



# Getting Ready for the Pennsylvania State Assessments, 2017-2018

Information on the New PSSAs  
Keystone Exams are the same.

# PSSA Testing Window

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Assessment	Dates	Grades
English Language Arts	April 9 – 13, 2018	3 – 8
Mathematics	April 16 – 20, 2018	3 – 8
Science	April 23 – 27, 2018	4, 8
Make-up	April 30 – May 4, 2018	

# ▶ Keystone Exams Testing Window

Assessment	Dates
Winter: Wave 1	December 4 – 15, 2017
Winter: Wave 2	January 8 – 22, 2017
Spring	May 14 – 25, 2018
Summer	July 30 – August 3, 2018

## 5 Reporting Categories per Grade

### ➤ **A = Numbers and Operations**

- **A-T** = Base Ten (Gr 3-5)
- **A-F** = Fractions (Gr 3-5)
- **A-N** = Number System (Gr 6-8)
- **A-R** = Ratios and Proportional Relationships (Gr 6-7)

### ➤ **B = Algebraic Concepts**

- **B-O** = Operations and Algebraic Thinking (Gr 3-5)
- **B-E** = Expressions and Equations (Gr 6-8)
- **B-F** = Functions (Gr 8)

### ➤ **C = Geometry**

- **C-G** = Geometry (Gr 3-8)

### ➤ **D = Data Analysis and Probability**

- **D-M** = Measurement and Data (Gr 3-5)
- **D-S** = Statistics and Probability (Gr 6-8)

# Test Design

## Mathematics – 2016-2017

Grades	# Sections	# MC - Core	# MC – Non-core	# OE – Core	# OE – Non-core	Time in Minutes	Total Points per Student (Core only)	Minimum # of Points per Reporting Category
3-8	3	60	12	3	1	<b>204</b>	72	10-12

The number of non-calculator questions is the same.

## Mathematics – 2017 and beyond

Grades	# Sections	# MC - Core	# MC – Non-core	# OE – Core	# OE – Non-core	Time in Minutes	Total Points per Student (Core only)	Minimum # of Points per Reporting Category
3-8	2	40	8	3	1	156	52	7-9

**Removed: 1 whole section; 20 core multiple-choice questions; 4 non-core questions. It's 48 minutes shorter.**

# Impact of New Design

## Advantages:

- Eliminates one of three test sessions
- Shortens testing time by 48 minutes
- Preserves content blueprint percentages
- Maintains the number of points coming from open-ended questions
- Ensures the level of rigor is not decreased
- Maintains sufficient points in each reporting category to continue strength profile reporting
- Preserves Math reporting
- Measures same construct; no impact on the Performance Level Descriptors

# PSSA Math: Test Item Specifics

- Embedded Field Test based on PA Core Standards (PCS)
- Open-ended items scored on a 0-4 point scale
- Item specific scoring guidelines (no general rubric)
- Formula sheets will be provided for grades 4-8 (See Resource Materials on PDE's web site for the formula sheets and item samplers)
- MC items are based on the AA-EC aligned to the PCS
- The EC is considered **Assessment Limits**
- All items may cross EC, Descriptors, Anchors and Reporting Categories
- All items align to an Anchor
- **Use the Glossary! It defines how terms are used in PA (e.g. "number sentence")** [Check glossary to make sure students understand any language differences between PSSAs and Math in Focus.]



## Examples of Phrasing in OE items

- Show or explain all your work
- Show all your work. Explain why you did each step
- Explain why [something is true or false]
- Describe how [doing something affects something else; to find something, etc.]

Reminder: Have students read all items carefully, especially the open-ended items, and answer **exactly** what is being asked

## Example of an Open-Ended Item

Roy is running for class president. He polls 50 students. 60 percent of them say they will vote for him.

A. There are 350 students in Roy's class. Based on his survey, how many students should he expect to vote for him? Show or explain all your work.

B. Roy will sell fruit drinks to raise money for his campaign. A fruit drink cost \$0.10 and he sells it for \$0.50. How many fruit drinks does Roy need to sell to earn \$80? Show all your work. Explain why you did each step. [\[Notice this is asking for three tasks.\]](#)

## Example Rubric (for sample item only):

### Part A:

- ½ point for correct answer **AND**
- 1 point for complete and correct work **OR**
  - ½ point for correct but incomplete work

### Part B:

- ½ point for correct answer **AND**
- 1 point for correct and complete work **OR**
  - ½ point for correct but incomplete work **AND**
- 1 point for correct and complete explanation
  - ½ point for correct but incomplete explanation

## Rubric Metric

Total Points (*within*)

Score (*on*)

4

4

3-3 ½

3

2-2 ½

2

½-1 ½

1

0

0



## Some notes about open-ended items:

- Guess and Check is a valid method but at least **two incorrect** guesses must be shown to receive full credit. [Even if students guess correctly, they need at least 2 incorrect guesses to get full credit.]
- Not all open-ended items require a “why.”
- At least half the score points must come from one Anchor. The rest can come from anywhere else.

- Can have a “blemish” and still get a 4.
- “e.g. missing \$” may or may not be a blemish depending on the item and grade.
- If an answer box is given the answer does not have to be in the answer box to receive full credit, but if there is an answer in the answer box it overrides any other answer given.
- An incorrect answer carried through correctly will receive full credit for the correct part.

# PSSA Math: Test Item Specifics

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- Rulers and protractors will be provided where needed. Students must use the rulers and protractors provided for the PSSA.
- Rulers will be used in **grade 3** only and will be scaled to the  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch and millimeter. Students will be required to measure to the  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and centimeter.
- Protractors will be used only for the grade 4 PSSA.

- Grade 3
  - Cannot use calculators
  - Answers marked in test booklet
  - [Avoid stray marks]
- Grade 4 and up:
  - Calculators **are** permitted on all but the beginning few items



## English Language Arts (ELA) Test Design

Grades	# of Sections	# MC – Core	# MC – Non-core	# EBSR – Core	# EBSR – Non-core	# SA – Core	# SA – Non-core	# WP – Core	# WP – Non-core	# TDA – Core # TDA Non-core	# TDA – Non-core	Time in Minutes	Points per Student (Core only, weighted values)
3	3	29	17	4	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	147	45
4-8	3	32	17	6	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	236	63



- 3 sections
- Removal of stand-alone writing prompt
- TDA questions remain
- No TDA in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- No mode-specific writing prompt (grades 3 - 8)

## Scoring Guidelines

PSSA TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS SCORING GUIDELINES

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



## Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

### [Assessment Anchors and Glossary](#)

[PDE](#) > [K-12](#) > [Assessment and Accountability](#) > [PSSA](#) > Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

## ASSESSMENT ANCHORS AND ELIGIBLE CONTENT

The Assessment Anchors are one of the many tools the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has developed to better align curriculum, instruction and assessment practices throughout the state. PDE first released the Assessment Anchors for Mathematics and Reading in 2004. The Assessment Anchors, like the Standards, are dynamic documents and will be adjusted periodically.

### 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 Grade 3 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 3 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 4 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 4 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 5 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 5 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 6 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 6 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 7 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 7 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 8 English Language Arts Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)
- [2014 Grade 8 - English Language Arts Compact Assessment Anchors](#) (PDF)

Check later for updated  
ELA anchors.



## Pennsylvania Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- The new testing blueprint eliminates the mode-specific writing prompt; however, the writing standards are assessed in the language multiple-choice items and the Text Dependent Analysis prompt.
- As stated in Chapter 4, LEAs are responsible to prepare students to attain the academic standards. The LEA's curriculum shall be designed to provide students with planned instruction needed to attain these academic standards.
- The Text Dependent Analysis essay continues to demand writing skills as an element of scoring.
- The analytic essay requires strong writing skills—it does require the teaching and learning of effective writing.

## Science Test Design - Grade 4

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC (w/ Field Test)	Number of OE (w/ Field Test)	Estimated Section Testing Time (in Minutes)
1	Science	23	3	38
2	Science	23	3	38
Total		46	6	76

Same number of sections but less questions

## Science Test Design - Grade 8

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of MC (w/ Field Test)	Number of OE (w/ Field Test)	Estimated Section Testing Time (in Minutes)
1	Science	24	3	45
2	Science	24	3	45
Total		48	6	90

## Science PSSA – Test Plan/Form Reduction Design

Grade	MC – Core	MC – Psychometric Use	MC – Field Test	OE – Core	OE – Field Test	Total Core Items	Total Core Points
4	38	2	6	5	1	38 MC / 5 OE	48
8	38	2	8	5	1	38 MC / 5 OE	48