



TCAP English Language Arts Grades 3–5 Assessment Fact Sheet

English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment Overview

This fact sheet provides information about the English language arts grades 3-5 assessments. The grades 3-5 ELA assessments are administered in four subparts and assess the Tennessee Academic Standards through both literary passages and informational texts and require students to demonstrate the ability to closely read and analyze text, answer text-dependent questions, provide a written response to a prompt (two prompts in grade 3), apply knowledge and understanding of foundational literacy skills, and demonstrate command of the English language.

Students who are enrolled in a grade 3-5 ELA class must take the assessment.

English language learners are also assessed each year with an assessment called ACCESS 2.0. The results are used to determine EL placement in courses designed to support instruction for English language learners.

For more information on TCAP assessments in grades 3-5, click [here](#).

Test Administration Schedule

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

Test Administration Times

The time for administration of the ELA assessment in grades 3-5 is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Test Administration Times for grades 3 and 4 and grade 5

		Assessment	Timing
ELA Grades 3 and 4	Subpart 1: 80 minutes	ELA Grade 5	Subpart 1: 80 minutes
	Subpart 2: 30 minutes		Subpart 2: 40 minutes
	Subpart 3: 40 minutes		Subpart 3: 40 minutes
	Subpart 4: 30 minutes		Subpart 4: 40 minutes
			Total: 200 minutes

Testing Structure: Grades 3-5

The below testing structure for grades 3-5 reflects both the number of operational assessment items and the number of embedded field test assessment items.

Table 2: Testing Structure for Grade 3

Subpart 1	Subpart 2	Subpart 3	Subpart 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 minutes • 1 informational passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-10 items • 1 writing prompt • 1 literary passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-10 items • 1 writing prompt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes • 1 passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-10 items per passage • 4-7 editing items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 2 passages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-10 items per passage • 4-7 editing items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes • 2 passages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-10 items per passage

Table 3: Testing Structure for Grade 4

Subpart 1	Subpart 2	Subpart 3	Subpart 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 minutes • 1 passage set* • 3-5 passage based items • 1 writing prompt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes • 1 passage set* • 4-10 items per passage • 4-7 editing items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 2 passage sets* • 4-10 items per passage • 4-7 editing items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes • 2 passage sets* • 4-10 items per passage

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

Table 4: Testing Structure for Grade 5

Subpart 1	Subpart 2	Subpart 3	Subpart 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 minutes • 1 passage set* • 3–5 passage-based items • 1 writing prompt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 1-2 passage sets* • 5–10 items per passage set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 1-2 passage sets* • 5–10 items per passage set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 minutes • 1 passage sets* • 5–10 items per passage • 8–14 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.

The table below 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 5: 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 3-5 are provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Performance Levels for the TCAP ELA Grades 3-5 Assessment Scale Scores

Assessment	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Grade 3	200–321	322–358	359–390	391–450
Grade 4	200–298	299–342	343–378	379–450
Grade 5	200–295	296–332	333–370	371–450

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 7: Score Point Distribution by Sub-Score Category for Grades 3-5

ELA Assessment	% Range of Total Score Points	Sub-Score Category
Grades 3-5	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

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 3-5 ELA assessments can include:

- Multiple choice - These are items with four answer options, only one of which is correct. Two-part multiple choice items contain a part A and a part B and may use either multiple choice or multiple select.
 - 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).
- Multiple select - These are items with more than four answer choices with multiple correct responses.
 - This item type requires students to choose the textual evidence in Part B that supports or elaborates on the correct answer in Part A.

Constructed Response items used for TCAP grades 3-5 ELA assessments include:

- Written response –
 - Grade 3:** Grade 3 students will experience two writing prompts on the ELA portion of the assessment. One writing passage and prompt will be literary, and one will be informational. Once the students have independently read the passage and responded to the passage based items, both the reading passage and prompt will be read out loud to the students. Students will be asked to write **at least** one cohesive paragraph drawing from personal experiences and evidence from the passage. The two prompts are aligned to writing standard 8. Each prompt will specify a specific mode of writing.
 - Grade 4:** Students will be asked to write several 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: 4.W.TTP.1, 4.W.TTP.2, or 4.W.TTP.3, and its directions explicitly indicate which mode students should respond in (e.g., opinion, explanatory, or narrative).
 - Grade 5:** Students 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: 5.W.TTP.1, 5.W.TTP.2, or 5.W.TTP.3, and its directions explicitly indicate which mode students should respond in (e.g., opinion, explanatory, or narrative).

Practice Tests

The department will provide the following practice tools to support educators and students this fall.

- **Paper practice tests:** PDF versions of practice tests for grades 3-5 are available on the Assessment Development Livebinder ([here](#)).

Additional Information

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