



Office of Assessments, Accountability, and Analytics

LEAP Assessment Guide for English Language Arts, Grades 3-8

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Purpose

This document is designed to help Louisiana educators understand the LEAP English Language Arts (ELA) assessments in grades 3-8.

Introduction

Students in grades 3-8 will take the LEAP ELA assessments, which provide

- questions that have been [reviewed by Louisiana educators](#) to ensure their alignment to the [Louisiana Student Standards for English Language Arts](#) and appropriateness for Louisiana students;
- measurement of the full range of student performance; and
- information for educators and parents about student readiness in ELA and whether students are “on track” for college and careers.

Vision for English Language Arts Standards and Assessment

Louisiana students are ready for college and career success when they meet academic and workplace expectations without needing remediation in English language arts skills and concepts. This vision is grounded in state standards that demand rigorous, evidence-based literacy, ensuring that every student graduates prepared to comprehend and communicate complex information effectively. To support this commitment to college and career readiness, the LEAP English Language Arts (ELA) assessments are designed to reflect a holistic,

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integrated approach to literacy that mirrors high-quality, classroom-based instruction. Rather than assessing reading and writing as isolated skills, the assessment framework measures a student's ability to deeply comprehend, analyze, and synthesize complex texts. The ELA assessment design is driven by the following core pillars:

- **Engagement with Complex, Knowledge-Rich Texts:** Assessments prioritize authentic, grade-level literary and informational texts across a variety of disciplines. Students are required to engage in careful, close reading to unpack the nuances of these texts.
- **Evidence-Based Analysis:** Students demonstrate their comprehension of grade-level texts by responding to standards-aligned reading and vocabulary items. Writing demands the strategic integration of explicit textual evidence to support ideas.
- **Scaffolded Meaning-Making:** Question sequences are structured to build a cohesive understanding. This intentional ordering guides students through a progressive exploration of the text, allowing them to construct a deeper, more comprehensive meaning.
- **Focus on Significant Vocabulary:** Assessment items target words that are essential to text comprehension and central to building disciplinary knowledge. Vocabulary evaluation emphasizes a student’s ability to use context to unlock both literal and figurative meanings.

Assessment Design

LEAP ELA Test Design

The LEAP ELA tests consist of one writing task in Session 1 and several literary and informational passage sets in Sessions 2 and 3. The different tasks that students might take are the Research Simulation Task, the Literary Analysis Task, or the Narrative Writing Task.

Session 1	Focus of Session	Assessable ELA Student Standards	Grade 3 Times	Grades 4-8 Times
1	Research Simulation Task	RI standards; vocabulary standards RI.4, L.4, L.5; writing standards W.1–2, 4, 7–8, 10; conventions standards L.1–2, plus language skills from previous grades	75 minutes	90 minutes
OR				
1	Literary Analysis Task	RL standards; vocabulary standards RL.4, L.4, L.5; writing standards W.1-2, 4; conventions standards L.1-2, plus language skills from previous grades	75 minutes	90 minutes
	Reading Passage Set*	RL or RI standards and vocabulary standards RL.4, RI.4, L.4, and L.5		
OR				
1	Narrative Writing Task	NWT: RL standards; vocabulary standards RL.4, L.4, L.5; writing standards W.3-4; conventions standards L.1-2, plus language skills from previous grades	75 minutes	90 minutes
	Reading Passage Set	RL or RI standards and vocabulary standards RL.4, RI.4, L.4, and L.5		

Sessions 2-3	Focus of Sessions	Assessable ELA Student Standards	Grade 3 Times	Grades 4-8 Times
2	Reading Literary and Informational Texts	RL and RI standards and vocabulary standards RL.4, RI.4, L.4, and L.5	45 minutes	55 minutes
3			45 minutes	45 minutes

NOTE: Some sessions will include field-test questions and will provide information that will be used to help develop future test forms.

*Reading Passage Set paired with the Literary Analysis Task (Grades 6-8 only)
 RL: Reading Literature; L: Language; W: Writing; RI: Reading Informational Text

Item Types

The LEAP ELA assessments include several types of items, as described below. All items are aligned to Louisiana Student Standards.

Item Type	Description	Scoring Information
Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)	This item type consists of two parts (A and B); one part asks students to show their understanding of a text, and the other part asks students to identify evidence to support that understanding or to extend or apply the understanding.	- Worth up to two points (2, 1, or 0) - Full credit (2 points): both parts correct - Partial credit (1 point): Part A is correct; Part B is not correct - No credit (0 points): only Part B is correct or neither part is correct
Multiple Select (MS)	- This item type asks students to choose more than one correct answer and only appears as part of an EBSR item. - Whenever this item type is used, the question always identifies in boldface the number of correct answers required.	EBSR rules apply: no credit if part A is incorrect. (No partial credit is given for the MS portion of an EBSR item.)
Technology Enhanced (TE)	- This item type uses technology to capture student comprehension of texts and may have one part or be part of an EBSR item. - For a summary of the different kinds of TE items and where to find examples of each type, refer to LEAP Technology-Enhanced Item Types.	- Worth 2 points (2, 1, or 0) - Full credit (2 points): all correct responses — whether one or two parts — and ordered correctly, if required, OR if item includes six or more responses, full credit when student chooses all or nearly all correct responses (number of correct responses minus 1) - Partial credit (1 point): depends on item type and the number of choices needed - No credit (0 points): does not meet partial credit rules, or for a two-part TE item, only part B is correct
Prose Constructed Response	This item type appears at the end of session 1 and asks students to create an extended and complete written	There are two rubrics used to score the student responses to the PCRs — one for the Research Simulation Task and

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Item Type	Description	Scoring Information
(PCR)	response that elicits evidence that students have understood a text or texts they have read and can communicate that understanding well. - There are three different writing tasks that students might take: Research Simulation Task (RST): allows students to show their understanding of informational texts. Literary Analysis Task (LAT): allows students to show their understanding of literary texts. Narrative Writing Task (NWT): allows students to create a narrative related to a literary text.	the Literary Analysis Task and one for the Narrative Writing Task. - A holistic score is determined, based on which score point best describes that response. - Grade 3 Scoring Rubrics: LAT/RST and NWT - Grades 4-5 Scoring Rubrics: LAT/RST and NWT - Grades 6-8 Scoring Rubrics: LAT/RST and NWT

SR: Selected-Response — includes two-part items (EBSR), multiple-select items, and technology-enhanced items (on computer-based test only)

Reporting Categories

Student performance on the LEAP ELA assessments will be reported by category as outlined in the following table.

Category	Category /Subcategory Descriptions
Reading Performance	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 nonfiction, including texts about history, science, and the arts.
	Reading Vocabulary: Students use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases in grade-level texts.
Writing Performance	Students use details from provided texts to compose well-developed, organized, clear writing and incorporate the rules of Standard English (grammar, mechanics, and usage).

Achievement-Level Definitions

Achievement-level definitions briefly describe the expectations for student performance at each of Louisiana’s five achievement levels:

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- **Advanced:** Students performing at this level have **exceeded** college and career readiness expectations and are well prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Mastery:** Students performing at this level have **met** college and career readiness expectations and are prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Basic:** Students performing at this level have **nearly met** college and career readiness expectations and may need additional support to be fully prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Approaching Basic:** Students performing at this level have **partially met** college and career readiness expectations and will need much support to be prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Unsatisfactory:** Students performing at this level have **not yet met** the college and career readiness expectations and will need extensive support to be prepared for the next level of study in this content area.

Achievement Level Descriptors

Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) indicate what typical students at each level should be able to demonstrate based on their command of grade-level standards. The [ELA ALDs](#) are written for the two assessment categories of Reading and Writing.

Test Administration

Administration Schedule for Computer-Based Testing

The **computer-based testing window opens April 1, 2027, and runs through May 12, 2027**. The school or district test coordinator will communicate each school's testing schedule. For updates to the testing schedule, refer to the [2026-2027 Louisiana Assessment Calendar](#). All LEAP assessments are **timed**. No additional time is permitted, except for students who have a documented extended time accommodation (e.g., an IEP).

Scheduling Requirements for Computer-Based Testing

Computer-based testing allows school systems some flexibility in scheduling. However, to reduce incidences of testing irregularities, school systems must adhere to the following scheduling and administration practices:

- Testing students in the same grade level across the school at or very close to the same time
- Completing makeup testing for students immediately upon their return
- Limiting student interaction during breaks between test sessions
- Isolating students who have not completed testing for the day (e.g., students with extended time accommodation)
- Preventing interaction between groups of students taking the same assessments at different times within a testing day
- Requiring the completion of a session once it is opened (i.e., limiting the reopening of test sessions)
- Taking the sessions within a content area in the correct order (e.g., ELA Session 1 taken before ELA Session 2)

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We also recommend the following:

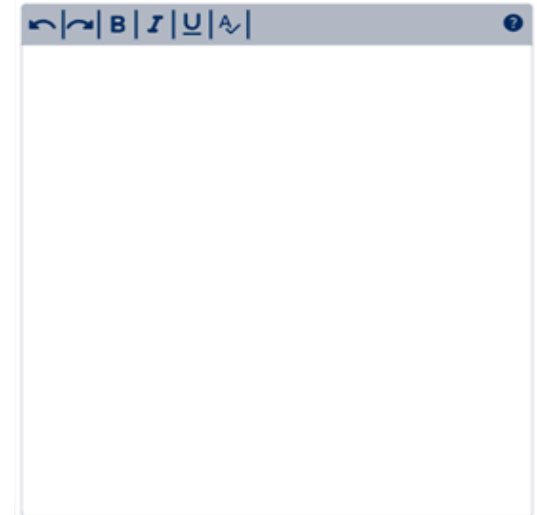
- Limiting sessions to no more than three in one day for a student

Testing Platform

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.

When responding to a PCR, students will type their essays into a response box, like the one shown on the right. The toolbar at the top of the response box allows students to undo or redo an action; add boldface, italics, or underlining to their response; and check the spelling of words in their response. The character count is not included on the response box so students focus on the quality of their written response rather than the amount of writing.

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. A help tool is also featured to assist students as they use the online system.



- Pointer



- Cross-off



- Highlighter



- Notepad



- Magnifier



- Line guide



- Masking



- Help



All students taking the computer-based tests should work through the [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#), available in INSIGHT, to practice using the online tools so they are well prepared to navigate the online testing system.

Administration Schedule for Paper-Based Testing

The paper-based testing (PBT) window is **April 7, 2027, through April 13, 2027**. The table below shows the PBT schedule for grade 3.

PBT Testing Window: April 7, 2027 — April 13, 2027		Session Times
Wednesday, April 7, 2027	English Language Arts Session 1	75 minutes
	Mathematics, Session 1	65 minutes
Thursday, April 8, 2027	English Language Arts Session 2	45 minutes
	Mathematics, Session 2	65 minutes
Friday, April 9, 2027	English Language Arts Session 3	45 minutes
	Mathematics, Session 3	65 minutes
Monday, April 12, 2027	Science, Session 1	70 minutes
	Science, Session 2	70 minutes
Tuesday, April 13, 2027	Social Studies, Session 1	80 minutes
	Social Studies, Session 2	80 minutes

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. Instructions for how to manage the test booklets will be outlined in the Test Administration Manual.

Students will fill in the circle next to the correct answer(s) for the selected-response questions, which include evidence-based selected-response and multiple-select questions. When students are answering the prose constructed-response question in session 1, which requires a written response, they should make sure to write their response in the space provided. Any information written outside the space or which has been scratched out in the test booklet will not be scored. The following information presents guidelines for marking/writing in the LEAP English language arts consumable 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 to respond to the writing task.
- 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.

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

Sample Test Items

This section includes samples of each item type: Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR), Technology Enhanced (TE), Multiple Select (MS), and Prose Constructed Response (PCR). The sample items, and the passages associated with them, are also included in the [Online Tools Training](#), available in INSIGHT.

The LEAP ELA practice tests allow teachers to better understand the expectations of the LEAP ELA tests.

- The practice test for grade 3 is available as a PDF in the LDOE [Assessment Guidance Webpage](#) and in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal \(eDIRECT\)](#).
- The practice tests for grades 4–8 are available as PDFs in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal \(eDIRECT\)](#) and online through the [teacher access link](#).
- Information about how to incorporate the practice test content into instruction can be found in the [ELA Practice Test Guidance](#).

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Item (Grade 3)

More Text Above

Today you will read two stories titled “Johnny Chuck Finds the Best Thing in the World” and “Me First.” As you read, think about the actions of the characters and the events of the stories. Answer the questions to help you write an essay.

Read the story titled “Johnny Chuck Finds the Best Thing in the World.” Then answer the question.

Johnny Chuck Finds the Best Thing in the World

by Thornton W. Burgess

- 1 Old Mother West Wind had stopped to talk with the Slender Fir Tree.
 - 2 “I’ve just come across the Green Meadows,” said Old Mother West Wind, “and there I saw the Best Thing in the World.”
 - 3 Striped Chipmunk was sitting under the Slender Fir Tree and he couldn’t help hearing what Old Mother West Wind said. “The Best Thing in the World—now what can that be?” thought Striped Chipmunk. “Why, it must be heaps and heaps of nuts and acorns! I’ll go and find it.”
 - 4 So Striped Chipmunk started down the Lone Little Path through the wood as fast as he could run. Pretty soon he met Peter Rabbit.
 - 5 “Where are you going in such a hurry, Striped Chipmunk?” asked Peter Rabbit.
 - 6 “Down in the Green Meadows to find the Best Thing in the World,” replied Striped Chipmunk, and ran faster.
 - 7 “The Best Thing in the World,” said Peter Rabbit, “why, that must be a great pile of carrots and cabbage! I think I’ll go and find it.”
- More Text Below

Part A

What does **cross** mean as it is used in paragraph 28 of “Johnny Chuck Finds the Best Thing in the World”?

- (a) excited
- (b) lost
- (c) upset
- (d) scared

Part B

Which statement **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (a) “. . . ran this way and ran that way . . .”
- (b) “. . . hadn’t found the Best Thing in the World.”
- (c) “. . . they started up the Lone Little Path . . .”
- (d) “They didn’t hurry now . . .”

Technology-Enhanced Item (Grade 6)

Read the article "Father of All Forecasters." Then answer the questions.

Father of All Forecasters

by Charlene Brusso

- 1 Did you know that the National Weather Service gathers data from across the country to help create local weather reports every day? In fact, its on-line national map (www.weather.gov/view/largemap.php) refreshes itself every five minutes to offer updated watches, warnings, and advisories. Cleveland Abbe would be so proud!
- 2 Abbe was born in New York City on December 3, 1838. In the summers, he worked on his grandfather's farm outside Windham, Connecticut. Fascinated by nature, he learned how important the weather could be on the farm. Heavy rains might delay planting or drown plants before they could be harvested. Storms could knock crops flat.
- 3 After studying science and mathematics, Abbe became a teacher. While teaching at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, he also studied astronomy. In 1868, he was hired as director of Ohio's Cincinnati Observatory. Abbe knew that atmospheric conditions such as clouds, haze, fog, and rain could affect astronomical observations. He became fascinated with the idea of studying weather in other places to predict what the local weather would be like.

4 But how would he get the data he needed? Abbe proposed setting up a

Select the options from the drop-down menus that **best** complete the sentences.

Abbe's studies led him to enter the field of

, which is the study of

mathematics
astronomy
meteorology

, such as clouds, rain,

research allowed him to create forecasts

based on his and provide

to areas that were going to have bad weather.

Multiple-Select Item (Grade 5)

Today you will read a passage from “The Growin’ of Paul Bunyan.” As you read, pay close attention to the characters’ thoughts. This will help you answer questions and prepare you to write a narrative story.

Read the passage from the story “The Growin’ of Paul Bunyan.” Then answer the questions.

from “The Growin’ of Paul Bunyan”

by William J. Brooke

- 1 *Paul Bunyan finds Johnny Appleseed after Paul chops down all the trees Johnny has planted for six days.*
- 2 Starin’ out at the orange sun, Johnny asks, “Are they all gone?” Paul looks back over his shoulder an’ allows as how they are. Paul waits for Johnny to say somethin’ else, but he just keeps starin’, so Paul says, “It took you six days to plant ‘em an’ it took me only three days to chop ‘em down. Pretty good, huh?”
- 3 Johnny looks up an’ smiles sadly. “It’s always easier to chop somethin’ down than to make it grow.” Then he goes back to starin’.
- 4 Now that rankles Paul. When he beats somebody fair an’ square, he expects that someone to admit it like a man. “What’s so hard about growin’ a tree anyway?” he grumps. “You just stick it in the ground an’ the seed does all the work.”
- 5 Johnny reaches way down in the bottom o’ his bag an’ holds out a seed. “It’s the last one,” he says. “All the rest o’ my dreams is so much kindlin’ wood, so why don’t you take this an’ see if it’s so easy to make it grow.”

More Text Below

Part B

Choose **two** details, one for Johnny and one for Paul, that support the answer to part A.

- (a) “It took you six days to plant ‘em an’ it took me only three days to chop ‘em down.”
- (b) “It’s always easier to chop somethin’ down than to make it grow.”
- (c) “Johnny reaches way down in the bottom o’ his bag an’ holds out a seed.”
- (d) “So he takes the little bitty seed an’ pushes it down in the ground with the tip o’ one fingernail.”
- (e) “He pats the soil around it real nice, like he seen Johnny do.”
- (f) “‘Don’t matter,’ says Johnny’s voice, ‘if the rabbits get the seed.’”

Prose Constructed-Response Item (Grade 8)

Today you will analyze a passage from *Oliver Twist* and a passage from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. As you read these texts, you will gather information and answer questions about the effect of dialogue or events so you can write an essay.

Refer to the passages from *Oliver Twist* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Then answer the question.

from *Oliver Twist*

by Charles Dickens

- 1 The room in which the boys were fed, was a large stone hall, with a copper at one end: out of which the master, dressed in an apron for the purpose, and assisted by one or two women, ladled the gruel at meal-times. Of this festive composition each boy had one porringer, and no more—except on occasions of great public rejoicing, when he had two ounces and a quarter of bread besides. The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again; and when they had performed this operation (which never took very long, the spoons being nearly as large as the bowls), they would sit staring at the copper, with such eager eyes, as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed, employing themselves, meanwhile, in sucking their fingers most assiduously, with the view of catching up any stray splashes of gruel that might have been cast thereon. Boys have generally excellent appetites. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months: at last they got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy, who was tall for his age, and hadn't been used to that sort of thing (for his father had kept a small cookshop), hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of gruel per diem, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next to him, who happened to be a weakly youth of

More

Both Charles Dickens and James Joyce incorporate dialogue into their passages.

Use evidence you have gathered from **both** passages to write an essay analyzing how the dialogue in **each** passage functions to reveal aspects of the characters. You should discuss **more than one** character from **each** passage.

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Resources

ELA Resources

- [Louisiana Student Standards in ELA](#): provides comprehensive information about interpreting and implementing the standards
- [K-12 ELA Planning Resources](#): provides guidance for planning and implementing quality ELA instruction, including a variety of instructional strategies
- [English Learner Resources Webpage](#): contains a collection of resources for supporting ELs

Assessment Guidance Webpage

- [Assessment Development Educator Review Committees](#): describes the item development process and the associated committees; includes information on applying for participation
- [Achievement Level Descriptors](#): describes the typical performance that could be expected at each achievement level

Practice Test

- [LEAP ELA Practice Test Guidance](#): provides guidance on how teachers might better use the ELA practice tests to support their instructional goals
- [Practice Test Quick Start Guide](#): provides information regarding administration/scoring of the online practice tests
- [LEAP Practice Test Answer Keys](#): helps prepare students for the spring assessments and provides scoring information for teachers
- **INSIGHT™** [Online Tools Training](#): helps students become familiar with the online testing platform

LEAP 360

- [Diagnostic](#) and [Interim](#) Quick Start Guides: provide information about administration and scoring of the diagnostic and interim tests
- [Diagnostic](#) and [Interim](#) guidance documents: explain how to incorporate the interim and diagnostic content into instruction

Assessment Resources Webpage

- [2026-2027 Louisiana Assessment Calendar](#): includes information on testing windows for test administrations
- [LEAP Technology-Enhanced Item Types](#): provides a summary of the different kinds of technology-enhanced items students may encounter in any CBT across courses and grade levels
- [LEAP Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#): provides information about accessibility features and accommodations

Contact Us

- assessment@la.gov for assessment questions
- classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov for curriculum and instruction questions
- ldoecommunications@la.gov to subscribe to newsletters; include the newsletter(s) you want to subscribe to in your email

Newsletters: offers archived copies of newsletters including the LDOE Weekly School System Newsletter and the Teacher Leader Newsletter