

Revised STAAR English I and II Assessments

As of spring 2014, the English I and II reading and writing assessments will be combined to become one assessment—English I and English II EOC. The chart below was adapted from TEA released chart which demonstrated the difference between the separate reading and writing tests and the newly revised combined test. This information is intended to help teachers and administrators understand the new time constraints of the redesigned test, as well as revisit the instructional implications of the English I and II STAAR content.

Reporting Categories	Redesigned STAAR English (Embedded Field Testing)	Instructional Implications
Reporting Category 1: Understanding/Analysis Across Genres	6 multiple choice (MC) 2 short answer questions (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will need to think critically/inferentially about texts (read <i>between</i> and <i>beyond</i> the lines) Students will need to understand what makes a connection between texts thematic or meaningful Short answer questions: students will need to know the difference between effective and flawed text evidence and know how to stay “inside” the text to find evidence Examples of connecting questions stems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is one similarity or difference between the two selections or between the narrators/ speakers/characters/authors in the two selections? What is a theme or idea explored in both selections? Is the central message of the two selections the same? How does a particular quotation from one selection link/correspond thematically to a quotation from the other selection?
Reporting Category 2: Understanding/Analysis of Literary Texts	11 MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because STAAR routinely employs dual-coding using F19B and a genre knowledge and skill statement, students will need to make complex inferences in all genres, beyond demonstrating the specific skills listed in individual Student Expectations Dual-coded questions tend to ask about author’s craft. Students should be able to identify author’s “tools” and articulate how they affect meaning Student will need to understand and apply the specific academic vocabulary associated with literary and informational reading Examples of author’s craft stems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why does the author include a particular paragraph? Why does the author begin or end a piece in a particular way? Why does the author include a description of XX? How does a poet, playwright, or author use imagery, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, time disruptions (flashback, foreshadowing) to create meaning? How does the author organize the selection? Why does the author organize the information in a particular way?
Reporting Category 3: Understanding/Analysis of Informational Texts	11 MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because STAAR routinely employs dual-coding using F19B and a genre knowledge and skill statement, students will need to make complex inferences in all genres, beyond demonstrating the specific skills listed in individual Student Expectations Dual-coded questions tend to ask about author’s craft. Students should be able to identify author’s “tools” and articulate how they affect meaning Student will need to understand and apply the specific academic vocabulary associated with literary and informational reading Examples of author’s craft stems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why does the author include a particular paragraph? Why does the author begin or end a piece in a particular way? Why does the author include a description of XX? How does a poet, playwright, or author use imagery, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, time disruptions (flashback, foreshadowing) to create meaning? How does the author organize the selection? Why does the author organize the information in a particular way?
Selection Breakdown	4 selections (1 pair/2 single selections)	Poetry has been represented widely in the 2013 released tests. All genres should be taught through reading and writing. Different texts of different genres should be compared.
Reading Base Test	28 MC, 2 SA	
Embedded Reading Field-Test	7 MC, 1 SA (1 pair OR single selection)	

Chart continues

Reporting Categories	Redesigned STAAR English (Embedded Field Testing)	Instructional Implications
Reporting Category 4: Composition	1 essay <i>English I – expository</i> <i>English II – persuasive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: moving <i>all</i> students from the lower half of the score-scale range to the upper half of the range • Teachers should understand the rubric for each type of writing assessed and know the differences between the levels of writing performance • Students should understand the language of the rubric and make accurate judgments about their own writing through the writing process. Students should know how to independently solve problems or roadblocks in their own writing. • Teachers should balance writing instructions to ensure students are writing pieces of varying lengths and for different purposes. • Teachers should remember that limited or formulaic strategies that short-cut the thinking/writing process do not prepare students for STAAR (or academic success). • Teachers should create a writing classroom that allows students the time and space to think their way through a topic, to understand writing for an outside audience, and to practice their skills in a “safe” environment. • English I Expository Essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students should read all the way through all parts of the prompt to know what the real topic or issue is. ○ Students must have a thesis statement that is supported throughout the essay. ○ Students must keep their outside audience in mind. ○ Students should know the different ways to organize expository writing: anecdotes, examples, compare/contrast, and cause/effect are examples. • English II Expository Essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students should be able to understand the central issue of the prompt. ○ The depth of the argument matters more than the breadth. ○ Students should understand the purpose of persuasive writing—to convince the reader with a clear position. ○ Students should rely on what they really know and understand to convince their audience: what they’ve read, seen, and discovered through books, movies, televisions, news, and history. They should NOT use false evidence. ○ Students should understand the different organizational structures may be more effective in persuading their audience, for example, a writer might place her strongest evidence at the end.
Reporting Category 5: Revision	11 MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should focus vocabulary and grammar instruction on application, not on memorization. • Students should understand that revision and editing are two different processes. Students should have multiple opportunities to practice both
Reporting Category 6: Editing	11 MC	
Passage Breakdown	4 passages (2 revision/2 editing)	
Writing Base Test	22 MC, 1 essay	
Embedded Writing Field-Test Items	6 MC (attached to 1 passage), 1 essay	
Total Number of Base-Test Items	50 MC, 2 SA, 1 essay	
Total Number of Items (including field test)	63 MC, 3 SA, 2 essays	

Testing Characteristics	Redesigned STAAR English (Embedded Field Testing)	Instructional Implication
Time Limit	1 day, 5-hour testing window	
Weighting of Each Component	One score only – no separate reading and writing scores Reading and writing contribute equally to the total score: 30% – reading multiple choice 20% – short answer questions 24% – writing multiple choice 26% – essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be reading and writing in the different genres continuously. • Teachers should emphasize that good writers are good readers. Students should see the connections between reading and writing. Understanding how an author crafts a piece can help students learn how to craft their pieces for better efficacy.
Retesting in Spring 2014 and Beyond	Students who do not achieve Level II are required to retake the entire assessment	

Redesign information from the Texas Education Agency, Student Assessment Division, September 2013: [STAAR English I and II Assessments Revised Blueprints](#)

Instructional Implication information from presentations delivered by Victoria Young, Director of Reading, Writing, and Social Studies Assessments, Texas Education Agency

- [STAAR English I, II, and III Writing: Texas Assessment Conference 2012](#) (PDF posted 12/07/12)
- [STAAR Grades 3-8 and English I, II, and III Reading: 2013 CREST Presentation](#) (PPT posted 04/10/13)