LEAP Assessment Guides, English Language Arts (ELA) Grade 7

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I. Purpose of Assessment Guide

This document is designed to assist Louisiana educators in understanding the LEAP ELA assessment for grade 7, which will be administered in spring 2016.

II. Introduction to LEAP

All students in grades 3–8 will take the LEAP ELA and mathematics assessments. In order for Louisiana to maintain comparability between assessments administered in spring 2015 and spring 2016, a percentage of the items (not more than 49.9%) for the LEAP assessments come from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is a group of states working together to develop high-quality assessments. The remaining percentage of items for the LEAP assessments comes from the College and Career Readiness Item Bank belonging to Data Recognition Corporation, winner of the LEAP mathematics and ELA test development contract.

The LEAP assessments will offer the following:

- Consistency with the rigor and types of questions used in the spring 2015 Louisiana assessments
- Measurement of the full range of Louisiana content standards in ELA and mathematics
- Ability to measure the full range of student performance, including the performance of high- and low-performing students
- Flexibility in test administration, with both paper- and computer-based testing available

- Information for educators and parents about student readiness in ELA and mathematics and whether students are "on track" for college and careers
- Comparison of Louisiana student performance with the performance of students in other states

III. Overview of ELA Reporting Categories

Student performance on the LEAP ELA assessments will be reported by claim and sub-claim as outlined in the following table.

Claim	Sub-Claim	Sub-Claim Description
Reading	Reading Literary Text	Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level fiction, drama, and poetry.
	Reading Informational Text	Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level non-fiction, including texts about history, science, art, and music.
	Reading Vocabulary	Students use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases in grade-level texts.
Writing	Written Expression	Students compose well-developed, organized, and clear writing, using details from provided texts.
	Knowledge and Use of Language Conventions	Students compose writing that correctly uses the rules of standard English (including those for grammar, spelling, and usage).

These reporting categories are the same as the reporting categories on the spring 2015 ELA student reports and will provide parents and educators valuable information about

- overall student performance, including readiness to continue further studies in English language arts;
- student performance broken down by subcategories, which may help identify when students need additional support or more challenging work in reading and writing; and
- how well schools and districts are helping students achieve higher expectations.

IV. Design of LEAP ELA Assessments

The LEAP ELA Assessments focus on an integrated approach to reading and writing that reflects instruction in an effective ELA classroom:

- careful, close reading of complex grade-level literary and informational texts
- a full range of texts from across the disciplines, including science, social studies, and the arts

- tasks that integrate key ELA skills by asking students to read text(s), answer reading and vocabulary questions about the text(s), and then write using evidence from what they have read
- questions worth answering, ordered in a way that builds meaning
- a focus on students citing evidence from texts when answering questions about a specific passage or when writing about a set of related passages
- a focus on words that matter most in texts, that are essential to understanding a particular text, and that include context that allows a student to determine literal and figurative meanings

The information below outlines the design of the Grade 7 ELA Assessment.

	Grade 7 ELA Test Design			
Test Session	**Focus of Session**	**Number of Passages**	**Number/Type of Items**	**Assessable Grade 7 Content Standards**
Session 1	Research Simulation Task (RST)	3	7 SRs and 1 PCR	RI.1–3, 5–6, 8–10; RI4, L.4–5; W.1–2, 4, 7–10; L.1–2 and appropriate Language Progressive Skills
Session 2	**EITHER** the Literary Analysis Task (LAT) only	2	5 SRs and 1 PCR	RL.1–3, 5–6, 9-10; RL4, L.4–5; W.1–4, 9–10; L.1–2 and appropriate Language Progressive Skills
	OR the Narrative Writing Task (NWT) + 1 or 2 passage set(s)	2-3	4 SRs and 1 PCR + 6 SRs for additional passage(s)	
Session 3	Reading Literary and Informational Texts	at least 3	15 SRs	RL.1–3, 5–6, 9-10; RI.1–3, 5–6, 8–10; RL4, RI4, L.4–5
Approximate Percentage of Points by Claim: Reading—61%; Writing—39%				
SR: Selected Response—students select answer(s); includes multiple-choice items (one- and two-part) and multiple-select items (items that require more than one correct answer)				
PCR: Prose Constructed Response—students write an extended response				
RI: Reading Informational Text; **W**: Writing; **L**: Language; **RL**: Reading Literature				

Session 1 consists of the Research Simulation Task, which mirrors the research process by presenting three texts on a given topic. Students answer a set of selected-response questions about the texts and then write an extended response about some aspect of the related texts (e.g., analysis of argument, comparison/contrast of information, point of view or purpose, the use of illustrations in the texts).

Session 2 consists of **either** the Literary Analysis Task (LAT) only **or** the Narrative Writing Task (NWT) **and** a set of selected-response questions based on 1-2 additional passage(s). The 1 or 2 passage set(s) that come after the NWT in Session 2 are included to balance the reading load between the LAT and the NWT and to provide consistent timing in sessions 2 and 3.

The LAT and NWT are described below.

- **Literary Analysis Task**—provides students an opportunity to show their understanding of literature. It asks students to read two literary texts, answer a set of selected-response questions about the texts, and write an extended response that compares and/or explains key textual ideas or elements (e.g., analysis of plot and characterization; comparison of themes; influence of point of view, structure; interaction of literary elements).

- **Narrative Writing Task**—asks students to read a literary text, answer a set of selected-response questions about the text, and then create a narrative related to the text (e.g., finish the story; retell the story in another narrative form, such as a journal entry). Students should make sure that their response is a narrative, not an expository response.

Session 3, Reading Literary and Informational Texts, asks students to read **at least three** texts and answer questions to show their understanding of each text. The reading selections may include fiction (e.g., short stories, novel excerpts, poems) and non-fiction (e.g., informational texts from across the disciplines of science, history, and the arts). Students will answer only selected-response questions about each text. No writing is included in this session.

See section VI of this document for information about the item types.

V. LEAP Test Administration Policies

Administration Schedule

The spring LEAP ELA and mathematics assessments will be administered during **one** testing window and will be available to districts as paper-based tests (PBT) and computer-based tests (CBT). The table below lists the PBT administration schedule for the spring ELA, mathematics, and science assessments.

Paper-Based Test Administration Schedule: Grade 7		
Day 1 **April 25**	English Language Arts Session 1: Research Simulation Task	90 minutes
	Mathematics Session 1: No Calculator	75 minutes
Day 2 **April 26**	English Language Arts Session 2: Literary Analysis Task **or** Narrative Writing Task and 1-2 passage set(s)	75 minutes
	Mathematics Session 2: Calculator	75 minutes
Day 3 **April 27**	English Language Arts Session 3: Reading Literary and Informational Texts	75 minutes
	Mathematics Session 3: Calculator	75 minutes
Day 4 **April 28**	Science Session 1: Multiple-Choice	Suggested time: 60 minutes
	Science Session 2: Task	Suggested time: 30 minutes
Day 5 **April 29**	Make-Up Sessions	Depends on session

The LEAP ELA and mathematics tests are **strictly timed** and no additional time is permitted, except for students who have a documented extended time accommodation (e.g., an IEP).

The table below lists the CBT administration schedule and policies for the spring ELA and mathematics assessments.

Computer-Based Test Administration Schedule: Grade 7		
Test Window: April 11, 2016 – May 6, 2016		
English Language Arts	Session 1: Research Simulation Task	90 minutes
Mathematics	Session 1: No Calculator	75 minutes
English Language Arts	Session 2: Literary Analysis Task **OR** Narrative Writing Task + 1-2 passage sets	75 minutes
Mathematics	Session 2: Calculator	75 minutes
English Language Arts	Session 3: Reading Literary and Informational Texts	75 minutes
Mathematics	Session 3: Calculator	75 minutes
Computer-Based Test Administration Policies: For the administration of the computer-based tests, schools must follow the policies below.		
- Sessions must be completed in the order listed above. - No more than two sessions can be scheduled per day (one English Language Arts and one Mathematics). - Students must be provided breaks between sessions. - All students in a particular grade must be tested on the same session at the same time as or as close to the same time as possible. If not possible, schools should have procedures in place to isolate students who have tested from those who are waiting to test. - Make-up sessions must be administered as soon as a student returns to school.		

The LEAP ELA and mathematics tests are **strictly timed** and no additional time is permitted, except for students who have a documented extended time accommodation (e.g., an IEP).

Paper-Based Tests

Students taking the paper-based tests, except those using braille test materials, will enter all answers in their test booklets. There will be no separate answer documents. Each session of the ELA test booklet will be sealed; day indicator bars will appear on the outside margin of each page. Instructions for how to manage the test booklets, including how to break the seals, will be outlined in the Test Administration Manual.

Multiple-Choice questions have four options. Students will fill in the bubble of the correct answer.

    (A)   Option A

    (B)   Option B

    (●C) Option C

    (D)   Option D

Multiple-Select questions ask students to choose more than one correct answer. The number of correct answers varies item by item but is identified in the stem of each question. The sample below asks for two correct answers.

    (●A) Option A

    (B)   Option B

    (●C) Option C

    (D)   Option D

    (E)   Option E

    (F)   Option F

The following information presents guidelines for marking/writing in the English language arts test booklet.

- Students are encouraged to mark the reading passages and questions in the test booklet (e.g., highlight or underline evidence, annotate the passage, circle key words in the questions), especially as part of their preparation in responding to the writing task at the end of sessions 1 and 2.
- Students may use yellow highlighters to highlight text in the test booklet.
- Highlighting text in options and placing an X to the right of the text in an option are recommended ways for students to eliminate options. However, crossing out options could create scoring issues if students mark through answer circles.

When students are answering the items requiring written responses in sessions 1 and 2, they should make sure to write their responses in the spaces provided. Any information written outside the space or which has been scratched out in the printed test booklet will not be scored.

Computer-Based Tests

Students taking the computer-based tests will enter their answers into the online testing system. The way each answer is entered depends on the item type. For example, for an EBSR item with one correct answer in each part, a student will click on the circle next to the correct answer in Part A and in Part B. When composing their written responses to a PCR, students will type their responses into the box using the typing tools provided.

The computer-based tests include the following online tools, which allow a student to select answer choices, "mark" items, eliminate answer options, take notes, enlarge the item, and guide the reading of a text or an item line by line (similar to what a student can do on the paper-based tests). A help tool is also featured to assist students as they use the online system.

- Pointer tool
- Highlighter tool
- Cross-Off tool

- Sticky Note tool
- Magnifying tool
- Line Guide

- Help tool

Note: All students taking the computer-based tests should work through the Online Tools Training to practice using the online tools so they are well prepared to navigate the online testing system.

Permitted Testing Materials

For both the paper- and computer-based tests, students will be permitted to have school-issued scratch paper only, which can be used to help students prepare their written responses.

Students will **not** be allowed to use dictionaries and thesauruses on any part of the test. Because the LEAP ELA tests integrate reading and writing, the use of a dictionary or thesaurus would compromise the measurement of many reading standards. For example, a student would be able to look up key vocabulary words or other words essential to measuring a student's understanding of a text. Definitions will be provided as footnotes for words that are important to understanding the text but do not have sufficient context. The scoring of the written responses takes into account the absence of such resources and the time constraints of each task.

For more information about accessibility and accommodations, please refer to the 2015–2016 LEAP Accessibility Features and Accommodations Overview.

VI. LEAP ELA Item Types

The 2016 Grade 7 LEAP ELA assessment includes several different types of items, many similar to the items on the spring 2015 ELA assessment. However, there are also some new item types and differences in how the items are scored, which are described below. All of the item types below, except for the technology-enhanced items, will appear on both the paper- and computer-based versions of the tests.

1) **Multiple-Choice (MC):** This item type consists of a question and four answer options with only one correct answer. It allows students to show their understanding of a text, including the vocabulary used in the text. The MC items are worth one point each.

2) **Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR):** This item type consists of two parts for students to A) show their understanding of a text and B) provide evidence that supports their understanding.

   Some of the EBSR items are worth two points, and students can earn partial credit (1 point). However, they must answer correctly the part that aligns to a specific standard and not only the part that asks for evidence. This means that if part A asks students to demonstrate their understanding of theme and part B asks for evidence of that theme, students must answer part A correctly to receive any credit; they cannot receive partial credit for answering only part B correctly. Some EBSR items are worth only one point, but are still composed of two parts. Both parts of one-point EBSR items must be answered correctly to receive any credit.

3) **Multiple-Select (MS):** This item type, whether it has one or two parts, asks students to choose more than one correct answer. Whenever this item type is used, the question always identifies in boldface print the number of correct answers required. Some of the MS items are worth two points, and students can earn partial credit (1 point). Other MS items are worth only one point and do not allow partial credit.

4) **Technology-Enhanced (TE):** This item type uses technology to capture student comprehension of texts. TE items appear only on the computer-based version of the assessment and are worth one point each (no partial credit). The Online Tools Training will allow students to see the different kinds of TE items and practice answering them to prepare for the computer-based test.

5) **Prose Constructed Response (PCR):** This item type appears at the end of each of the two tasks and asks students to create an extended and complete written response. It elicits evidence that students have understood a text or texts they have read and can communicate that understanding well, both in terms of written expression and knowledge of language and conventions.

   There are two grade 7 rubrics used to score the PCRs—one to score student responses to the Literary Analysis Task (LAT) and the Research Simulation Task (RST) and one to score student responses to the Narrative Writing Task (NWT). The LAT/RST rubric used to score the LEAP Grade 7 ELA test is different from the one used to score these tasks on the spring 2015 ELA tests. The table that follows summarizes the scoring of the 2016 ELA Tasks at grade 7.

Scoring of Tasks on the 2016 ELA Tests: Grade 7					
Task	**Dimensions**	**Points by Dimension**	**Total Points**	**Change from 2015 Scoring Rubrics**	**Rubrics**
Research Simulation	Reading/Written Expression*	16 points (4 times holistic score)	19	Reading and Written Expression now one dimension (same total score points as 2015)	[Grades 6–8 Scoring Rubrics](#)
	Conventions	3 points			
Literary Analysis	Reading/Written Expression*	16 points (4 times holistic score)	19	Reading and Written Expression now one dimension (same total score points as 2015)	
	Conventions	3 points			
Narrative Writing	Written Expression	12 points (3 times holistic score)	15	No change	
	Conventions	3 points			

* When scoring the Reading/Written Expression dimension, the holistic score (4, 3, 2, 1, 0) is determined, based on which score point best describes that response. That holistic score is multiplied by 4. This means that if a student receives a 2 for Reading/Written Expression, the student will receive a score of 8 for this dimension. This score is then added to the Conventions score to provide the total score for the RST and the LAT.

VII. Resources

- [Grades 6–8 English Guidebook](): offers comprehensive information to support teachers in creating yearly, unit, and daily instructional plans for students

- [Grades 6–8 ELA Teacher Library](): provides links to grade-specific resources, such as the standards, shared teacher resources, and instructional plans

- [EAGLE Sample Test Items](): provides teachers a bank of questions that can be used for instructional and assessment purposes

- [PARCC's Grade 7 ELA Released Items Documents](): includes actual items from PARCC's 2015 tests, along with annotated student samples and scoring information, to help teachers understand what is expected and how the written responses are scored

- [2014–2015 Grade 7 Practice Test](): provides teachers and students with additional items and task types similar to those on the 2016 test, but should not be administered as a "practice test" because test designs for 2015 and 2016 are not the same

- [LEAP 2015–2016 Grade 7 ELA Paper Practice Test]() and [Scoring Guide](): offer a paper-based grade 7 ELA practice test to help prepare students for the spring assessments

- LEAP 2015–2016 Grade 7 ELA Online Practice Test, [Scoring Guide](), and [Answer Sheet](): offers a sample of a grade 7 computer-based practice test to help prepare students for the spring assessments; the online practice test is accessed through INSIGHT

- [Guide to Administering the Online Practice Tests](): provides information regarding the administration and scoring process required to access and use the online practice tests

- [LEAP 2015-2016 ELA Practice Test Guidance](): provides teachers with information about test structure, recommended uses, general cautions, item types, and scoring of the practice tests

- Online Tools Training: provides teachers and students examples of interactive, technology-enhanced items so they can become familiar with the computer-based testing format

- [2015–2016 LEAP Accessibility Features and Accommodations Overview](): provides an overview of Louisiana's accessibility features and accommodations for grades 3–8 spring 2016 testing, clarifying differences between paper-based and online testing

UPDATE: Online Practice Test Links and Resources