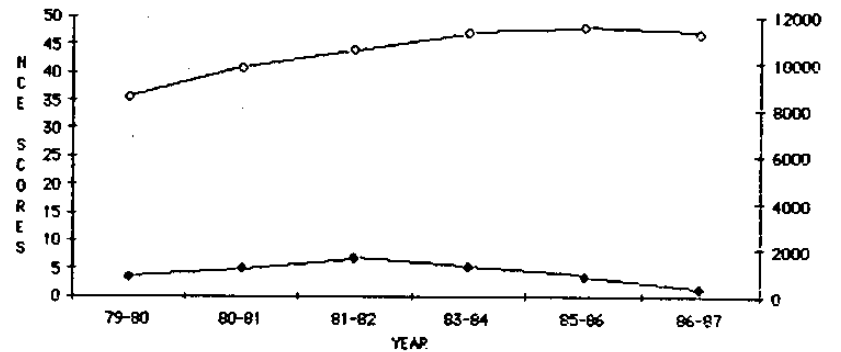
MARYLAND GRADE 4 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



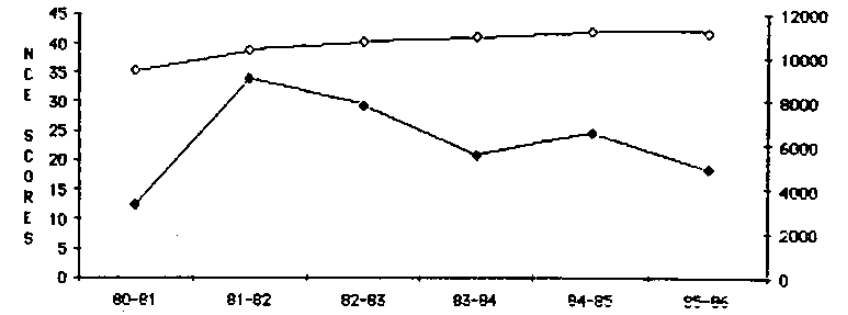
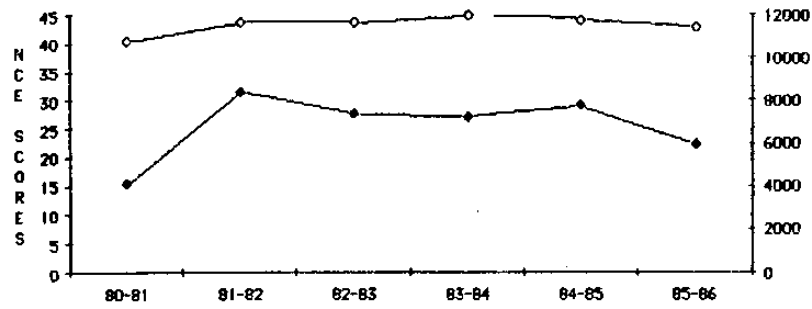
MARYLAND GRADE 5 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



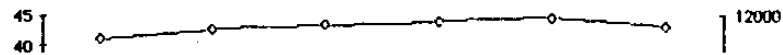
MARYLAND GRADE 6 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



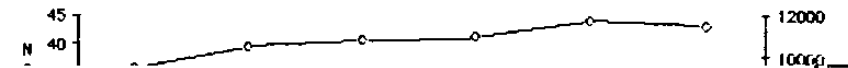
NEW JERSEY GRADE 5 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



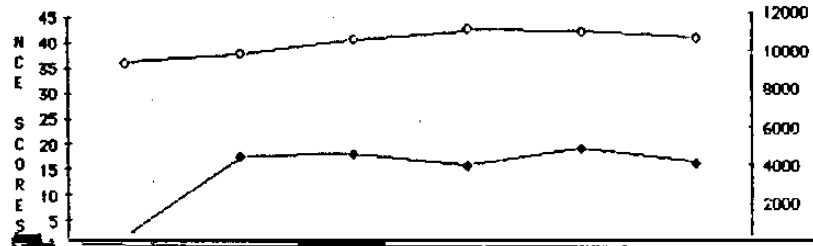
NEW JERSEY GRADE 3 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



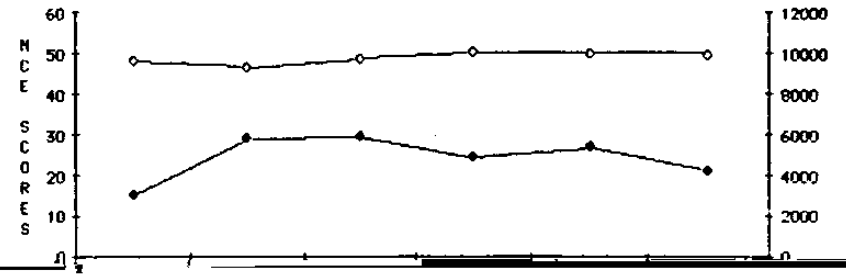
NEW JERSEY GRADE 6 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



NEW JERSEY GRADE 8 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

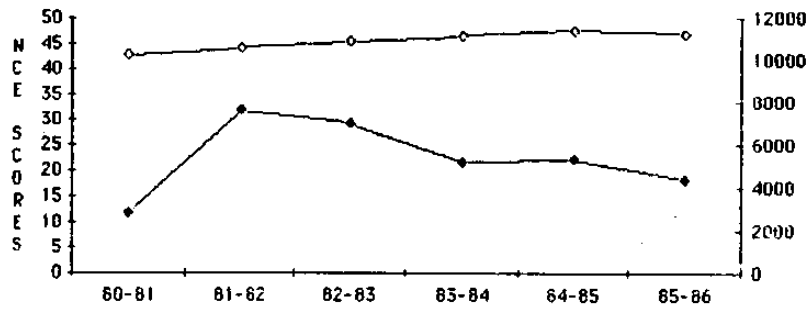


NEW JERSEY GRADE 2 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

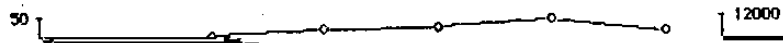
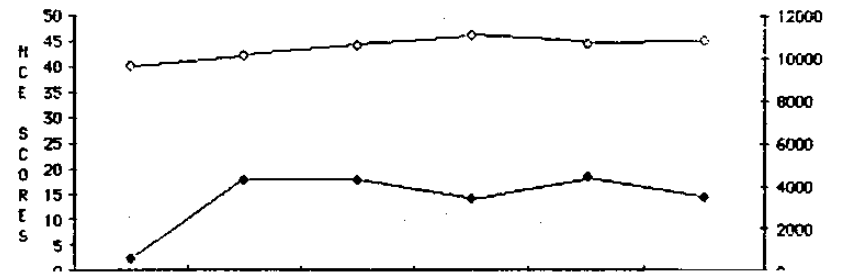


NEW JERSEY GRADE 9 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

NEW JERSEY GRADE 3 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



NEW JERSEY GRADE 8 MATH SCORES & MEMBERSHIP



SOUTH CAROLINA GRADE 2 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

SOUTH CAROLINA GRADE 5 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

40

2000

The table contains data for South Carolina Grade 2 and Grade 5 reading scores and membership for the year 2000. The table is almost entirely obscured by heavy black redaction bars. Only a few faint numbers and text are visible, including the page number '40' and the year '2000' at the top, and some faint numbers like '2000' and '2000' within the table rows.

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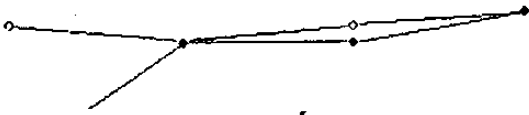
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[REDACTED]

H 45
C 40
E 25
S 30
C 25



40000
75000
50000
25000
20000

TEXAS GRADE 8 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

40000

Table with multiple columns and rows, mostly obscured by heavy black redaction bars. Some faint text is visible in the first few rows, including what appears to be a year column and some data points.

TEXAS GRADE 2 READING SCORES & MEMBERSHIP

45
40

40000
35000

