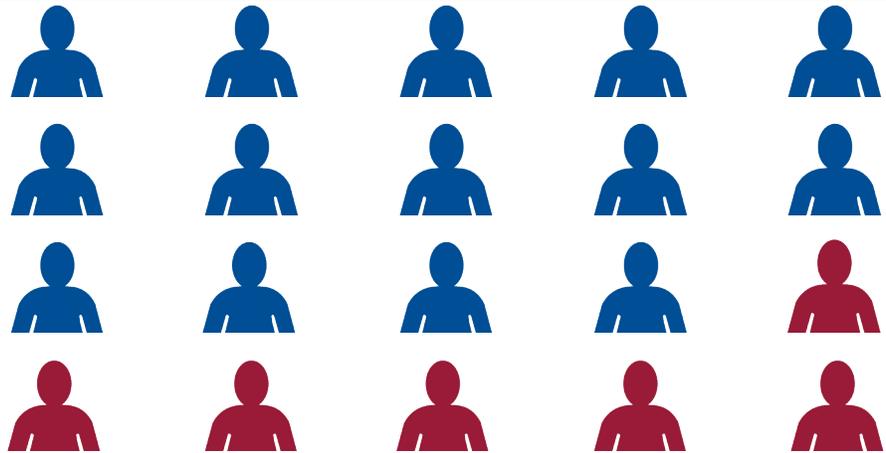


### Large Number of Students Perform Above Grade Level

In the US, students are typically grouped by age into different classrooms. However, same-age students do not always perform at the same level. Using data from several states, as well as more national datasets, researchers estimate that between 20% and 40% of students perform above grade level in reading and between 11% and 30% perform above grade level in math.

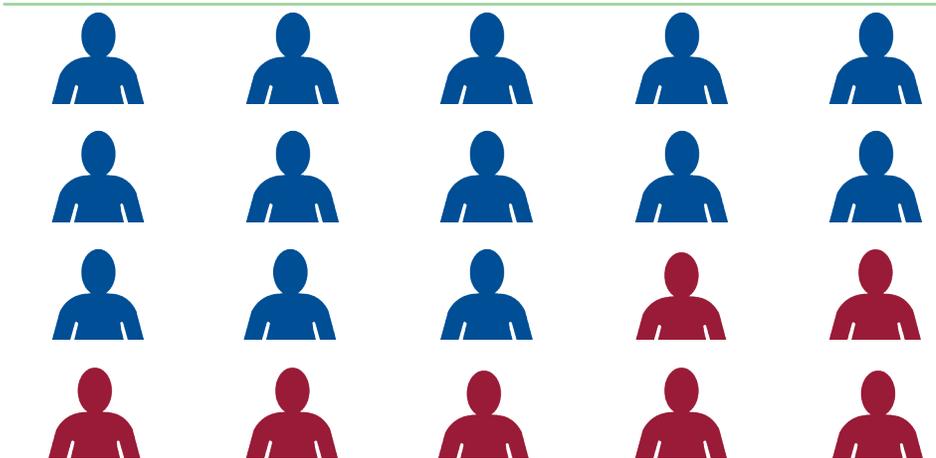
#### 30% above grade level in reading

For example, data suggest that in 2015, Florida 3rd grade classrooms could look like the images to the right and below:



#### 36% above grade level in math

In a class of 20 students, 6 would score above grade level in reading and 7 would score above grade level in math.



One common misconception is that many schools use various grouping strategies to help differentiate educational opportunity. However, differentiation efforts often focus on helping students who struggle, not students who excel. Moreover, such efforts may not meet the needs of students of performing well above grade level.

#### Take Action

**Parents:** Find out what opportunities for academic acceleration are offered at your school and how eligibility for services is determined.

**Educators:** Do you know how many of your students score above grade level? Are these scores part of the process to determine access to acceleration or grouping?

- 1. Appropriate learning environments, motivation, encouragement, and even luck can all play a role in helping students develop and succeed.**
- 2. Tests, including IQ tests, are good at predicting later life performance.** IQ scores are highly predictive of performance in school, occupation, income, and even physical and mental health. IQ scores from childhood can even predict mortality: smarter people generally live longer, even after controlling for social class.
- 3. Higher scores are related with higher outcomes throughout the full range of ability.** Even within just the top one percent of students, higher test scores are associated with higher adulthood accomplishments and achievements.
- 4. All people have different abilities that are typically positively related and that form an overall general ability.** This means that people who tend to be good at one thing also tend to be good at other things, but they can have strengths and weaknesses in specific areas.
- 5. Early high performance in a domain predicts later educational, occupational, and creative accomplishments in that domain.** People strong in math or verbal domains at an early age tend to achieve extraordinary accomplishments in their domain of strength.
- 6. Non-verbal tests alone will not tell us if students will succeed in school,** especially when success relies on verbal skills. Non-verbal tests are also not necessarily “a more fair assessment” of academic potential.
- 7. Fewer students will be identified as gifted** when participation in a gifted program requires students to have high ratings on all criteria (for example: high test scores and high teacher rating scale scores and a parent nomination) compared to when a single criterion is used.
- 8. Classes grouped by age have huge variations in student learning needs.** This supports the need for differentiated instruction based on student learning needs, not student age.
- 9. The claim that being taught using a student’s preferred learning style leads to greater achievement is not supported by evidence.** However, there is substantial strong evidence that good teaching is effective for all students.
- 10. Current measures do not reliably differentiate academic achievement from ability,** even though we have the verbal skills to create unique definitions for each.
- 11. There is no consistent relationship between acceleration and social-emotional problems.** But the research does show that acceleration can have huge academic benefits for students.
- 12. In general, more education is better, especially if matched with student interests and passions.**

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