



Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

**TELPAS Writing
Scoring Guide
Grades 8–9**

Constructed Response

Fall 2022

General Information

This guide provides information about scoring of the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) online writing assessment for grades 8–9. Items included in this guide are from the Spring 2022 TELPAS Writing Field Test.

The responses you see in this guide are student responses to a writing prompt administered online in the spring of 2022. A range of responses are included to show the progression of student writing from lower score points to higher score points. The response images are as the students typed them.

The annotations focus on the specific responses. A response earns a specific score point, based on the characteristics in that particular response. The proficiency level of the student is determined by the accumulated score across a series of multiple choice and written responses. The annotation establishes the link between a response and the associated score point. An individual response does not necessarily reflect a student’s proficiency level but reflects one piece of data that contributes to the determination of the student’s proficiency level.

The TELPAS proficiency level descriptors (PLDs) for writing and the writing rubric are included in this guide for your reference.

ELPS-TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors Grades 2-12 Writing

Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Advanced High
<p>Beginning English learners (ELs) lack the English vocabulary and grasp of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks meaningfully.</p>	<p>Intermediate ELs have enough English vocabulary and enough grasp of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks in a limited way.</p>	<p>Advanced ELs have enough English vocabulary and command of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks, although second language acquisition support is needed.</p>	<p>Advanced high ELs have acquired the English vocabulary and command of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks with minimal second language acquisition support.</p>
<p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have little or no ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • lack the English necessary to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing (e.g., focus and coherence, conventions, organization, voice, and development of ideas) in English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to label, list, and copy • high-frequency words/phrases and short, simple sentences (or even short paragraphs) based primarily on recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material; this type of writing may be quite accurate • present tense used primarily • frequent primary language features (spelling patterns, word order, literal translations, and words from the student's primary language) and other errors associated with second language acquisition may significantly hinder or prevent understanding, even for individuals accustomed to the writing of ELs 	<p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a limited ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • are limited in their ability to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English; communicate best when topics are highly familiar and concrete, and require simple, high-frequency English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple, original messages consisting of short, simple sentences; frequent inaccuracies occur when creating or taking risks beyond familiar English • high-frequency vocabulary; academic writing often has an oral tone • loosely connected text with limited use of cohesive devices or repetitive use, which may cause gaps in meaning • repetition of ideas due to lack of vocabulary and language structures • present tense used most accurately; simple future and past tenses, if attempted, are used inconsistently or with frequent inaccuracies • descriptions, explanations, and narrations lacking detail; difficulty expressing abstract ideas • primary language features and errors associated with second language acquisition may be frequent • some writing may be understood only by individuals accustomed to the writing of ELs; parts of the writing may be hard to understand even for individuals accustomed to the writing of ELs 	<p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English, although second language acquisition support is particularly needed when topics are abstract, academically challenging, or unfamiliar <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grasp of basic verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns; partial grasp of more complex verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns • emerging grade-appropriate vocabulary; academic writing has a more academic tone • use of a variety of common cohesive devices, although some redundancy may occur • narrations, explanations, and descriptions developed in some detail with emerging clarity; quality or quantity declines when abstract ideas are expressed, academic demands are high, or low-frequency vocabulary is required • occasional second language acquisition errors • communications are usually understood by individuals not accustomed to the writing of ELs 	<p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to use the English language, with minimal second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate, with minimal second language acquisition support, elements of grade-appropriate writing in English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nearly comparable to writing of native English-speaking peers in clarity and precision with regard to English vocabulary and language structures, with occasional exceptions when writing about academically complex ideas, abstract ideas, or topics requiring low-frequency vocabulary • occasional difficulty with naturalness of phrasing and expression • errors associated with second language acquisition are minor and usually limited to low-frequency words and structures; errors rarely interfere with communication

TELPAS Twelve-Point Writing Rubric

As part of the TELPAS writing assessment, rubrics were developed to determine the score points that should be ascribed to a student's response based on their performance on a particular item. The rubrics demonstrate the possible number of score points that students can achieve on each writing test item. There is one rubric for grades 2–3 and one rubric for grades 4–12. The twelve-point rubric for grades 4 through 12 is based on the TELPAS proficiency level descriptors (PLDs). Using the twelve-point rubric the student's writing is assessed based on the following three traits: vocabulary, usage, and completeness. For each of the three traits, the student receives a score from 1 to 4 for a total possible score of 12 points. This rubric demonstrates how a student will be assessed for writing; however, the rubric should not replace the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) or PLDs and should not be used in isolation.

	(1) Writing that receives a score point 1 per characteristic	(2) Writing that receives a score point 2 per characteristic	(3) Writing that receives a score point 3 per characteristic	(4) Writing that receives a score point 4 per characteristic
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May contain some high-frequency or routine words and phrases; may even contain a small number of very simple formulaic sentences May include vocabulary from the student's native language Contains widespread spelling errors that significantly interfere with comprehensibility even with common, high-frequency words; spelling errors reflect frequent borrowing from the student's native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses vocabulary that is repetitive or limited in range and variety, particularly when writing is academic May circumlocute when the precise word is unknown or struggle to use words correctly Contains some spelling errors that may interfere with comprehensibility; spelling errors may reflect some borrowing from the native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally uses a variety and range of grade-appropriate social language; may struggle to use vocabulary that is academic or newly introduced Sometimes uses vocabulary that is precise; may not always have the right word(s) for the task Contains occasional spelling errors that do not significantly interfere with comprehensibility; errors do not represent a significant level of interference from the native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently uses a variety and range of grade-appropriate academic and social language Consistently uses precise vocabulary; employs the right word(s) for the task Contains infrequent spelling errors that do not interfere with comprehensibility, similar to those made by native English-speaking peers; errors are only rarely due to interference from the native language
Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May contain some simple sentences using present tense or memorized past tense verbs but with errors and inaccuracies Includes significant grammar usage errors that interfere with comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains mostly simple sentences using present tense; other tenses used inconsistently or inaccurately Includes frequent grammar usage errors that sometimes interfere with comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May still contain many simple sentences but shows ability to use simple tenses successfully and a developing ability to use complex tenses Demonstrates an emerging ability to write compound and/or complex sentences Includes some grammar usage errors that do not significantly interfere with comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently demonstrates ability to correctly use both simple and complex tenses Contains some expanded compound and/or complex sentences Demonstrates grammar usage that is generally correct and comparable to that of grade-level native English-speaking peers Includes infrequent grammar usage errors which do not interfere with comprehensibility; errors may be similar to those made by native English-speaking peers or be limited to complex grammar structures
Completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May copy the prompt or contain no English Contains simple sentences lacking details or language needed to align to the task Is minimally effective in communicating intended message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May include limited or repetitive use of words and phrases needed to sequence events and show relationships between sentences (cohesive devices) Narrates, describes, or explains in a limited way with few details; lacks language needed to align to the task Shows limited effectiveness in communicating intended message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes some of the appropriate words and phrases needed to sequence events and show the relationship between sentences but does so inconsistently and with some repetition or unnaturalness Narrates, describes, or explains in some detail but shows a decline when topics are more academic or abstract Is mostly effective in communicating intended message but lacks some specificity needed to complete the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes the appropriate words, phrases, and/or clauses needed to sequence events and show the relationship between sentences or parts of sentences Reflects a clear alignment to the specific genre (narration, description, explanation, etc.) Mostly achieves the intended goal and contains a degree of specificity and detail needed to address the task completely

Grades 8–9 Writing Question and Scored Responses

Read the text. It is the beginning of a story.

I wrote my name on the ticket and put it in the box. I really wanted to win the prize. It was a vacation anywhere the winner wanted to go. A week later, the winner was announced. I won! I decided that I wanted . . .



Prompt

Now write the middle and end of the story. In your middle and end, be sure to:

- tell what happened in order
- include details about where the person chose to go and who the person decided to take
- describe how the person felt and how the person got ready for the trip
- write about what happened during the vacation, what the person did, and how the person felt

Score Point 3

In this mine story this girl or boy wrote her/his name to do the win the vacation then she win and know were she was goin or she want.

Vocabulary – 1

This response features only routine, high-frequency words and phrases. The vocabulary is overly simple for this grade level and demonstrates significant difficulty finding and using the correct word, resulting in confusing wording throughout. While spelling errors are relatively few, this is not enough to elevate this response to a higher score.

Usage – 1

Overall, this response contains severe errors in grammar usage throughout that significantly interfere with comprehensibility. The response consists of only a few short sentences that are not properly divided with punctuation. Despite their relative brevity, the sentence structures show significant errors.

Completeness – 1

This response lacks any significant detail with the majority of the response being a paraphrase of the stimulus information. As it is so minimal and simplistic overall, the response represents a minimally effective attempt to respond to the task.

Score Point 4

A kid wrote his name because he wanted to win a trip of vacation he mybe go toa palce were is to swim and go with a friend or family member.He was exited and goy ready with clothes to go swimming and more extra clothes.

Vocabulary – 1

This response features primarily simple and high-frequency vocabulary. It is notably vague and imprecise throughout (“go to a palce were is to swim”; “goy ready with clothes . . . and more extra clothes”). Spelling errors are quite common, even in routine and high-frequency words, and these errors interfere with comprehensibility.

Usage – 1

This response contains frequent and significant grammar usage errors. The sentence structures are simple and prone to error. The writer also has difficulty with using the correct prepositions (“win a trip of vacation”) and using correct forms of verbs (“he mybe go toa palce were is to swim”).

Completeness – 2

Overall, the writer demonstrates a limited effectiveness in addressing the task and provides some limited detail through the narration (“go toa palce were is to swim”; “goy ready with clothes to go swimming and more extra clothes”). Otherwise, the response lacks the language needed to align to the task, including a lack of cohesive devices to sequence events.

Score Point 5

to go to France because I have always dreamed of going to France and see the effiel tower and also meet people that speak french and learn about their culture because they look like really fun people to be around with and I wanna see a real mime face to face.

Vocabulary – 2

The writer displays a limited range in vocabulary by including some more precise examples of things to see in France (“effiel tower,” “a real mime”). Spelling errors are relatively minor and do not significantly interfere with comprehensibility.

Usage – 1

This response consists of a run-on sentence with notable errors throughout. The writer begins with the present perfect tense (“I have always dreamed of going to France”) but is unable to maintain that tense and makes a switch to the simple present for the rest of the response. This shift is erroneous through at least the first half of the response and contributes to the difficulty in comprehension, especially when combined with the run-on nature of the response overall.

Completeness – 2

This response contains some detail throughout with limited narration or description. On the whole, the writer shows a limited effectiveness at addressing the task. While the details provided are relevant and somewhat precise, they are not well expanded on or explained. Additionally, there is very little in this response in terms of cohesive devices to show relationships between ideas or to sequence events.

Score Point 6

To go to mexico because most of my family is there and ill take my aunt and cousins i was so happy so i started to pack my bags for the plane. During the vacation we went to parties and went to check on the cows and chickens we rode horses to the mountains.

Vocabulary – 2

This response features a limited range of vocabulary. For the most part, the language is more social with little in the way of more advanced or academic language. The writer covers some basic vocabulary in a few different subjects such as family (“aunt and cousins”), animals (“cows and chickens . . . horses”), and travel (“pack my bags for the plane”). Spelling throughout the response is generally correct with relatively few errors.

Usage – 2

Overall, the response consists of multiple sentences which are mostly simple. The writer forgets to punctuate between the first two sentences, but it is clear where the delineation between them occurs. The writer uses simple tenses correctly throughout, though the use of present tense in the first sentence is a bit awkward when the prompt and the rest of the response call for past tense. While grammatical errors are relatively few, the grammar in this response is simple on the whole.

Completeness – 2

The writer narrates a trip to Mexico in a limited way. For the most part, the writer does not include much by way of cohesive devices in this response, the notable exception being at the beginning of the third sentence (“During the vacation”) which does give some context to the information that follows. The response is somewhat detailed with some relevant facts that give a basic understanding of the vacation. These consist of simple events and experiences with effectively no elaboration or analysis to deepen the detail beyond a surface level presentation.

Score Point 7

i decided to go too hawaii when i got home i tolf my mom she was excited that i won and mom been working hard so i told her mom do you want to go with me my mom said yes. we started to get ready we packed shirts jeans and swimming clothes. when we go there we got to our room and the first thing i wanted to do was swim my mom joined me and we had a good time, we ate danced even went exploring around i was very happy.

Vocabulary – 2

The writer demonstrates a limited range and variety of vocabulary throughout this response. While there are occasional instances of some more precise wording (“she was excited that i won”; “we ate danced even went exploring around”), there are also instances where the writer does not have the correct words and either offers circumlocution or shows interference from their first language (“we packed shirts jeans and swimming clothes”). Overall, the vocabulary in this response is somewhat inconsistent. It contains largely simple but concrete language with sections of both more and less precise wording.

Usage – 2

This response features simple sentences with a tendency to run together in a distracting manner. These run-on sentences are frequent and severe enough that they constitute grammatical errors that interfere with comprehensibility. Other errors are also present including some that may indicate interference from the writer’s first language (“so i told her mom do you want to go”). The writer is mostly able to use the simple past tense correctly throughout the response.

Completeness – 3

The writer demonstrates some appropriate sequencing of events throughout the response by using some appropriate phrases to sequence events and show the relationships between them (“so i told”; “when we go there”; “the first thing i wanted to do”). Additionally, the response contains some appropriate details. This includes not only some simple details about the trip but also some elaboration that gives more depth to the narrative (“mom been working hard”; “we had a good time”; “i was very happy”).

Score Point 8

I decided that I wanted to take my friend with me and I decided to go to Mexico. I felt really excited about winning the free vacation and so I started to pack my cloth and othe important things I needed to take. Once we arrived at Mexico it was raining and once me and my friend got to the hotel we went to the pool it had with the hotel and it was fun and me and my friend felt happy.

Vocabulary – 2

The writer demonstrates a limited range of vocabulary which does not include much academic language. While the writer is able to provide some variety in language, it is often imprecise (“pack my cloth and the othe important things”). Spelling errors are present at times but do not significantly impact comprehension. Overall, the vocabulary in this response is somewhat simplistic for this grade level.

Usage – 3

The writer shows a developing ability to write more complex sentences, frequently attempts to write longer and more interesting sentences, and is usually able to do so successfully despite the final sentence running together. The writer consistently uses the past tense successfully even with irregular or less common verbs (“decided,” “felt,” “arrived”).

Completeness – 3

Throughout the response, the writer uses some appropriate words and phrases to not only sequence events but to also show some relationships between them (“and so I started to pack,” “Once we arrived”). Additionally, the response is somewhat detailed. The writer includes some details, both concrete and emotional, that help to develop the narrative, leading to a response that is mostly effective in responding to the task.

Score Point 9

To go to Miami Florida with my best friend. I was so excited and couldn't wait to go. I started to pack my suitcase I packed two pairs of swimming shorts and two t-shirts. I also packed my sandals, sun screen, towl , and charger.

When we got to Miami, we checked into our hotel and got our room and everything. We put our bags down and changed and headed to the beach and had fun. We had the best time of our lives.

Vocabulary – 3

The writer includes some variety of language that is sometimes precise and never seems to struggle to find the correct word or phrase. The writer includes specific items that were packed and specific activities without any difficulty (“swimming shorts,” “sandals, sun screen, towl, and charger,” “checked into our hotel”). Spelling errors are few and do not significantly affect comprehension.

Usage – 3

The sentence structures in this response are mostly clear and demonstrate the writer’s developing ability to form more complex sentences. While the writer does successfully use longer and more complex sentences, the writer does not overly rely on them and includes a good variety of sentence structures. The writer successfully uses the past tense and is consistent with its use throughout the response. Grammar usage errors are few and do not interfere with comprehension.

Completeness – 3

The writer narrates in some detail while mostly addressing the task in an effective way. The writer includes some specific information, including specific things that they packed (“sandals, sun screen, towl, and charger”), activities (“checked into our hotel,” “headed to the beach”), and feelings (“I was so excited and couldn’t wait to go”). The writer also includes some appropriate attempts to sequence events, though the use of transitions and other cohesive devices are limited.

Score Point 10

To go to Colorado with my boyfriend Dante ! I was so happy that I won and couldn't wait to tell Dante. After I told Dante he was so happy to go to Colorado. He has never left texas and the hot weather , so I could not wait to see how this was gonna be for him. We went to the mall to get some clothes and shoes for the cold , and we even got hiking boots ! Tomorrow we were leaving and wanted to be prepared! The next morning , we got all our bags in the truck and drove to Colorado ! On the way to Colorado we loved seeing the mountains , the deers everywhere , everything ! Dante and i went everywhere we could and had a blast. We didn't even want to leave , we knew we had to though. On the way back , it was still fun , just sad we couldn't stay. Defintely going back soon . BEST VACATION EVER !!!

Vocabulary – 3

Overall, this response features vocabulary that is appropriate but not especially sophisticated or academic. The writer does not seem to struggle to find the correct word, but, conversely, does not appear to attempt to expand the vocabulary of this response with more sophisticated verbiage. The vocabulary in this response contributes to an informal tone overall. Some spelling errors are present but do not interfere with comprehensibility.

Usage – 3

The writer demonstrates a developing ability to write more complex sentences and frequently produces longer sentences with an extra clause or two. This is usually successful, but the writer is sometimes overeager and attempts to form extra clauses where none are necessary ("The next morning, we got all our bags"). Near the end of the response, the writer includes a couple sentence fragments that detract from the overall sophistication of the sentence structures. There are also some noticeable errors in the response ("the deers everywhere"), though they do not tend to interfere with understanding.

Completeness – 4

This writer demonstrates a degree of specificity and detail necessary to fully respond to the task in the form of a narrative. The writer includes sufficient details about the preparation for the trip as well as the trip itself that are specific and relevant. While the details help to form a successful narrative, the writer also includes other less concrete details that develop more context and give the reader a greater understanding of the characters and their reactions (“He has never left Texas and the hot weather”). The writer also uses appropriate cohesive devices to sequence the response, creating a cohesive narrative the entire way through.

Score Point 11

My name is Yaritza, I entered a raffle, and if I win I get to travel anywhere I want. As I wrote my name on the ticket I felt my stomach twist. I really wanted to win this. I was consumed by tingles all over my body, I was nervous and excited at the same time. There was so many people behind me waiting for their turn. I was unconfident, seeing all these other people in line made me more nervous. There's a 50/50 chance I'll even win this. I really want to travel to Korea, why you may ask, well. My dream is to travel the whole world but I would love to start with Korea. I really want to see the Cherry blossom trees. I heard they are very pretty there, they even have a park full of them. A week had pass and it was the day before the winner was announced. I couldn't sleep that night, I was to worried about the results. I really really wanted to win. The next morning I recieved a call, my heart was racing. As I picked up the phone I closed my eyes waiting for the results. "Congratulations, you've won the ticket!" I cheered loudly. I was really excited and happy! I can't wait to go to Korea!

Vocabulary – 4

This response contains an appropriate range and variety of language that is often descriptive and evocative. The writer is able to be specific and descriptive by using precise language (“I felt my stomach twist”; “I was consumed by tingles all over my body”). The writer also uses social language to set a conversational tone for the response (“why you may ask”). Additionally, the spelling in this response contains a few errors that do not interfere with comprehension.

Usage – 3

The writer shows skill at writing complex and interesting sentences and produces varied sentence structures. The writer struggles primarily with tense and switches between past and present tense in a manner that is somewhat inconsistent and distracting. The response also contains some noticeable grammatical errors that often have to do with verb forms (“There was so many people behind me”; “A week had pass”) that hinder the overall usage.

Completeness – 4

The writer successfully uses appropriate words and phrases to sequence the response and show relationships between events. Notably, near the end, the writer demonstrates particular skill at showing time pacing and the building anticipation (“A week had pass and it was the day before the winner was announced”; “The next morning I received a call”). In addition, the writer provides details, both descriptive and explanatory, that help to fully develop the narrative and completely respond to the task.

Score Point 12

I want to go to Tokyo for fashion week. I've seen fashion week shows in Los Angeles and New York already, so I think that it's time to get out of the states to a place that's more exotic. Another reason I think going to Tokyo is perfect is because I've been with my girlfriend Sora for 2 years now. Her parents live in a suburb outside of Tokyo. After discussing it, we are also now planning to spend some time at her parent's house so I can meet them. we booked first class tickets with American Airlines as well as an artistic bohemian-decorated luxury apartment and a rental car in Tokyo. I experienced culture shock as soon as we got out of the airport and walked into the busy streets of Tokyo. The apartment was absolutely gorgeous and going to all the indie, gothic, and electronic styled fashion shows by amazing designers was a refreshing experience. Meeting sora's parents was a nervous but exiting thing. Going into her parent's driveway, all i could think was "please, i hope they like me" as soon as she introduced me as her girlfriend everything got a lot easier. We had an amazing dinner and went out to explore the city the day after with her family. After the vacation, i almost didnt want to leave.

Vocabulary – 4

This response features consistent use of specific and precise sophisticated language. The writer uses academic and descriptive language throughout to great effect (“an artistic bohemian-decorated luxury apartment”; “going to all the indie, gothic, and electronic styled fashion shows”). It is clear that the writer has a strong grasp of English vocabulary across a variety of content areas and tones.

Usage – 4

Overall, this response has strong sentence structures and very few meaningful errors. The writer demonstrates the ability to capably use different tenses throughout the response, including both future and past tenses. The sentence structures show variety with both shorter and more complex sentences being used successfully.

Completeness – 4

The writer fully addresses the task and produces a response that is fully developed with ample specific and relevant detail throughout every part of the writing. The degree of specificity is especially notable as the writer paints a very clear picture using precise details. The response is also well sequenced and cohesive. The writer sets up meeting Sora’s parents in the beginning of the response and returns back to it near the end, giving the response more structure and cohesion overall.