Understanding Your Child's Academic Progress

How is my child doing? This is a simple question many parents ask when they see a child's test score. There are actually two issues involved when tests are given: **Level of Achievement** and **Growth**.

Level of Achievement: Was my child's test score high enough?

Growth: Are my child's test scores improving quickly enough to move up to the next level, keep from falling behind, or catch up?

Growth: The other half of the story. Most tests we take give only a score reflecting something about our level of achievement (pass/fail, A/B/C/D/F grade, etc.). Until recently, Utah children received a proficiency score for each of the CRT academic areas of English language art, mathematics, and science, and a progress score that was designed to help view students' progress towards a higher achievement level. But we recognized that a better measurement was needed to track growth.

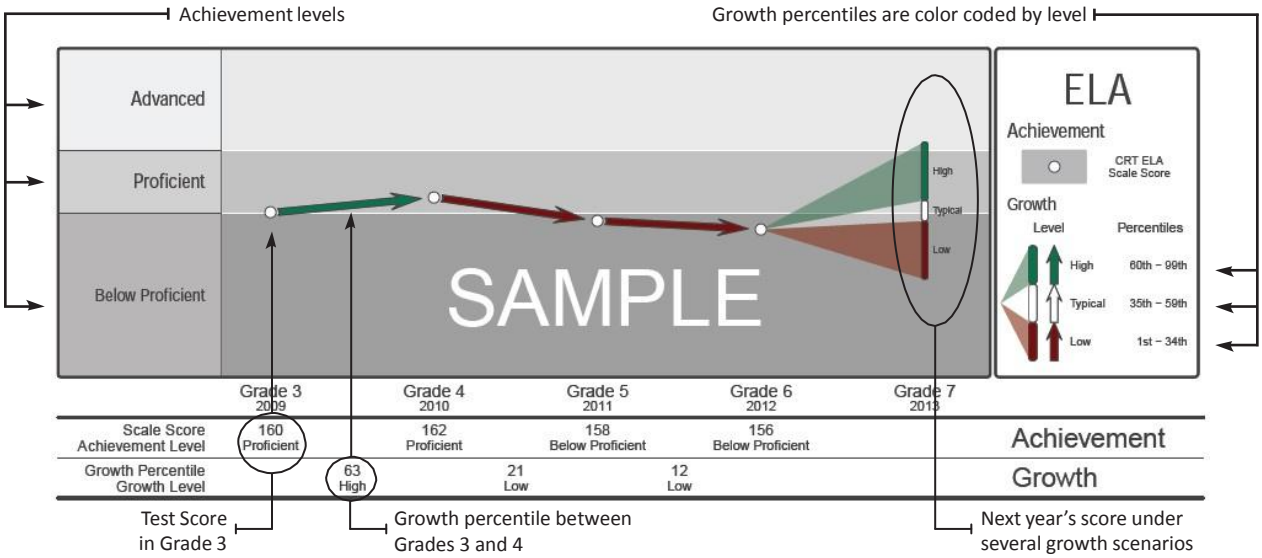
Achievement levels provide only one part of the story - a snapshot of performance at a single point in time. **The other half of the story is each child's growth in learning.** Growth shows success in the education system because it shows us where positive change is happening for students and schools.

The Utah Student Growth Percentile (SGP) measures the academic progress each student has made in a year. However, instead of just saying how many points a student has gained or lost since the previous year, the model **tells us how a student's progress compares** to other students with a similar CRT score history. These SGP scores range from 1 (lowest growth) to 99 (highest growth). Percentiles are not percent correct scores, and do not tell us anything about students' "snapshot" achievement levels. Even students with low test scores can get high student growth percentiles, if they made great progress since the previous year's test.

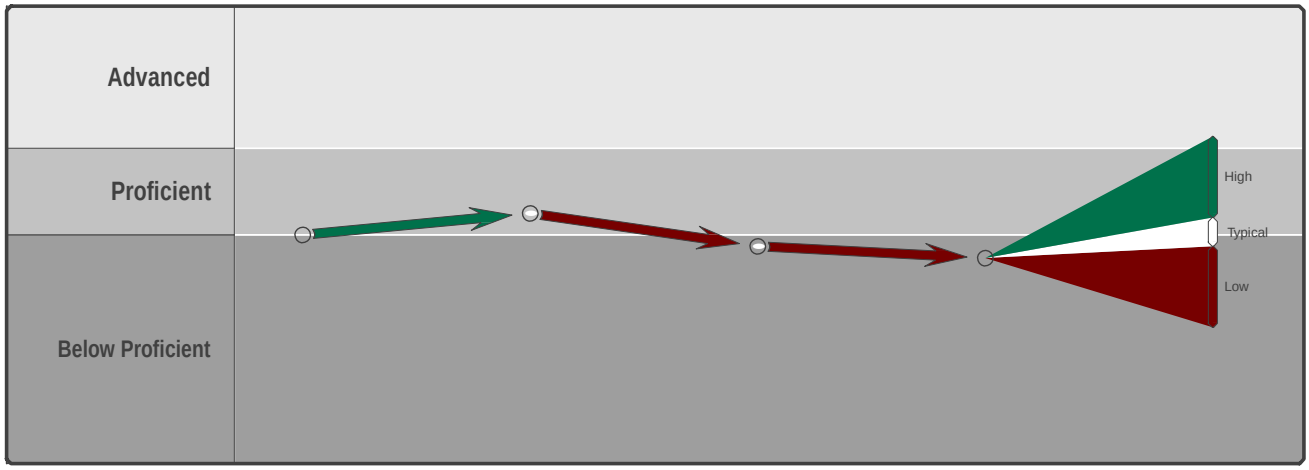
For example, in the sample plot below, this boy's ELA score between 2009 and 2010 went up, and his growth percentile was 63. His growth was therefore as high as or higher than 63% of other students at a similar level of proficiency; in other words, only 37% of similar students progressed more than he did. FROM 2010 to 2011 the Growth Percentile was 21 and considered low growth as marked by the red arrow. A 50th percentile growth score is right in the middle, so it's a typical growth score across the state – not particularly low or high. The sample below will help you to understand what those graphs are telling you about your child's academic growth.

We hope this report of your child's growth scores will help you see your child's academic progress in a new, more useful way. This new academic growth report can form the basis of fresh, better-informed conversations with your child's school and teachers because it is more than just a snapshot of what has already happened. We encourage you to discuss your child's **achievement levels** and **growth** in new and more challenging ways. Instead of "How is my child doing?" you can ask a teacher or principal more focused questions such as:

- ***What steps can we take since my son's growth in English language arts wasn't good enough, and he needs to catch up?***
- ***Is my daughter's academic growth enough to keep her Proficient in math next year?***
- ***What will it take for my son to move up to "Advanced" in science next year?***



Example Student Example School



ELA

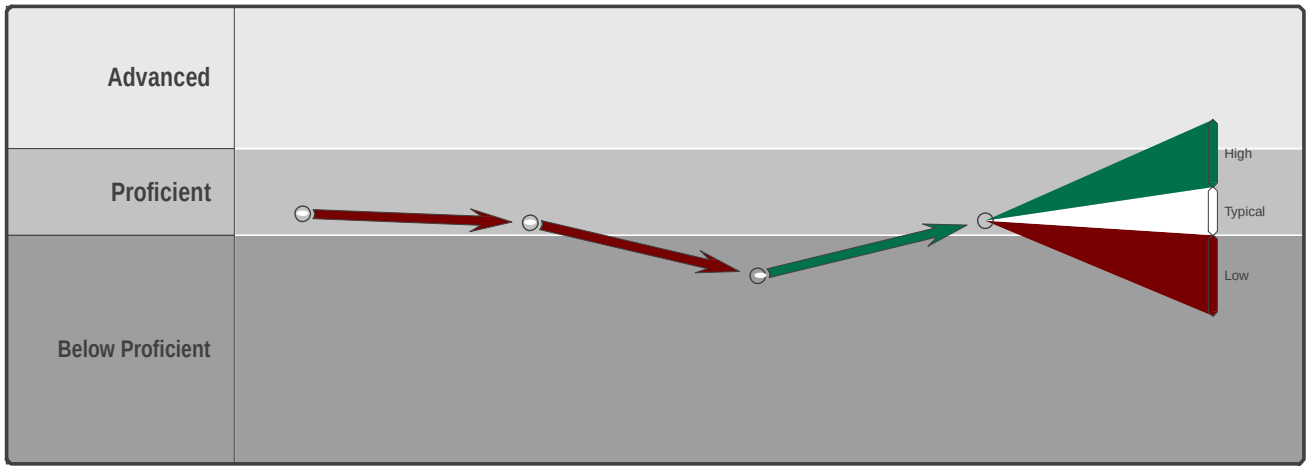
Achievement

CRT ELA Scale Score

Growth

Level	Percentiles
High	60th – 99th
Typical	35th – 59th
Low	1st – 34th

	Grade 3 2009	Grade 4 2010	Grade 5 2011	Grade 6 2012	Grade 7 2013	
Scale Score	160	162	158	156		Achievement
Achievement Level	Proficient	Proficient	Below Proficient	Below Proficient		
Growth Percentile	63	21	12			Growth
Growth Level	High	Low	Low			



Math

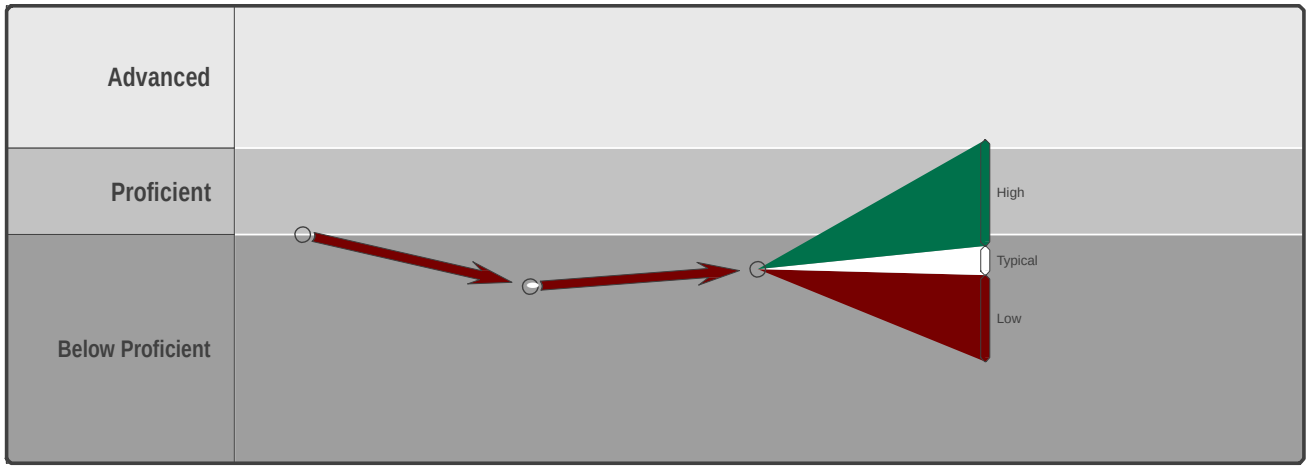
Achievement

CRT Math Scale Score

Growth

Level	Percentiles
High	60th – 99th
Typical	35th – 59th
Low	1st – 34th

	Grade 3 2009	Grade 4 2010	Grade 5 2011	Grade 6 2012	Grade 7 2013	
Scale Score	162	161	153	161		Achievement
Achievement Level	Proficient	Proficient	Below Proficient	Proficient		
Growth Percentile	27	5	73			Growth
Growth Level	Low	Low	High			



Science

Achievement

CRT Science Scale Score

Growth

Level	Percentiles
High	60th – 99th
Typical	35th – 59th
Low	1st – 34th

	Grade 4 2010	Grade 5 2011	Grade 6 2012	Grade 7 2013	
Scale Score	160	151	154		Achievement
Achievement Level	Proficient	Below Proficient	Below Proficient		
Growth Percentile	2	32			Growth
Growth Level	Low	Low			