

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)

Grades 4 and 7 Writing

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Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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HB 743

STAAR grades 3–5 assessments should be redesigned so that 85% of students can complete in 2 hours.

STAAR grades 6–8 assessments should be redesigned so that 85% of students can complete in 3 hours.

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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STAAR grades 4 and 7 writing tests have been redesigned this year.

All other 3 through 8 assessments may be redesigned for the spring 2017 administrations—depending on the time-to-test survey.

There will be no field test items on the spring 2016 grades 3 through 8 tests.

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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- Redesign of STAAR grades 4 and 7 writing tests
 - One-day test
 - Fewer multiple-choice items
 - One expository writing prompt

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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- Redesign of STAAR grades 4 and 7 writing tests
 - Release of new blueprints, test design schematics, and assessed curriculum documents in fall 2015
 - No change to writing rubrics

STAAR Phase-in Standards

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- The Commissioner of Education raised the phase-in standards for the 2015–2016 school year.

STAAR Grade 4 Writing Breakdown

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- There will be a total of 26 points available for the grade 4 writing test.
 - 18 multiple-choice questions
 - 6 revision questions (1 passage)
 - 12 editing questions (2 passages)
 - 8 points for the expository written composition
 - Summed score (X 1)

Grade 4 Writing New Test Design

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Grade 4	Number of Items	Number of Available Points	Percentage of Test	Total Number of Available Points
Revision	6	6	23%	26
Editing	12	12	46%	
Expository Essay	1 Writing Prompt	8	31%	
Total	18 multiple-choice 1 Expository Essay	26 Points	100%	

STAAR Grade 7 Writing Breakdown

- There will be a total of 46 points available for the grade 7 writing test.
 - 30 multiple-choice questions
 - 13 revision questions (2 passages)
 - 17 editing questions (2 passages)
 - 16 points for the expository composition
 - Summed score (X 2)

Grade 7 Writing New Test Design

10

Grade 7	Number of Items	Number of Available Points	Percentage of Test	Total Number of Points
Revision	13	13	28%	46
Editing	17	17	37%	
Expository Essay	1 Writing Prompt	16	35%	
Total	30 multiple-choice 1 Expository Essay	46 Points	100%	

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

HB 1164

- In 2015-2016, this bill requires TEA to plan a study to develop a writing assessment methodology as an alternative to the Grades 4 and 7 writing tests.
- In 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, this bill requires TEA to implement a pilot program.
- Students participating in the pilot program would not be required to take the grades 4 and 7 writing tests.

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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HB 1164: Alternative Writing Assessment

■ Pilot Program Design

- Must assess a student's mastery of TEKS in writing through timed writing samples
- Must assess improvement of a student's writing skills from the beginning to the end of the school year
- Must assess a student's ability to follow the writing process from rough draft to final product
- Must assess a student's ability to produce more than one type of writing style

Legislative Changes for 2015–2016

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HB 1164: Alternative Writing Assessment

- ▣ Pilot Program Design

- Will include a diverse group of students from at least one urban, one suburban, and one rural district

- ▣ More information will be coming out later this spring.

Student Assessment New Contract

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- The Student Assessment Division awarded ETS the primary testing contract through 2019.
 - ETS took over primary responsibilities on September 1, 2015.
 - ETS will be writing items to be shown to teachers at external item review meetings in summer of 2016.
 - First time students will see ETS items will be in spring of 2017.*

*ELA/Writing and Grade 8 and above mathematics tests only (For all other tests, ETS has been subcontractor through Pearson.)

STAAR Writing Scores

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	2014 Level II (2012-2015 Phase-In)	2014 Level III	2015 Level II (2012-2015 Phase-In)	2015 Level III
Grade 4	73	6	70	7
Grade 7	70	6	72	10

Grade 4 Writing (Editing)

16

- Sentence 23 from “We Need a Rock-Climbing Wall”
 - (23) With proper instruction and supervision, the fourth and fifth graders at our school would really benefit from the addition of a rock-climbing wall to our playground.

- #22 What change should be made in sentence 23?
 - A Change *proper* to **propper** 31%
 - B Change *graders* to **grader’s** 20%
 - C Change *from* to **it would be from** 9%
 - D No change should be made in sentence 23.* 39%

Grade 7 Writing (Editing)

17

- Sentence 20 from “The Bugman Stumbles”
 - (20) I jotted down some notes about the word’s origins along with a couple of example sentences, the rest of the paper would be a breeze.

#37 What is the correct way to write sentence 20?

- **A** I jotted down some notes about the word’s origin along with a couple of example sentences. Sure that the rest of the report would be a breeze. 12%
- **B** I jotted down some notes about the word’s origin. Which along with a couple of example sentences meant that the rest of the report would be a breeze. 10%
- **C** I jotted down some notes about the word’s origin along with a couple of example sentences. The rest of the report would be a breeze.* 40%
- **D** The sentence is written correctly in the paper. 37%

Grade 4 Expository Statewide Distributions

2014 2015

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2014 Expository Summed Scores		2015 Expository Summed Scores	
1/1 = 2	17%	1/1 = 2	18%
1/2 = 3	14%	1/2 = 3	15%
2/2 = 4	38%	2/2 = 4	39%
2/3 = 5	15%	2/3 = 5	15%
3/3 = 6	11%	3/3 = 6	10%
3/4 = 7	3%	3/4 = 7	2%
4/4 = 8	1%	4/4 = 8	1%

Grade 7 Expository Statewide Distributions 2014 2015

2014 Expository Summed Scores		2015 Expository Summed Scores	
1/1 = 2	10%	1/1 = 2	10%
1/2 = 3	13%	1/2 = 3	15%
2/2 = 4	44%	2/2 = 4	41%
2/3 = 5	17%	2/3 = 5	18%
3/3 = 6	10%	3/3 = 6	11%
3/4 = 7	3%	3/4 = 7	3%
4/4 = 8	1%	4/4 = 8	1%

2015 Grade 7 STAAR Writing Expository Prompt

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READ the following quotation.

A friend is a gift you give yourself.

—Robert Louis Stevenson

THINK carefully about the benefits of friendship.

WRITE an essay explaining the importance of having a good friend.

“Building” Depth

- Students should link sentences from one idea to the next.
- Students should link ideas through meaningful transitions that are not just one word conjunctive adverbs. Sometimes it's appropriate to use a one-word transition. Other times transitional sentences allow the reader to “see” how ideas are linked. There are other times, however, that students can link sentences logically, and the reader is able to follow the logical flow of ideas.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 2

A man once said, “A friend is a gift you give yourself. That true because no one can choose your friends but you. Friends are the ones who help you with school, family, and relationships. Their the ones that understand you, not the one who use you or ditch you. They don’t have to be the same as you, they can be emo, jewish, or hispanic. Try making a new one. Everyone wants a new friend to hangout with or go to their house. You can make a new friend by joining a new club, sport, or at a parents work.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 2

Try meeting a new kid you never talked to or the new kid at your school.

Friendship means to never betray each other. Try having some fun with each other like prank someone or play a sport with each other. But one thing in mind never judge them for who they are cause who might know they might be with you till the very end.

“Building” Depth

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- Little evidence that the student took the time to plan the composition.
- Most ideas are not linked from one idea to the next.
- Ideas don't build, which causes the essay to not flow.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 3

Friendship is something that will help you get through in life. This shows in real life and in literature. Due to experiences and novels, it is clear that friendship is and always will be important.

One day in fifth grade, we were learning about how to divide two by three. Everyone was understanding it, but I wasn't at all. While my friend Wyatt was doing the worksheet, I think he realized that I had nothing done. So rather than him getting the practice he needs, he decided to put his worksheet aside, and help me. After that, I finished with no problem. This also shows in novels, too.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 3

In *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan, Grover is a close friend to Percy. Without Grover's protection for Percy, Percy would probably had not been a successful demigod. Grover (in the movie) was the one who even volunteered to stay behind in the underworld just so Percy and the others were safe. Having a good friend has a lot of importance to it.

In conclusion, everyone has that one friend that they are very close to. Because of these examples, it is obvious that being a good friend has lots of importance to it. And in order for you to have a friend, you have to be a friend.

“Building” Depth

- Student uses a personal anecdote to EXPLAIN one time when a friend sacrificed to be a good friend.
- Inside both the anecdote paragraph and the novel paragraph, the ideas are linked from sentence to sentence, showing why the student chose these two examples.
- There’s enough specificity for the reader to understand how these examples relate to the controlling idea.
- In score point 4s, these ideas would be fleshed out, or developed, better.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 4

Friendship. Where would we be without that little word? Some people say, “Every man for himself!” But that’s the negative people talking. Others like to believe in unity and togetherness. That is why it is so important to have friends that stand by you and understand your feelings. Without a companion that understands and pulls you through tough situations, you won’t have someone to vent your inner frustrations to!

Through thick and thin, you always need a person that relates to you.

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 4

For most people, the purpose and presence of this person helps get them through tough times. Whether they are in the middle of a divorce or in a position of poverty, they need someone there who will listen to their dilemma. Just think, if you had a “friend” who, every time you tried to express your opinion or explain an issue that you were going through, said everything you were thinking was wrong and that your opinion was incorrect, how would that make you feel? Defeated and worthless is what comes to mind. So that is why, whether you are 5 or 85, having a friend

Grade 7 Expository Score Point 4

that understands and relates to you is very significant.

When you have emotions bottled up inside, it's hard to function. Whenever you have unresolved feelings that you aren't able to express to anyone, you need a right-hand man to keep you on solid ground. Friendship and understanding go hand-in-hand, so make sure that throughout your life, you have someone who provides both of those qualities.

Building Depth

31

- The essay is focused on one idea.
- The sentences are linked logically to one another, creating coherence.
- The reader is never lost, asking how did we get to this idea?
- Because of the strong sentence-to-sentence connections the composition is developed thoroughly.
- Effective word choice creates a strong expository tone.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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