

DATE:	September 1, 2022
SUBJECT:	New and Updated STAAR Redesign Resources
CATEGORY:	Student Assessment
NEXT STEPS:	Share with appropriate staff

The purpose of this communication is to inform superintendents and district and campus administrators about new and updated resources for educators regarding the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®).

Beginning with the spring 2023 administration, STAAR will be redesigned to align more closely with effective classroom instruction. The Texas Education Agency (TEA), working with a wide range of education stakeholders, including the Assessment Education Advisory Committee, has been exploring the most instructionally supportive approach to implement these changes. The redesign includes several components:

- **New types of test questions:** New, non-multiple-choice question types are more like the kinds of questions teachers ask in class and give students more ways to show understanding.
- **More cross-curricular reading passages:** Reading comprehension test questions reference topics students have learned about in other classes.
- **Evidence-based writing incorporated into reading language arts tests:** Combined reading and writing tests better support the interconnected way these subjects are taught and eliminate stand-alone writing tests for grades 4 and 7.
- **Robust accommodations in online tests:** The online testing platform provides a full suite of robust accommodations for students with specific learning needs.
- **Tests administered online:** Online testing supports all of the changes above and provides faster test results to support accelerated learning. *(The transition to online testing will be implemented beginning with the December 2022 administration.)*

Based on educator feedback, TEA is releasing new and updated resources to ensure educators and students are familiarized with the redesigned STAAR.

Resources to familiarize educators with the redesigned STAAR

Final Test Blueprints

The [final test blueprints](#) for the redesigned STAAR show the distribution of questions, points, and readiness and supporting standards across reporting categories for each STAAR assessment. Reading language arts (RLA) blueprints also include test design information, including the number of passages, the reading load, and the genres eligible for assessment.

Full-Length Practice Tests

Full-length practice tests that resemble the redesigned STAAR will be available on the [Practice Test Site](#) on Friday, September 2. The full-length practice tests, available for all grades and subjects, demonstrate how new item types and robust online accommodations will appear in the redesigned STAAR tests. RLA practice tests also demonstrate how cross-curricular reading passages and evidence-based writing will be incorporated in the redesigned RLA STAAR tests.

Practice tests should not be used to evaluate students' proficiency levels. STAAR tests undergo [rigorous processes](#) to ensure the difficulty of the tests remains the same year after year, so that results can be compared. These practice tests have not gone through the same processes, so they may be easier or more difficult than actual STAAR tests.

Scoring Guides for Constructed Responses Items

To help educators understand how new RLA, science, and social studies constructed response items will be scored, [Constructed Response Scoring Guides](#) will be available later this fall on the STAAR Redesign webpage under Resources to Support New Question Types. The guides include rubrics and real examples of student responses for short and extended constructed response items.

Other Resources and Trainings

Based on educator feedback, TEA is developing resources and trainings to support teacher understanding of the STAAR redesign, the rationale and research behind it, and how it better aligns with classroom instruction. Within the next month, education service centers (ESCs) will be conducting STAAR redesign professional development sessions and presentations and supporting local educational agencies (LEAs) to facilitate sessions for their teachers. Later this fall, TEA will email teachers with information about two optional, TEA-provided opportunities to learn about the STAAR redesign: synchronous STAAR redesign webinars and asynchronous professional development trainings that will be available in the Student Assessment learning management system.

Optional resources to support student assessment

Beginning-of-Year (BOY) Assessments are diagnostic tests administered once at the start of the year that help educators plan instruction. BOY assessments are administered online and are fully accommodated, so they are good opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with the accommodations and accessibility tools that they will use on STAAR. This year's BOY assessments are released STAAR tests from spring 2022 and therefore do not include new, non-multiple-choice questions, additional focus on cross-curricular passages, or evidence-based approach to writing.

STAAR Interim Assessments are benchmarking tests administered one to two times a year to monitor students' progress. Interim assessments are administered online; are fully accommodated; mirror the STAAR blueprint; and include all new, non-multiple-choice questions, except for constructed responses.

Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR) is a platform that supports formative assessment practices. Using TFAR, LEAs may digitize their existing curricular-embedded formative assessments and administer them on the same online platform used to administer STAAR tests. TFAR enables users to create most of the non-multiple-choice questions that will appear on the redesigned STAAR. Items from the TEA-owned item bank are fully accommodated; however, questions created by users will not include content and language supports.

Teachers continue to play an important role in the development of STAAR, including reviewing and approving all items before they appear on STAAR. Teachers are encouraged to register their interest in the [Learning Management System](#) to participate in educator committees, which guide and support the development of all tests included in the Texas Assessment Program. Educators may also stay informed about assessment news by subscribing to quarterly updates on the [TEA website](#).

Please submit any questions regarding the STAAR redesign or any of these resources to TEA via the [Student Assessment Help Desk](#).