



Getting Ready for the Pennsylvania State Assessments 2023-2024

Agenda

- Contact Information
- Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA)
- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
- Keystone Exams
- Accommodations
- English Learner Assessments

Contact Information

- Brian Truesdale, Chief, Division of Assessment and Accountability, btruesdale@pa.gov
- Dr. Megan Clementi, PSSA Mathematics, Keystone Algebra I, General Testing Questions, mclementi@pa.gov
- Dr. Beth Gannon, PSSA ELA, Keystone Literature, Accommodations, egannonrit@pa.gov
- Craig Weller, PSSA Science, Keystone Biology, crweller@pa.gov
- Lynda Lupp, Special Education Assessment Lead, llupp@pattan.net
- Lisa Hampe, Special Education Advisor, lihampe@pa.gov
- Drew Schuckman, NAEP, dschuckman@pa.gov
- Jay Gift, Testing Irregularities and General Testing Questions, rgift@pa.gov
- General PSSA and Keystone Exam Testing Questions, ra-ed-pssa-keystone@pa.gov
- Test Security/Irregularities, RA-edirregularities@pa.gov





PA Alternate System of Assessment Dynamic Learning Maps

PASA DLM





PASA DLM

Who Participates in the PASA DLM?

- Only students with the *most significant cognitive disabilities* who meet all six of the state's eligibility criteria.
- Participation determination is made by the student's IEP team.
- ESSA regulations continue to stipulate no more than 1% of the total tested population should participate in the state alternate assessment.
- [PASA Eligibility Criteria](#)





▶ PA 1% Compliance

- PDE received a letter from USDE in October 2023 placing the state in 'high risk' status for continuing not to meet the 1% compliance federal regulation. A required improvement plan has been submitted.
- PA has not been able to secure a state 1% waiver with USDE because the state also does not meet the federal requirement to assess at least 95% of all students and SWD.
- LEAs who continue to exceed the 1% threshold can expect additional measures of oversight and monitoring by the BSE as required by the submitted improvement plan since PA is expected to not exceed 1% of students taking an alternate statewide assessment.
- [ESSA 1.0 Percent Threshold Justification Requirements \(pa.gov\)](https://pa.gov)



PASA DLM 2023-24 Important Dates

PASA Activity	Dates
Required Test Administrator Training and Lessons Learned (PASA ACs and Assessors)	August 4, 2023 - December 15, 2023
Required Data Management Training for PASA ACs	August 28, 2023 – December 15, 2023
PASA PIMS Student Enrollment	October 16, 2023 – November 17, 2023
Test Administration Window	March 11, 2024 - May 3, 2024
Electronic School Reports Available in Kite Educator Portal	Beginning June 14, 2024
Printed Score Reports Mailed	Beginning July 26, 2024

[Parent Notification Letter for Year-End Model States \(docx\)](#)

[Parent Notification Letter \(en Español\) for Year-End Model States \(docx\)](#)

[2023-24 PASA DLM Instruction and Assessment Calendar \(dynamiclearningmaps.org\)](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org)



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PASA DLM Blueprints and Scoring

PASA DLM Blueprints

- [Blueprint for English Language Arts](#)
- [Blueprint for Mathematics](#)
- [Blueprint for Science](#)

Score Report Information

- Sample score reports for [ELA](#), [Math](#), and [Science](#)
- [Parent Interpretive Guide \(English\)](#)
- [Parent Interpretive Guide \(en Espanol\)](#)
- [Parent Cover Letter](#)
- [Talking with Parents About Score Reports](#)
- [Video About Score Reports](#)





PASA DLM

Important Websites

- [PaTTAN PASA DLM Instruction and Assessment Resource Hub](#)
 - Provides all PA Alternate Assessment Team emails to PASA Assessment Coordinators, PA instruction and assessment calendar, and other resources
- [Pennsylvania DLM homepage](#)
 - Provides access to all PASA DLM specific information including link to manuals, calendar, score reports, instructional resources, and annual Required Test Administrator Training
- [BSE Assessment](#)
 - Provides PASA information including 1% threshold requirement information



PASA DLM-Assessment Coordinator (AC)

PASA Getting Ready is a required training for the Special Education Administrator serving as the PASA AC

- [2023-24 PASA Getting Ready: What Special Education Administrators Need to Know About PASA DLM Participation and 1% Compliance Requirements Webinar](#) Opens In A New Window (YouTube)
- [2023-24 PASA Getting Ready: What Special Education Administrators Need to Know About PASA DLM Participation and 1% Compliance Requirements](#) (PDF)





PASA DLM Contacts

TOPIC	NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS
PASA DLM General Questions and Accountability	Lisa Hampe Lisa Hauswirth Lynda Lupp	lihampe@pa.gov lhauswirth@pa.gov llupp@pattankop.net
PASA Enrollment and Data Management	PA Help Desk	alternateassessment@pattankop.net
ESSA: 1% Threshold Justification	Lisa Hampe Lisa Hauswirth	lihampe@pa.gov lhauswirth@pa.gov
PASA Eligibility, Test Irregularities, Test Security Violations	Lisa Hampe Lisa Hauswirth Lynda Lupp	lihampe@pa.gov lhauswirth@pa.gov llupp@pattankop.net
DLM Trainings, Resources, General PASA DLM Questions	Meredith Penner (East) Kim Jenkins (East) Tara Russo (Central) Kelley DesLauriers (West)	mpenner@pattankop.net kjenkins@pattankop.net trusso@pattan.net kdelauriers@pattanpgh.net alternateassessment@pattankop.net



Pennsylvania System of School Assessment PSSA

▶ Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

[Pennsylvania System of School Assessment \(PSSA\)](#)

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

The annual Pennsylvania System School Assessment is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment which provides students, parents, educators and citizens with an understanding of student and school performance related to the attainment of proficiency of the academic standards. These standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels. School districts possess the freedom to design curriculum and instruction to ensure that students meet or exceed the standards' expectations.

Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 is assessed in English Language Arts and Math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 4 and 8 is assessed in science.

Individual student scores, provided only to their respective schools, can be used to assist teachers in identifying students who may be in need of additional educational opportunities, and school scores provide information to schools and districts for curriculum and instruction improvement discussions and planning.

In compliance with §4-51(a)(4) of the PA School Code the State Board of Education approved, "specific criteria for advanced, proficient, basic and below basic levels of performance."

Resource Materials

[Mathematics](#)
[English Language Arts](#)
[Science](#)
[Braille and Video Braille Language](#)

Reporting

[PSSA Results](#)
[PSSA Technical Reports](#)
[PSSA Impact Charts \(PDF\)](#)

Testing

[Testing Information](#)
[Accommodations](#)
[Administration Materials](#)
[Assessment Anchors/Exemplars](#)
[Contact](#)
[PSSA Individual Student Report Cards](#)
[Performance Level Descriptors and Cut Scores](#)
[State Fiscal Stabilization Funds Information and Data](#)

Other Materials

[Secretary's Letter \(10/10/10\) \(PDF\)](#)
[Application for Educator Assessment Committee \(EAC\)](#)
[Electronic Userguide for PSSA Data Interface \(PDF\)](#)



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PSSA Resources and Tools

- [PSSA Testing Window](#)
- [DRC eDIRECT](#)
- [Assessment Anchors and Glossaries](#)
- [Item and Scoring Samplers \(Click subject under Resource Materials\)](#)
- [Performance Level Descriptors and Cut Scores](#)
- [Technical Reports](#)
- [Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System \(SAS\)](#)
- [Classroom Diagnostic Tools \(CDT\)](#)



PSSA Assessment Anchors and Glossary

Assessment Anchors and Glossary

Mathematics

- [2014 Mathematics Glossary to the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 3 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 4 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 5 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 6 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 7 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 8 Mathematics Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)

Reading/English Language Arts

- [2014 English Language Arts Glossary to the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 3 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 3 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 4 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 4 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 5 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 5 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 6 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 6 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 7 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 7 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 8 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 \(updated 2017\) Grade 8 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)

Science

- [Science Introduction](#) (PDF)
- [Science Assessment Glossary](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 4 Science Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 8 Science Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)



▶ PSSA Item and Scoring Samplers

English Language Arts

2023 Item and Scoring Samplers

- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 3](#) (PDF)
- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 4](#) (PDF)
- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 5](#) (PDF)
- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 6](#) (PDF)
- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 7](#) (PDF)
- [2023 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 8](#) (PDF)

Mathematics

2023 Item and Scoring Samplers

- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 3](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 4](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 5](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 6](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 7](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Mathematics Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 8](#) (PDF)

Science

2023 Item and Scoring Samplers

- [2023 Science Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 4](#) (PDF)
- [2023 Science Item and Scoring Sampler Grade 8](#) (PDF)



▶ PSSA ELA Resources and Tools

- [English Language Arts \(ELA\) Test Design](#)
- [Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [ELA Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction \(CAI\) Community \(SAS\)](#)
- [English Language Arts Resources](#)
- [Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan \(PaSLP\) Toolkit](#)
- [Text Dependent Analysis \(TDA\) Toolkit](#)

PSSA ELA Test Design

English Language Arts (ELA) Test Design

English Language Arts (ELA) Test Design

Grade	Selected Response						Constructed Response (CR)				Total Core Items	Total Core Points (Raw)	Total Core Points (Weighted)
	Passage-Based Multiple Choice (MC)		Stand Alone MC		Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)		Passage-Based Short-Answer (SA)		Text Dependent Analysis (TDA)				
	Core	Embedded FT	Core	FT	Core	Embedded FT	Core	Embedded FT	Core*	Embedded FT			
3	20 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	4	2	2	1	0	0	33 SR 2 CR	45	45
4	23 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	6	2	0	0	1	1	38 SR 1 CR	51	63
5	23 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	6	2	0	0	1	1	38 SR 1 CR	51	63
6	23 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	6	2	0	0	1	1	38 SR 1 CR	51	63
7	23 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	6	2	0	0	1	1	38 SR 1 CR	51	63
8	23 (4 pass.)	8 (1 pass.)	9	2	6	2	0	0	1	1	38 SR 1 CR	51	63

Grade 3 Test Design

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC/EBSR Per Form	Number of SA	Estimated Number of Passages	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Conventions of Standard English (Writing) and Reading	14–18 MC 1–3 EBSR	1	2	40-60
2	Reading	8 MC 2 EBSR	1	1	35
3	Conventions of Standard English (Writing) and Reading	14–18 MC 1–3 EBSR	1	2	40-60

10/20/2021

Grades 4-8 Test Design

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC/EBSR per Form	Number of TDA	Estimated Number of Passages	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Conventions of Standard English (Writing) and Reading	21–24 MC 4–5 EBSR	0	3	65-75
2	Reading and Text Dependent Analysis (Reading/Writing)	8 MC 2 EBSR	1	1	70
3	Conventions of Standard English (Writing), Reading and Text Dependent Analysis (Reading/Writing)	11–14 MC 1–2 EBSR	1	1	70–80

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PSSA ELA Grade 3 Scoring Guidelines

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES FOR READING SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

3 Points

- The response provides a complete answer to the task (e.g., a statement that offers a correct answer as well as text-based support).
- The response provides specific, appropriate, and accurate details (e.g., naming, describing, explaining, or comparing) or examples.

2 Points

- The response provides a partial answer to the task (e.g., indicates some awareness of the task and at least one text-based detail).
- The response attempts to provide sufficient, appropriate details (e.g., naming, describing, explaining, or comparing) or examples; may contain minor inaccuracies.

1 Point

- The response provides an incomplete answer to the task (e.g., indicating either a misunderstanding of the task or no text-based details).
- The response provides insufficient or inappropriate details or examples that have a major effect on accuracy.
- The response consists entirely of relevant copied text.

0 Points

- The response provides insufficient material for scoring.
- The response is inaccurate in all aspects.

PSSA ELA TDA Scoring Guidelines

PSSA TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS SCORING GUIDELINES

Score Point	Description	Score Point	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas and inferences Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Skillful use of transitions to link ideas Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion Minimal evidence of an organizational structure Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) Few, if any, transitions to link ideas Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

PSSA Mathematics Resources and Tools

- [Mathematics Test Design](#)
- [Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Calculator Policy](#)
- [Mathematics Resources](#)
- [Mathematics Learning Community \(SAS\)](#)



PSSA Mathematics Test Design

Mathematics Test Design

Standard Operational Mathematics High-Level Test Plan per Form from 2018 Onward

Grade	Multiple-Choice (MC)			Open-Ended (OE)			Total Core Items	Total Core Points
	Core	Psychometric Use*	Embedded Field Test	Core	Psychometric Use*	Embedded Field Test		
3	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52
4	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52
5	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52
6	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52
7	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52
8	40	2	6	3	0	1	40 MC 3 OE	52

* Psychometric Use is generally for equating purposes. Not all equating items will be unique on all forms [up to 18 unique MC items across all forms].

Mathematics Operational Section Layout Plan for Grades 3 through 8

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC	Number of OE	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Mathematics	24	2	78
2	Mathematics	24	2	78



PSSA Mathematics Scoring Guidelines

General Description of Scoring Guidelines for Mathematics Open-Ended Questions

4— The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

The response provides correct answer(s) with clear and complete mathematical procedures shown and a correct explanation, as required by the task. Response may contain a minor “blemish” or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

3— The response demonstrates a *general* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

The response and explanation (as required by the task) are mostly complete and correct. The response may have minor errors or omissions that do not detract from demonstrating a *general* understanding.

2— The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required mathematical concepts and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

1— The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

0— The response has no correct answer and *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task for that grade level.

Response may show only information copied from the question.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

Blank.....Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

Refusal.....Refusal to respond to the task

Off Task.....Makes no reference to the item but is not an intentional refusal

Foreign Language.....Written entirely in a language other than English

IllegibleIllegible or incoherent

▶ PSSA Mathematics Tools

Rulers and Protractors

- Rulers are provided for grade 3 students. Rulers are scaled to the $\frac{1}{8}$ inch and millimeter. Students will measure to the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and centimeter.
- Protractors are provided for grade 4 students.

Calculators

- See attached [Pennsylvania Calculator Policy](#)
- Grade 3
 - may not use calculators for any part of the test
- Grades 4 - 8
 - may not use calculators during the non-calculator portion of the assessment



▶ PSSA Science Resources and Tools

- [Science Test Design](#)
- [Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Science Resources](#)
- [Science Learning Community](#)

PSSA Science Test Design

Science Test Design

Standard Operational Science High-Level Test Plan per Form

Grade	Multiple Choice (MC)			Open Ended (OE)			Total Core Items	Total Core Points
	Core	Equating Block*	Embedded FT	Core	Equating Block*	Embedded FT		
4	38	2	6	5	0	1	38 MC 5 OE	48
8	34 + 4 scenario-based	2	4 + 4 scenario-based	5	0	1	38 MC 5 OE	48

*Note that not all equating block items shown in the table below will be unique on all forms.

Science Operational Section Layout Plan for Grade 4

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC	Number of OE	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Science	23	3	38
2	Science	23	3	38

Science Operational Section Layout Plan for Grade 8

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC	Number of OE	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Science	24	3	45
2	Science	24	3	45



PSSA Science Scoring Guidelines

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES FOR SCIENCE OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

2 Points

- The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task(s).
- The response provides a clear, complete, and correct response as required by the task(s). The response may contain a minor blemish or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

1 Point

- The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task(s).
- The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

0 Points

- The response provides *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures as required by the task(s) for that grade level.
- The response may show only information copied or rephrased from the question or *insufficient* correct information to receive a score of 1.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

Blank.....Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

RefusalRefusal to respond to the task

Off Task.....Makes no reference to the item but is not an intentional refusal

Foreign LanguageWritten entirely in a language other than English

Illegible.....Illegible or incoherent

▶ PSSA Science Tools and Scenarios

Calculators ([Pennsylvania Calculator Policy](#))

- Calculators are permitted though not required
- Memory of the calculators must be cleared prior to assessment and after the assessment by TAs
- Students may not share calculators during the assessment

Science Scenarios

- Contains text, graphics, charts, and/or tables
- Describes the results of a project, an experiment, or similar research to answer MC questions

Keystone Exams



▶ Keystone Exams

Keystone Exams

Keystone Exams

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in the subject areas of Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Literature, English Composition, Biology, Chemistry, U.S. History, World History, and Civics and Government. Beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, Keystone Exams in the following subjects were developed by the Department and made available for use by school districts, AVTSs and charter schools, including cyber charter schools:

- Algebra I
- Literature
- Biology

The Keystone Exams are one component of Pennsylvania's statewide high school graduation requirements. Keystone Exams will help school districts guide students toward meeting state standards.

[Learn more about Pennsylvania's statewide graduation requirements.](#)

Keystone Exams Waiver - Impacts on LEA Practices

[Access guidance on Keystone end-of-course exams \(Keystone Exams\)](#) in the context of the pandemic of 2020, federal assessment and accountability requirements for the 2019-20 school year, and Act 13 of 2020 (Act 13).

Resource Materials

- [Test Definitions](#)
- [Item and Scoring Samplers](#)
- [General Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Braille and Video Sign Language](#)

Reporting

- [Keystone Exam Results and Technical Reports](#)

Testing

- [Testing Information](#)
- [Accommodations](#)
- [Administration Materials](#)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content](#)
- [Report Interpretation Guides](#)

Other Materials

- [Performance Level Descriptors - Algebra I, Biology and Literature \(PDF\)](#)
- [Keystone Exam Scale \(PDF\)](#)
- [Application for Educator Assessment Committees !\[\]\(4d5671ed09a68966fe2e932f2c5334b2_img.jpg\)](#)
- [Parent Letter FAQ \(Spanish\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Electronic Device Letter \(Spanish\) \(PDF\)](#)



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▶ Keystone Exams Resources and Tools

- [Keystone Exams](#)
- [Keystone Testing Window](#)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content](#)
- [Item and Scoring Samplers](#)
- [Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System \(SAS\)](#)



▶ Keystone Exams Assessment Anchors and Glossary

[Assessment Anchors and Glossary](#)

Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content

- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Algebra I with Sample Items](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Algebra II](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Algebra II with Sample Items](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Literature with Sample Items](#) (PDF)
- [Keystone AAEC Compact Literature Nonfiction](#) (PDF)
- [Keystone AAEC Compact Literature Fiction](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Geometry](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Geometry with Sample Items](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - Biology with Sample Items](#) (PDF)
- [Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content - English Composition](#) (PDF)



Keystone Exams Item and Scoring Samplers

Item and Scoring Samplers

Algebra 1

- [2023 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2022 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2021 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2019 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2018 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2015 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)
- [2011 Item and Scoring Sampler - Algebra I](#) (PDF)

Biology

- [2023 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2022 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2021 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2019 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2018 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2015 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)
- [2011 Item and Scoring Sampler - Biology](#) (PDF)

Literature

- [2023 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2022 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2021 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2019 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2018 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2015 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)
- [2011 Item and Scoring Sampler - Literature](#) (PDF)



Keystone Literature Test Definition

Keystone Literature Test Definition

Literature Genre & Module Design

Literature	Module 1 Fiction Literature % of points	Module 2 Nonfiction Literature % of points	Module 1 Genre % of Passages Fiction Literature	Module 2 Genre % Passages Nonfiction Literature
		50% 25 Eligible Content	50% 31 Eligible Content	50%

The Literature Keystone Exams will measure the Literature Assessment Anchors as defined by the Eligible Content and will be aligned to the concepts and competencies.

Module 1—Fiction Literature:

Core MC items	17
<u>3 core 3 pt.-CR items</u>	<u>9</u>
Total	26 points

Module 2—Nonfiction Literature:

Core MC items	17
<u>3 core 3 pt.-CR items</u>	<u>9</u>
Total	26 points

There will be a total of 52 points (Module 1 and Module 2 combined), with approximately 65% MC and 35% CR.

Keystone Literature Resources and Tools

- [Keystone Literature Test Definition](#)
- [Literature Constructed-Response Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [ELA Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction \(CAI\) Community](#)
- [English Language Arts Resources](#)
- [Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan \(PaSLP\) Toolkit](#)
- [Text Dependent Analysis \(TDA\) Toolkit](#)



Keystone Literature Scoring Guidelines

LITERATURE CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES

3 Points

- The response provides a clear, complete, and accurate answer to the task.
- The response provides relevant and specific information from the passage.

2 Points

- The response provides a partial answer to the task.
- The response provides limited information from the passage and may include inaccuracies.

1 Point

- The response provides a minimal answer to the task.
- The response provides little or no information from the passage and may include inaccuracies.

OR

- The response relates minimally to the task.

0 Points

- The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant or contains insufficient information to demonstrate comprehension.

Keystone Algebra I Resources and Tools

- [Keystone Algebra I Test Definition](#)
- [Algebra I Constructed-Response Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Calculator Policy](#)
- [Mathematics Resources](#)
- [Mathematics Learning Community](#)

▶ Keystone Algebra I Test Definition

Keystone Algebra I Test Definition

Algebra I Module Design

Algebra I	Module 1 % of points	Module 2 % of points
	50% 18 Eligible Content	50% 15 Eligible Content

The Algebra I Keystone Exams will measure the Algebra I Assessment Anchors as defined by the Eligible Content and will be aligned to the Concepts and Competencies.

Module 1—Operations and Linear Equations & Inequalities

Core MC items	18 points
3 core 4 pt.-CR items	12 points
Total	30 points

Module 2—Linear Functions and Data Organization

Core MC items	18 points
3 core 4 pt.-CR items	12 points
Total	30 points

There will be a total of 60 points (Module 1 and Module 2 combined) with approximately 60% MC items and 40% CR items.

Keystone Algebra I Scoring Guidelines

ALGEBRA I CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES

4 Points

- The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.
- The response provides correct answer(s) with clear and complete mathematical procedures shown and a correct explanation, as required by the task. Response may contain a minor “blemish” or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

3 Points

- The response demonstrates a *general* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.
- The response and explanation (as required by the task) are mostly complete and correct. The response may have minor errors or omissions that do not detract from demonstrating a *general* understanding.

2 Points

- The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.
- The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required mathematical concepts and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

1 Point

- The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

0 Points

- The response has no correct answer and *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.

▶ Keystone Biology Resources and Tools

- [Keystone Biology Test Definition](#)
- [Biology Constructed-Response Scoring Guidelines](#)
- [Science Resources](#)
- [Science Learning Community](#)

▶ Keystone Biology Test Definition

Keystone Biology Test Definition

Biology Module Design

Biology	Module 1 % of points	Module 2 % of points
	50%	50%
	16 Eligible Content	22 Eligible Content

The Biology Keystone Exams will measure the Biology Assessment Anchors as defined by the Eligible Content and will be aligned to the Concepts and Competencies.

Module 1—Cells and Cell Processes

Core MC items	24 points
3 core 3 pt.-CR items	9 points
Total	33 points

Module 2—Continuity and Unity of Life

Core MC items	24 points
3 core 3 pt.-CR items	9 points
Total	33 points

There will be a total of 66 points (Module 1 and Module 2 combined) with approximately 73% MC items and 27% CR items.

Keystone Biology Scoring Guidelines

BIOLOGY CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES

3 Points

- The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures required by the task(s).
- The response provides a clear, complete, and correct response as required by the task(s). The response may contain a minor blemish or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

2 Points

- The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures required by the task(s).
- The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

1 Point

- The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures required by the task(s).
- The response is somewhat correct with *minimal* understanding of the required scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

0 Points

- The response provides *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures as required by the task(s).
- The response may show only information copied or rephrased from the question or *insufficient* correct information to receive a score of 1.

▶ Accommodations

[Accommodations Webpage](#)

- [Accommodations PowerPoint](#)
- [Webinar Link](#)
- [Accommodations Guidelines](#)
- [Accommodations Guidelines for ELs](#)
- [Read Aloud and Scribing Guidelines](#)
- [Supplemental Guidelines for ASL in VSL](#)
- [Unique Accommodations Assurance Form](#)
- [Confidentiality Form](#)

English Learner Assessments

Academic Assessments

- ELs in their first total 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools are not required to take the ELA PSSA or Literature Keystone Exam
- ELs who meet the eligibility criteria to take the PASA follow the same requirements for Mathematics, Algebra I, Science, and Biology.
- For more information on EL participation in state assessments, please see the current [Accommodations Guidelines for ELs](#)

English Language Proficiency Assessment

- All ELs, K-12, are required to take the [ACCESS for ELLs®](#) English Language Proficiency Test
- ELs who meet the eligibility criteria to take the PASA participate in the [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs®](#)



English Learner Accommodations

1. Word-to-word translation dictionaries, without definitions **and without pictures** may be used for PSSA Mathematics, Keystone Algebra I, PSSA Science, and Keystone Biology; **not for any part** of the PSSA ELA or Keystone Literature
2. Qualified interpreters/sight translators for PSSA Mathematics, Keystone Algebra I, PSSA Science, and Keystone Biology; **not for any part** of the PSSA ELA test (*except for the TDA prompts*) or Keystone Literature
3. Spanish versions PSSA Mathematics, Keystone Algebra I, PSSA Science, and Keystone Biology

▶ Getting Ready: 2023-2024

For more information on *Getting Ready for the 2023-24 State Assessments* please visit PDE's [Assessment and Accountability](#) webpages.

The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high-quality education.