

TIMSS 2011 Item Release Plan

The design of TIMSS 2011 is based on groups or blocks of items assigned to test booklets. An item block is a group of items that is administered together as part of the test. As far as possible, within each block the distribution of items across content and cognitive domains matches the distribution across the item pool overall. TIMSS 2011 has a total of 28 blocks, 14 containing mathematics items and 14 containing science items. Student booklets were assembled from various combinations of these item blocks. Details about the TIMSS 2011 student booklet design are included in the *TIMSS 2011 Assessment Frameworks*.

TIMSS 2011 is the fourth assessment in a series of studies that take place every four years, providing data on trends in achievement dating as far back as 1995. Due to the evolving nature of the TIMSS design, portions of the assessment blocks are released and replaced with each new study. Therefore, TIMSS 2011 contains assessment blocks from 2003, 2007, and 2011. Six of the fourteen TIMSS 2011 assessment blocks in each subject will be released in February of 2013 and made widely available as part of the *TIMSS 2011 International Database*.

Item blocks are released to provide the public with as much information as possible about the nature and contents of the assessment. The exhibits on the following pages show the cycle for which each assessment block was developed and whether the block will be released to the public after the 2011 assessment. The released item blocks include three blocks containing items from 2003 and three blocks containing items from 2007 and 2011.

