

TCAP English Language Arts Grades 6-8 Assessment Fact Sheet

English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment Overview

This fact sheet provides information about the English language arts grades 6-8 assessments. The ELA assessments are administered in four subparts and assess the Tennessee Academic Standards through literary and informational texts and require students to demonstrate the ability to closely read and analyze text, answer text-dependent questions, display understanding of language and vocabulary, provide a written response to a prompt, and demonstrate command of the English language. Students who are enrolled in a grade 6-8 ELA class must take the assessment.

For more information on TCAP assessments in grades 6-8, click [here](#).

Test Administration Schedule

For a full schedule of all statewide assessments, see the testing administration windows on the department's [website](#).

Test Administration Times

The time for administration of the ELA assessment in grades 6-8 is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Test Administration Times for grades 6-8

Assessment	Timing
ELA Grades 6-8	Subpart 1: 85 minutes
	Subpart 2: 50 minutes
	Subpart 3: 50 minutes
	Subpart 4: 45 minutes
	Total: 230 minutes

Testing Structure: Grades 6-8

Table 2 provides the testing structure for grades 6-8 and reflects both the number of operational assessment items and the number of embedded field test assessment items.

Table 2: Testing Structure for Grades 6-8

Subpart 1	Subpart 2	Subpart 3	Subpart 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 85 minutes ☐ 1 passage set* 3– ☐ 5 passage-based items ☐ 1 writing prompt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 50 minutes ☐ 2 passage sets* 5–10 items per passage set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 50 minutes ☐ 2 passage sets* ☐ 5–10 items per passage set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 45 minutes ☐ 1 passage set* 5– ☐ 10 items per passage set 8–16 editing items

*A passage set may be comprised of one or more passages. The word count across all passage sets is comparable.

Performance Levels and Scale Scores

Student performance on Tennessee’s statewide assessments is categorized into four performance levels.

Table 3 provides information regarding student achievement at each performance level for the TCAP ELA tests. This information is provided on student reports so that students, parents, and educators may interpret student results in a meaningful way.

Table 3: Performance Levels

Level 1 (Below)	Level 2 (Approaching)	Level 3 (On-track)	Level 4 (Mastered)
Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has a minimal understanding and has a nominal ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student is approaching understanding and has a partial ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has a comprehensive understanding and has a thorough ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has an extensive understanding and has an expert ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.

Performance level scale score ranges for TCAP ELA assessments for grades 6-8 are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Performance Levels for the TCAP ELA Grades 6-8 Assessment Scale Scores

Assessment	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Grade 6	200–302	303–341	342–376	377–450
Grade 7	200–304	305–340	341–373	374–450
Grade 8	200–297	298–345	346–383	384–450

Score Point Distribution by Sub-Score Categories

Score point distribution percentage ranges of total score points by sub-score category for each assessment are provided in the table below. Ranges reflect percentage of operational assessment items.

Table 5: Score Point Distribution by Sub-Score Category for Grades 6-8

ELA Assessment	% Range of Total Score Points	Sub-Score Category
Grades 6-8	25-29%	Written Expression
	7-9%	Conventions
	25-30%	Reading: Literature
	25-30%	Reading: Informational
	8-12%	Reading: Vocabulary

Assessment Blueprints

Assessment blueprints are designed to show educators a summary of what will be assessed on each assessment. This resource is designed to help educators as they plan for the upcoming school year. Assessment blueprints for 2019-20 can be found on the department website [here](#).

Test Administration Information

Within the state testing window, testing schedules are established **by the district at the school and/or district level**. It is at the district's discretion to allow schools to set their own testing schedules, independent of a district testing schedule. Please see details on subparts for each subject and grade level on the updated testing times chart [here](#).

Item Types

The TCAP English language arts assessments are administered using both **Selected Response** and **Constructed Response** item types. These item types are used in multiple ways to elicit responses that demonstrate understanding of the Tennessee Academic Standards for ELA.

- **Selected Response** items used for TCAP grades 6-8 ELA assessments can include:
 - Multiple choice - These are items with four answer options, only one of which is correct.
 - Multiple select - These are items with more than four answer choices with multiple correct responses.
 - Editing task - This item consists of a short passage that contains underlined text about which the student will answer questions. The student may be asked to correct an error or revise for meaning or style. For some of these editing/revision items, the underlined text will not need to be changed, and the correct answer will be "No change." In addition to editing and revision, students may also be asked to demonstrate a skill such as specificity of word choice, use of affixes, or syllabification (depending on grade level).
- **Constructed Response** items used for TCAP grades 6-8 ELA assessments include:
 - Written response – Students in grades 6-8 will be asked to write multiple cohesive paragraphs in response to a prompt. The prompt is unique to each passage or passage set. The prompt is aligned to one of three writing standards (W.TTP.1, W.TTP.2, or W.TTP.3).

Practice Tests

The department has provided the following practice tools to support educators and students:

- **Paper practice tests:** PDF versions of practice tests for grades 6-8 are available on the Assessment Development Livebinder ([here](#)).

Additional Information

Please visit the [department's website](#) for more information about the statewide assessment program.