

> 2015 PSSA Changes

PSSA ELA ASSESSMENT 2015

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English Language Arts Test

- Reading and Writing items are now presented in a single ELA test booklet
- There is no separate PSSA Writing test window
- All grades have 4 sections
- All grades have reading, language and writing composition items
- All grades have evidence based selected response (EBSR) items
- Only Grade 3 has short answer questions
- Only Grades 4-8 have text dependent analysis (TDA) questions

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ELA Reporting Framework

ELA Reporting Framework, Clusters, and Categories			Reporting Category Code
Reading	Genre	Literature Text	A
		Informational Text	B
	Core Competencies	Key Ideas and Details [Key Ideas]	A-K/B-K
		Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas [CSI]	A-C/B-C
		Vocabulary Acquisition and Use [Vocabulary]	A-V/B-V
Writing	Writing	C	
	Language	D	
Text Dependent Analysis			E

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Item Types and Points

Grade 3	
20 core passage MC items	20 points
18 core standalone MC items	18 points
2 core 2 pt EBSR items	4 points
2 core 3 pt EBSR items	6 points
2 core 3 pt SA items	6 points
1 core 4 pt WP (weighted x2)	8 points
Total 62 points	

Grades 4-8	
23 core passage MC items	23 points
18 core standalone MC items	18 points
3 core 2 pt EBSR items	6 points
3 core 3 pt EBSR items	9 points
1 core 4 pt TDA (weighted x4)	16 points
1 core 4 pt WP (weighted x3)	12 points
Total 84 points	

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Grade 3 Format

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC/EBSR	Number of WP/SA	Estimated Number of Passages	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Writing and Language	20 MC	1	0	60
2	Reading	8–12 MC 1–3 EBSR	1	2	34–50
3	Reading	14 MC 2 EBSR	1	2	48
4	Reading	8–12 MC 1–3 EBSR	1	2	34–50

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Grades 4-8 Format

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC/EBSR	Number of WP/TDA	Estimated Number of Passages	Estimated Section Testing Time (in minutes)
1	Writing and Language	20 MC	1	0	60
2	Reading	15–18 MC 4–5 EBSR	0	3	58–69
3	Reading and Text Dependent Analysis	14 MC 2 EBSR	1	2	73
4	Reading and Text Dependent Analysis	5–8 MC 1–2 EBSR	1	1	48–57

Grade 4 Evidence Based Selected Response (3 pts.)

1. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

What is the central theme of this story?

- A. Friendship starts as a mystery.
- B. Moving makes it difficult to develop friendships.
- C. Friendship begins with having things in common.
- D. Reading books together creates friendship.

Part Two

Which **two** details from the passage support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “ ‘Hey, I’ve read that one. It’s great.’ ”
- B. “ ‘Don’t tell me how it ends!’ ”
- C. “At least she had a good mystery to read.”
- D. “ ‘We have the same homeroom, right?’ ”
- E. “Finally she clouded up the mirror in one corner.”

Grade 8 Language Multiple Choice (1 pt.)

1. Which underlined verb is **not** used correctly?
 - A. The coach insists that each player be on time for practice.
 - B. Mary wishes that she were able to attend tomorrow's concert.
 - C. The teacher suggested that John types his paper instead of handwriting it.
 - D. If the shop were to close before noon, we would have to find another place to get supplies.

Sample Grade 7 Writing Prompt (4 pts.)

Your school is considering offering additional classes in one of its subjects in order to benefit students. Think about the various subjects that students might learn about in school. These subjects could be history, math, science, geography, or any other subject. Which subject should your school choose for additional classes in order to benefit students the most?

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which subject your school should choose for additional classes and why it would benefit students more than other subjects. Use evidence and reasons to support your argument.

How Are TDA Responses Scored?

- Scored for analysis of the reading passage
- Scored for composition skills
- Holistic scoring
- 4 points