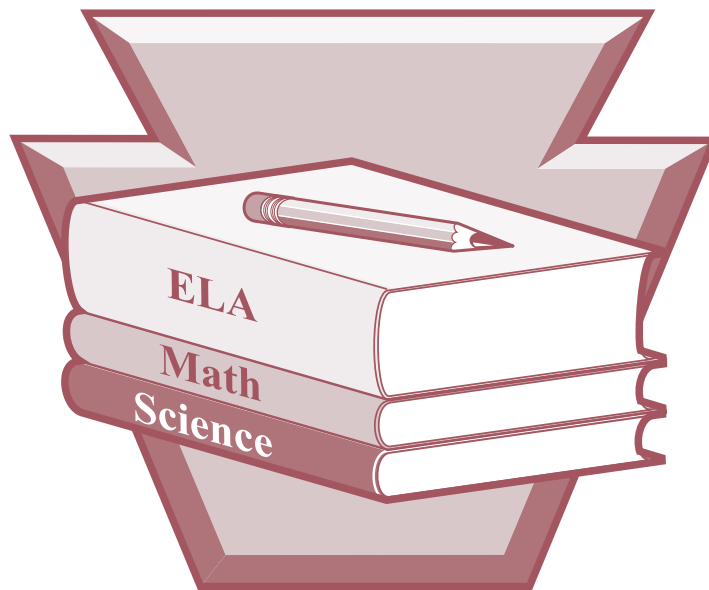




Pennsylvania
Department of Education



GRADES 4–8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT
DIRECTIONS FOR PAPER AND PENCIL
ADMINISTRATION

SPRING 2025

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This manual is to be used for the paper and pencil administration of the **Spring 2025 PSSA English Language Arts Assessment**. This manual provides the Test Administrator (TA) with directions that will ensure a standard assessment environment in schools throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The administration of this exam may differ from other assessments the TA has given; therefore, **TAs are to become thoroughly familiar with this manual and the procedures for administering the English Language Arts Assessment before the testing window, April 21 through 25, 2025.**

New this Year:

Each student taking the online PSSA will receive **a unique test ticket for each section** for each assessment as it is being administered.

New this Year:

The Grade 3 ELA PSSA has its own DFA. It is no longer with the Grade 3 Mathematics PSSA. The Grade 3 Mathematics PSSA is now included with Grades 4–8 to become the Grades 3–8 Mathematics PSSA DFA.

Many of the test questions can be answered by contacting PA Customer Service. If you have other questions or concerns refer to the table below.

A. Contact Information Concerning Questions

Topic or Subject	Contact Person / Telephone	Email Address
DRC PA Customer Service	800-451-7849	PACustomerService@DataRecognitionCorp.com
Test Security/Irregularities		ra-edirregularities@pa.gov
General PSSA and Keystone Exam Testing Questions	Division of Assessment and Accountability	ra-ed-pssa-keystone@pa.gov
Opting Out of Testing	Brian Truesdale – 717-214-5433	btruesdale@pa.gov
Testing Irregularities	Jay Gift – 717-783-1144	rgift@pa.gov
Testing Accommodations (IEP and 504, Regular Education, EL)	Dr. Beth Gannon – 717-346-9399	ra-eduniqueaccom@pa.gov
ELA, Keystone Exam Literature, EL Accommodations	Dr. Beth Gannon – 717-346-9399	egannonrit@pa.gov
Math, Keystone Exam Algebra I	Dr. Megan Clementi – 717-783-6543	mclementi@pa.gov
Science, Keystone Exam Biology, Notify Changes in Testing Dates and/or Times, Testing Window Exceptions, and Cell Phone Issues not Related to Test Security	Craig Weller – 717-525-5825	crweller@pa.gov

If a test security violation is suspected, contact the SAC immediately. If you believe the SAC may have involvement in the violation, immediately contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) directly at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov. The email should include a detailed subject line. Please ensure that you only utilize the email account provided here for security violations. Please do not send a question to multiple email accounts. This causes a delay in response.

B. Maintain Exam Security

The PSSAs are a measure of individual student achievement conducted by the PDE. Any deviation from the exam procedures outlined in this manual (including, but not limited to, group work, teacher coaching, teaching or releasing of the performance tasks or exam questions, using old, non-released Pennsylvania assessment items as preparation tools, etc.) is strictly prohibited and is considered a violation of exam security. (This prohibition does not include the use of the PSSA Item and Scoring Samplers available on PDE's website.) Those individuals who divulge exam questions, falsify student scores, or compromise the integrity of the state assessment system in any manner will be subject to professional disciplinary action under the Professional Educator Discipline Act, 24 P.S. § 2070.1a et seq, including a private reprimand, a public reprimand, a suspension of their teaching certificate(s), a revocation of their teaching certificate(s), and/or a suspension or prohibition from being employed by a charter school. In this regard, an educator is any individual who holds public or private academic school certification and all charter and cyber charter school staff members and contracted educational providers who would be required to hold certification if they served in a traditional public school.

In order to ensure the validity and security of the PSSA, all TAs and Proctors should read and understand the *Handbook for Secure Test Administration* (Appendix A) of this manual.

Students may not discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the assessment content to others. This includes talking with others about questions on the test during or after the test. Students will be subject to discipline based on the LEA's policy and procedures. Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.

1. Test Security

- a. TAs must complete the online Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training (PSTAT), found at www.pstattraining.net, once every school year for which they are a TA or Proctor. The PSTAT must be completed by TAs/Proctors prior to working on any PSSA tasks.
- b. District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), School Assessment Coordinators (SACs), TAs, Principals, and all other individuals who are involved in this assessment program must maintain the security of all exam materials. Together, they share the responsibility for ensuring that all exam materials and student responses are handled securely, confidentially, and in accordance with security mandates and other general procedures. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Except where allowed by a specific written accommodation, only students being tested are allowed to view the content of the exam materials.
 - ii. No secure materials from the assessment may be copied, photographed, or recorded in any manner.
 - iii. Student responses must not be reviewed for accuracy or completeness by anyone other than the student.
 - iv. Students may not review responses at any time other than during the administration of a test.
- c. It is required that TAs, Proctors, and any other individual who handles secure assessment materials must read, sign, and date a *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)*. The *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* must be signed **after** the assessments have been administered.

2. Reporting Irregularities

If a test security violation is suspected, contact the SAC immediately. If you believe the SAC may have involvement in the violation, immediately contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) directly at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov. The email should include a detailed subject line. Please ensure that you only utilize the email account provided here for security violations. Please do not send a question to multiple email accounts. This causes a delay in response.

3. Avoiding Inappropriate Test-Taking Strategies

Every answer booklet will be processed by scanners that detect pencil marks. As such, it is not appropriate to have students taking a paper assessment eliminate answers by striking through an answer bubble or by bubbling multiple answers and later erasing. Students who mark their answers in the test booklet initially must remember to mark their final response in the answer booklet. Students must not discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the assessment content to others.

4. Storing Secure Materials

All answer booklets and test booklets (and test tickets for online assessments) are considered secure materials and must be kept in a preselected, locked, secure storage area at both the district and school levels. Secure materials must never be left unattended or in open areas. TAs must not be given access to secure test materials before the administration day. TAs should only be given access to secure test materials immediately preceding test administration. **It is mandatory that school districts utilize a sign-out/sign-in sheet for distribution and collection of secure test materials.** It is recommended that TAs count the number of test booklets and answer booklets received and returned in the presence of the SAC or the SAC's designee.

- a. The *Directions for Paper and Pencil Administration* manuals are not considered secure test materials and should be provided to TAs prior to the assessment for review.
- b. Each student taking the ELA PSSA will receive **one test booklet and one answer booklet per subject.**
- c. Scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written is considered secure and must be collected at the end of each testing session to be destroyed by the SAC or the SAC's designee.

All secure testing materials must be inventoried, counted, and returned immediately to the SAC or the SAC's designee after testing is completed. Individual restroom breaks during testing are permitted but require monitoring. Materials must be kept secure after each testing session and prior to shipping to DRC.

A. Summary of the Test Administrators' Responsibilities

1. Complete the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training (PSTAT) online module, prior to working as a TA/Proctor, one time per school year (this satisfies both the PSSA and Keystone Exam requirement for the school year).
2. Become familiar with the exam administration procedures provided in this manual, the *Directions for Paper and Pencil Administration*.
3. Receive student assessment materials from the SAC or the SAC's designee immediately prior to the testing session on the day during which you are scheduled to be a TA (or Proctor) for the PSSA Grades 4–8 English Language Arts Assessments.
4. Alert the SAC if any student information on the student label or bubbled in is incorrect and needs to be changed.
5. Look at the back cover of each answer booklet and ensure that your initials are correctly bubbled in the Test Administrator Initials fields. Some schools may have TAs bubble in the Test Administrator initials, and other schools may have bubbled in the Test Administrator initials. If your initials are incorrect or missing, alert your SAC.
6. Distribute test booklets and answer booklets to students at the time of the assessment, making certain that form numbers match.
7. Read the directions for administration to students at the start and end of each PSSA assessment for which you are a TA.
8. Actively monitor the assessment environment during the scheduled testing time. Actively monitoring is monitoring the administration of the exam and nothing else.
9. Collect, account for (including counting the number received and returned), and return all student assessment materials to the SAC or the SAC's designee at the end of each assessment session.
10. Return the reference sheet, all scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written to the SAC or the SAC's designee at the end of each assessment session to be destroyed.
11. Review, understand, sign, date, and return the *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* to the SAC at the end of the final PSSA administration for which you are a TA or Proctor.

B. Follow the Exam Schedule Set by the School Assessment Coordinator

The Spring 2025 English Language Arts Assessment must be administered within the PDE-designated testing window on the dates assigned by the SAC. The assessment consists of **three sections. Each section must be administered without a group break during the section administration. The sections must be administered in the sequence in which they are printed** in the booklet. It is possible to combine multiple sections as a single testing session, with a limit of two sections in one day. The SAC must discuss the schedule with TAs at least one week prior to the assessment dates. Please note that some sections may require more time than others. See "General Organization of the Assessment" on page 9 of this document for more information on administration and testing times.

C. Considerations for Test Administration

The procedures listed below must be followed prior to administering the Spring 2025 English Language Arts Assessment. This assessment includes procedures that students may not have encountered before.

1. The SAC will receive a *PSSA Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* that provides additional, detailed information about the assessment. This document is also posted on these portals:
 - a. <https://pa.drceirect.com> [Click on the applications drop-down and select 'General Information.' Then select 'Documents.']
 - b. <pa.gov/agencies/education.html> [Under 'Data and Reporting,' select 'Assessment Reporting.' Select 'Learn more about the PSSA.' Select 'Administration Materials.']
2. The entire Grades 4–8 English Language Arts *Directions for Paper and Pencil Administration* manual must be read in advance in order to become familiar with the procedures for administering the assessment. Prior to the assessment administration, the TA must do the following:
 - a. Become familiar with the assessment schedule and the procedures for allowing extended testing time.
 - b. Follow the directions of the SAC for maintaining test security.
 - c. Plan sufficient time for distribution and collection of materials.
 - d. Assign seats to students based upon the Form Number of the test. Complete and return the seating chart to the SAC.
 - e. Post a “**Testing—Do Not Disturb**” sign on the door(s) to the classroom to indicate that an assessment session is taking place.
3. Student Precode Labels are supplied for most students; however, if any student does not have a Student Precode Label, a District/School Label must be used.
4. Prior to the assessment, ensure that all answer booklets have a barcode label affixed. For those booklets that have a District/School Label, rather than a Student Precode Label, ensure that the SAC or the SAC's designee has bubbled in all appropriate information on pages 1 and 2 (see “Reviewing Barcode [District/School or Student Precode] Labels” on page 14 of this document).
5. Prior to the assessment, be aware of test accommodations that are outlined in the current PSSA and *Keystone Accommodations Guidelines* and in the current *Accommodations Guidelines for English Learners (ELs)* (e.g., “Test Administrator transcribed student responses,” “Extended time”). These documents are posted on these portals:
 - a. <https://pa.drceirect.com> [Click on the applications drop-down and select 'General Information.' Then select 'Documents.']
 - b. <pa.gov/agencies/education.html> [Under 'Data and Reporting,' select 'Assessment Reporting.' Select 'Learn more about the PSSA.' Select 'Accommodations.']

Prior to the test administration, the TA/Proctor will need to consult with the teacher or case manager to determine which students have test accommodations. Not all accommodations that are provided on a day-to-day basis in the classroom are approved for use with the PSSA; however, all accommodations in IEPs or 504 Plans must be considered when planning for the administration of the PSSA.

6. A form number is on the front cover of each answer booklet and each test booklet. For the Spring 2025 English Language Arts Assessment, there are nine (9) forms labeled 01 through 09. Students must use an answer booklet and a test booklet with the same form-number designation.
7. TAs will review, understand, sign, date, and return the *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* (Appendix B) to the SAC at the end of the final PSSA administration for which you are a TA or Proctor. Contact your SAC if you need more information.

8. If a test security violation is suspected, contact the SAC immediately. If you believe the SAC may have involvement in the violation, immediately contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) directly at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov. The email should include a detailed subject line. Please ensure that you only utilize the email account provided here for security violations. Please do not send a question to multiple email accounts. This causes a delay in response.

D. Prepare the Students for the Assessment

1. Inform students in advance of the schedule for the assessment sessions as communicated by the SAC or the SAC's designee.
2. Students are not permitted to have cell phones, cameras, smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds, or any other unapproved electronic devices in their possession during the administration of the assessment. Students **must** be informed of this policy in advance and should be encouraged to leave such items at home on administration days. **The TA must collect all such devices prior to distributing assessment materials. A Unique Accommodation Assurance must be completed for students who need to retain their devices for medical monitoring. See the Accommodations Guidelines for more information and procedures.**
3. PDE encourages districts and schools to inform students before testing begins of the locally determined ramifications/sanctions for student misconduct during the PSSA assessments. This includes, but is not limited to, discipline associated with possession of unapproved electronic devices, cheating, sharing, and/or reproduction of test content.
4. Discuss the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* (Appendix C). It is essential that students understand the importance of each point in the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* before testing begins. Prior to the administration, students must fill in the appropriate bubble indicating that they understand the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* that their TA (or other school personnel) has reviewed with them. TAs should answer any questions that students have to ensure that all students understand this code of conduct. Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.
5. Students may **not** use a dictionary or a thesaurus for any part of this assessment.
6. Students must use a No. 2 pencil; an ink pen may **not** be used.
7. Students may highlight, underline, and make notes or comments in the test booklet or on scratch paper, but they must write their answers in the answer booklet. All scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written must be collected and returned to the SAC to be destroyed. **Students must not use highlighters on the answer bubbles.**
8. Students can cross out incorrect answers, but students should not make any extraneous marks on or near the answer bubbles (e.g., crossing out answer bubbles believed to be incorrect or marking multiple answer bubbles thought to be correct). Students should completely erase any extraneous marks in the answer booklet on the answer bubbles.
9. The English Language Arts Assessment includes questions that require students to select from four possible answers (multiple-choice questions). The assessment also includes questions that have two parts and require students to select one or more answers in each part (evidence-based selected-response questions). These multiple-choice and evidence-based selected-response questions and answer choices are found in the test booklet. Students will read each question and record their answer or answers in the spaces provided **in their answer booklets only. Responses written or marked in the test booklet or on scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written will not be scored.**

- 10.** The English Language Arts Assessment also includes questions that require students to write a response (text-dependent analysis questions). These questions appear in the answer booklet only. Students will read each question and will write their responses in the spaces provided **in the answer booklet only**. **Responses written in the test booklet or on scratch paper and any other paper will not be scored.**

Students are permitted to	Students are NOT permitted to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use scratch paper. (Students may use it to create their own graphic organizers, etc., during the assessment.) • highlight, underline, and make notes or comments in the test booklet. (Students must not use highlighters to mark the answer bubbles.) They may cross out the text/numbers next to the answer bubbles. • use a clean copy of the grade-specific reference sheet. The reference sheet has the Writer’s Checklist on one side and the Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guidelines on the other side. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use preprinted graphic organizers. • possess or use unapproved electronic devices, including cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds, cameras, any type of computer, or any mobile device with a camera and/or Internet access (e.g., tablets, MP3 players, gaming systems, entertainment devices) at any time during the assessment. • possess or use dictionaries, thesauri, and/or spell- or grammar-checkers at any time during the assessment.

E. Prepare the Classroom for the Assessment

Good organization of assessment materials and well-executed procedures will help the administration of the assessment proceed smoothly.

Appropriate test conditions optimize the chance for better student performance. The assessment should be given in a regular classroom setting, if possible. Other settings may be used according to needs and available facilities. However, test situations created to dishonestly inflate assessment scores are a violation of test security.

Remove or cover with opaque material all classroom instructional materials or any other materials that may affect the validity of the 2025 English Language Arts Assessment. Classroom libraries do not need to be covered.

DO NOT DISPLAY:

1. writing terms and/or definitions
2. vocabulary words and/or definitions
3. examples of assessment questions or answers
4. tips on how to write and/or review essays

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. These are general examples of what is not permitted. Any materials that may contain content that could be tested must be removed or covered.

The *PSSA Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guidelines* may be displayed in the classroom. Additionally, each student may have a copy of the guidelines, but it must be a clean copy. The guidelines are also posted on these portals:

- a. <https://pa.drceidirect.com> [Click on the applications drop-down and select ‘General Information.’ Then select ‘Documents.’]
- b. pa.gov/agencies/education.html [Under ‘Data and Reporting,’ select ‘Assessment Reporting.’ Select ‘Learn more about the PSSA.’ Select ‘English Language Arts (ELA).’]

Student seating must be arranged to prevent student interaction during the assessment sessions. A quiet, calm atmosphere is conducive to concentration on the assessment. Disturbances must be kept to a minimum during the assessment sessions. Posting a “**Testing—Do Not Disturb**” sign on the door(s) to the classroom indicates that an assessment is in session. Students should not be permitted to sharpen pencils during the assessment sessions.

Each student should have at least two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers and some scratch paper. Extra sharpened pencils must be available for students.

F. Required Assessment Materials

The SAC will provide the TA with the appropriate assessment materials on each administration day. After each administration, assessment materials, including scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written, must be returned immediately to the SAC. Every answer booklet has a unique security number and barcode printed on the back cover. These security numbers should be used to track the distribution and collection of secure assessment materials. All secure assessment materials assigned to a school must be accounted for and returned to DRC by the DAC or SAC. The *Directions for Paper and Pencil Administration* manual is not considered secure and does not have to be returned unless required by the SAC or DAC.

G. Organize the Assessment Materials

For the Test Administrator:

1. One Spring 2025 Grades 4–8 English Language Arts *Directions for Paper and Pencil Administration* manual
2. “Testing—Do Not Disturb” sign(s) to hang on the classroom door(s)
3. One student test booklet to use for demonstration purposes
4. One student answer booklet to use for demonstration purposes
5. One copy of the English Language Arts Grades 4–8 reference sheet (the reference sheet includes the Writer’s Checklist and Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guidelines) to use for demonstration purposes

For each student taking the assessment:

1. One test booklet (There are nine (9) different forms labeled from 01 through 09. Students must use a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form-number designation.)
2. One answer booklet with a Student Precode Label or a District/School Label
3. One copy of the English Language Arts Grades 4–8 reference sheet
4. Two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers
5. Scratch paper for each section

H. Damaged Answer Booklets

If a student receives an answer booklet with damaged or missing pages, replace it with an answer booklet **of the same form number** and allow the student to continue working. If the student has already begun one or more sections of the assessment, the student should start working in the new answer booklet at the point where they left off in the damaged booklet and use the new answer booklet for the remainder of the assessment. After the assessment has been completed, the SAC or the SAC’s designee must transcribe verbatim all of the student’s previous responses into the undamaged answer booklet. It is recommended that the transcription take place in the presence of a professional staff member who will sign the appropriate *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* form. The student may not transcribe answers. On the new answer booklet, the SAC or the SAC’s designee must affix a District/School Label, write the student’s name (as found in PIMS) on the front cover, and fill in the corresponding bubbles. Applicable portions of page 2 of the answer booklet should also be completed by the SAC or the SAC’s designee. **Do not insert pages from one answer booklet into another.** Multiple documents for one student and loose pages **will not be scored**.

The TA should give the damaged answer booklet to the SAC. The SAC will apply a “**Do Not Score**” label over the existing label on the front cover of the damaged booklet and return it to DRC.

I. Test Management Concerns

Some circumstances during testing require that the TA consult the SAC or PDE or contact the DAC. These instances include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Student cheating
2. Test security violation
3. Improper test administration
4. Student illness during testing

Issues requiring additional directions and any circumstances not outlined in this manual may need to be resolved with the SAC and/or DAC and/or PDE. Any test security violation should be reported to the SAC.

If a test security violation is suspected, contact the SAC immediately. If you believe the SAC may have involvement in the violation, immediately contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) directly at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov. The email should include a detailed subject line. Please ensure that you only utilize the email account provided here for security violations. Please do not send a question to multiple email accounts. This causes a delay in response.

J. General Organization of the Assessment

The Grades 4–8 English Language Arts Assessments each consist of **three sections. Each individual section must be completed without a group break during the section administration.** It is recommended that each section be scheduled as a separate assessment session; however, it is permissible to combine multiple sections as a single assessment administration session, with a limit of two sections in one day. **The sections must be administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the booklets.** The SAC must discuss the schedule with the TA at least one week prior to the administration dates. Adequate time should be scheduled for the preparation of the classroom. The following administration times are estimates and are supplied for scheduling purposes only:

Grade/Section	Selected-Response Questions*	Constructed-Response Questions	Administrative Tasks Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)	Actual Testing Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)	Total Administration Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)
Grade 4 Section 1	29	0	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 4 Section 2	10	1	15–20	65–75	80–95
Grade 4 Section 3	12	1	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 5 Section 1	28	0	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 5 Section 2	10	1	15–20	65–75	80–95
Grade 5 Section 3	13	1	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 6 Section 1	29	0	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 6 Section 2	10	1	15–20	65–75	80–95
Grade 6 Section 3	12	1	15–20	70–80	85–100

Grade/Section	Selected-Response Questions*	Constructed-Response Questions	Administrative Tasks Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)	Actual Testing Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)	Total Administration Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)
Grade 7 Section 1	28	0	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 7 Section 2	10	1	15–20	65–75	80–95
Grade 7 Section 3	13	1	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 8 Section 1	28	0	15–20	70–80	85–100
Grade 8 Section 2	10	1	15–20	65–75	80–95
Grade 8 Section 3	13	1	15–20	70–80	85–100

* Selected-response questions include multiple-choice questions and evidence-based selected-response questions. Constructed-response questions include text-dependent analysis questions.

K. Code of Conduct for Test Takers

The *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* (Appendix C) provides requirements that students must follow before, during, and after each assessment. **It is important that the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* be reviewed with all students and that all questions are answered such that all students understand each point in this code of conduct before the testing day.** Prior to starting the assessment, students will be required to darken a bubble in their answer booklet to indicate that they understand the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* that was reviewed with them by their TA (or other school employee). TAs must be prepared to answer any questions about the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* so that all students can acknowledge their understanding of the requirements. Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.

L. Display Assessment Information

During each assessment section, students are to respond to a specific set of test questions. The following test-section information must be displayed on a chalkboard, dry-erase board, or other easily visible medium during each assessment session. Only information about the current assessment session should be displayed.

Grade	Section 1 – ELA	Section 2 – ELA	Section 3– ELA
4	Test Booklet–Begin on page 4 Answer Booklet–Pages 5–7 Questions 1–29	Test Booklet–Begin on page 38 Answer Booklet–Pages 9–13 Questions 30–40	Test Booklet–Begin on page 52 Answer Booklet–Pages 15–19 Questions 41–53
5	Test Booklet–Begin on page 4 Answer Booklet–Pages 5–7 Questions 1–28	Test Booklet–Begin on page 36 Answer Booklet–Pages 9–13 Questions 29–39	Test Booklet–Begin on page 50 Answer Booklet–Pages 15–19 Questions 40–53
6	Test Booklet–Begin on page 4 Answer Booklet–Pages 5–7 Questions 1–29	Test Booklet–Begin on page 34 Answer Booklet–Pages 9–13 Questions 30–40	Test Booklet–Begin on page 48 Answer Booklet–Pages 15–19 Questions 41–53
7	Test Booklet–Begin on page 4 Answer Booklet–Pages 5–7 Questions 1–28	Test Booklet–Begin on page 34 Answer Booklet–Pages 9–13 Questions 29–39	Test Booklet–Begin on page 48 Answer Booklet–Pages 15–19 Questions 40–53

Grade	Section 1 – ELA	Section 2 – ELA	Section 3– ELA
8	Test Booklet–Begin on page 4 Answer Booklet–Pages 5–7 Questions 1–28	Test Booklet–Begin on page 34 Answer Booklet–Pages 9–13 Questions 29–39	Test Booklet–Begin on page 48 Answer Booklet–Pages 15–19 Questions 40–53

In addition, the following statement must be displayed on the chalkboard, dry-erase board, or other easily visible medium:

Go back to check your work and make sure you have answered each question before closing your test booklet and answer booklet. When you have closed your test booklet and answer booklet, the Test Administrator will collect them.

M. Extended Testing Time

The PSSA Grades 4–8 English Language Arts Assessments are untimed assessments. Not all students will finish the assessment sections at the same time. Students should not feel rushed while they are taking the assessment, and no student should be penalized for working slowly. It is equally important, however, to encourage students to work in a timely manner to finish the assessment. Students should close their booklets when they have finished the section of the assessment in which they had been working. Students should keep scratch paper and all other paper on which they have written separate from their booklets. TAs must collect all test materials, including scratch paper and all other paper on which students have written, when students are finished rather than keeping the assessment materials closed on the students’ desks.

1. Students who finish early may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until all students have finished. Reading for pleasure includes magazines along with fiction text, such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc. Reading anything that may include information related to the content area being assessed is not allowed. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.
2. TAs should follow the direction of the SAC to determine when the assessment session should end and when students who have not finished should be provided an extended-time setting. This may involve using professional judgment. As a general guideline, the assessment session should be ended when all students indicate they have finished an assessment section. If the time scheduled for the administration of the section ends, students not finished should report to the extended-time location. All students should complete each section within a school day, and sections must be scheduled so that there is enough time to complete the section within the school day.
3. Any student may request extended time if they indicate they have not completed an assessment section. Such requests should be granted if the TA finds the request to be educationally valid. Not permitting ample time for students to complete the assessment section may impact performance.
4. Students with special requirements and/or disabilities (i.e., physical, visual, auditory, or learning disabilities as defined by their IEPs or service contracts) and students who work slowly may require extended time. Special assessment situations should be arranged for these students.
5. When allowing extended time for an assessment session for a portion of the student population:
 - a. **Do not** allow students to attend a lunch period with other students if the lunch period occurs between the original assessment session and the extended session.
 - b. **Do not** allow students to attend any classes or related activities between the original assessment session and the extended session.
 - c. **Do not** allow any overnight extensions.
 - d. **Do not** allow students to return to a section after the completion of that section.

6. **Do not allow the extended assessment session to be administered without monitoring. It is the responsibility of a TA to monitor any extended sessions, whether in the classroom where the assessment was begun or in a separate location.**
7. When all students have indicated that they have finished an assessment section, end the session. Students may return to regular activities, or you need to give the students a break in-between the sections before administration of the next section may begin.

N. Assessment Administration Reminders

It is important to use standardized testing procedures to maintain fairness for all students. Following the assessment administration instructions carefully ensures that all students are tested under similar conditions in all classrooms.

Before test administration:

1. Be sure each student has the correct test booklet and answer booklet (correct student name [as found in PIMS] and the form number is the same on the test booklet and answer booklet).
2. Be certain to direct students as to where and how to mark or write their answers.
3. Follow the directions of the SAC and this manual for maintaining assessment security.
4. Establish an environment that encourages students to approach the assessment in a positive manner.
5. Read and follow the *Handbook for Secure Test Administration* (Appendix A).

During test administration:

1. Follow the directions of the SAC for maintaining assessment security.
2. The test directions may be repeated to students as needed during the administration; however, the TA may not paraphrase or offer additional information and may not give information that provides clues concerning test questions or answer choices.
3. It is acceptable to encourage the group of students to keep trying.

Remember: You will need a copy of a test booklet and an answer booklet during the administration for demonstration purposes. The test booklet and answer booklet must be returned to the SAC at the end of each testing session.

- **In some places in this manual, the TA will be prompted to “demonstrate” to students where specific administration information (such as instruction boxes, page numbers, question numbers, etc.) can be found in the test booklet or answer booklet. To help students understand these references, the TA should hold up a copy of the test booklet or answer booklet and point to the relevant information.**
- For the remainder of this manual, **indented text in bold type** is to be read aloud to students exactly as written. All other text is information for the TA.

When ready to start the assessment, the TA should begin with *Part III: Directions for Administering the Assessment* on the next page of this manual.

A. Getting Started with the Assessment

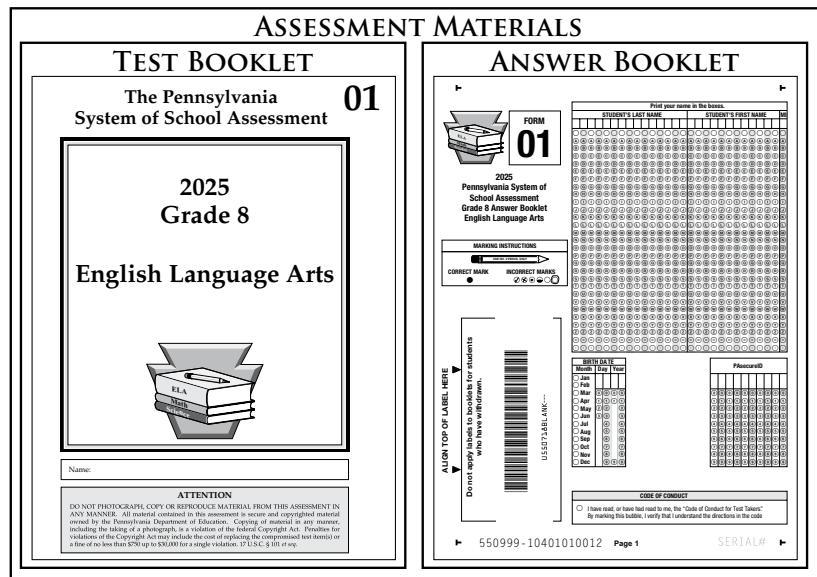
Make sure all students have two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers. Make certain that no student is in possession of a cell phone, camera, smartphone, smartwatch, earbuds, or other unapproved electronic device. **Collect all unapproved electronic devices prior to distributing any assessment materials.**

Say:

Welcome to the PSSA. I will now distribute the test booklets and answer booklets. Do not open your test booklet or answer booklet until I tell you to do so.

First, distribute answer booklets with front covers facing up, and then distribute test booklets with front covers facing up.

Answer booklets must have a Student Precode Label or a District/School Label if the Student Precode Label is not available. Contact the SAC if you do not have a labeled answer booklet for each student. If a Student Precode Label is not on a student’s answer booklet, the SAC or the SAC’s designee should have printed the student’s name (as the name appears in PIMS) on the front cover, bubbled in the letters corresponding to the name, and written in the student’s birth date and PAsecureID on page 1.



Note: A form number is on the front cover of each test booklet and answer booklet. There are nine (9) different forms labeled 01 through 09. Make certain that the form number on each student’s test booklet matches the form number on each student’s answer booklet.

Say:

Today we will begin the PSSA in English Language Arts. Each of you should have a Grade [say grade] English Language Arts Test Booklet and Answer Booklet. Do not open your booklets until I tell you to do so.

Look at the front covers of the two booklets. In the upper right-hand corner of the test booklet, there is a number from 01 through 09. Make sure that this number is the same as the number shown near the upper left-hand corner of the answer booklet. If the number in the box on your answer booklet is not the same, raise your hand, and I will give you a new test booklet.

Correct any errors in booklet distribution.

When all students are ready, say:

Look at the front cover of your test booklet. In the box labeled “Name” at the bottom of the page, print your name —your first name, your middle initial, and then your last name.

Pause while students print their names in the box on the cover of their test booklets. The student’s name on the front of the test booklet ensures accurate distribution of the correct test booklet to each student at the beginning of each testing session. Make certain that all students have recorded their names correctly. Then say:

Below your name on the test booklet is a box labeled ATTENTION. Read the entire statement in the box now.

Pause while students read the information in the box. This statement is repeated on page 4 of the answer booklet. When all students have completed this task, say:

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, continue with the next section.

B. Reviewing Barcode (District/School or Student Precode) Labels

Say:

Look at the front cover of your answer booklet. In the lower left-hand corner is a barcode label. Check to see if the barcode label has a colored stripe on it.

If the barcode label DOES NOT have a colored stripe, check to make sure your full name and birth date are correct. Raise your hand if you find an error.

If the barcode label DOES have a colored stripe, check to make sure that your full legal name is printed in the boxes near the top of the cover page of your answer booklet.

If the barcode label DOES have a colored stripe and your name IS NOT printed in the boxes, please raise your hand.

If the label on a student’s booklet has a colored stripe, but the student’s name is not printed in the boxes, contact your SAC immediately to obtain the student’s name, PAsecureID, and birth date as it appears in PIMS. The student may work on the assessment while the SAC obtains the student’s name, PAsecureID, and birth date. Either you, the SAC, or the SAC’s designee must fill in the information for the student. The student information must include the student’s name as it appears in PIMS, birth date, and PAsecureID.

Note: If any barcode label has an error on it, please contact the SAC.

When all students are ready, say:

In the bottom right-hand corner of your answer booklet is a box labeled CODE OF CONDUCT. Read the statement inside this box silently as I read it aloud. “I have read, or have had read to me, the Code of Conduct for Test Takers. By marking this bubble, I verify that I understand the directions in the code.” If you understand the Code of Conduct for Test Takers, darken the circle inside the box now. If you have questions about the Code of Conduct for Test Takers, raise your hand.

Pause to assist students as necessary. Answer student questions until all students understand the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* and darken the circle inside the box. (The *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* (Appendix C) of this manual.) When students are ready, continue with the next section.

When all students are ready, say:

Turn to page 4 in your answer booklet where there is a box labeled ATTENTION. Read the entire statement in the box now.

C. Administer Section 1—ELA

When all students are ready, say:

I will now distribute scratch paper.

Distribute scratch paper. When all students are ready, say:

Now we are ready to begin Section 1—ELA. For some of the questions, you will choose your answer from among a set of four answer choices. For other questions, you will read passages and answer questions about the passages. Some questions will have more than one part, and you will select one or more answers in each part. You will record your responses to the questions in your answer booklet only. Only responses recorded in your answer booklet will be scored. The PSSA is an untimed assessment. You may take as much time as you need to complete this section. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

Open your test booklet to page 2.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 2 and 3 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 1. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 2. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are three types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 2. It is labeled “Conventions of Standard English Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- ***Read each question and choose the best answer.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided is correct.***
- ***Record your choice in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

Now look at the second box on page 2, which is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- ***First, read the passage carefully.***
- ***Read each question and choose the best answer.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided is correct.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.***
- ***Record your choice in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions.

When all students are ready, say:

Now look at the box on page 3, which is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.” Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.

Other questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- ***Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.***
- ***Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.***
- ***Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.***
- ***Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

We are now ready to start Section 1. Turn to page 4 in your test booklet and page 5 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a GO ON arrow.

Point to the arrow in the booklet that you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the arrow.

This arrow indicates that you are not yet finished with Section 1 and you are to continue on to the next page. Follow the “GO ON” arrows. Continue until you complete all of the multiple-choice questions and the evidence-based selected-response questions in Section 1. At the end of Section 1, you will see a “STOP” sign in your test booklet and in your answer booklet.

Point to the stop sign on the last page of Section 1 in the test booklet and page 7 of the answer booklet you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the stop sign.

GRADES 4 & 6 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 1 through 29 in Section 1 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question in your answer booklet.

GRADES 5, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 1 through 28 in Section 1 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question in your answer booklet.

If you complete Section 1 before the testing session is over, you may check your work for questions ONLY in Section 1. Do not look ahead to any other section in your test booklet or answer booklet. After you have checked your work, make sure you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet. Then close your answer booklet and place it inside your test booklet so I will know you have finished. I will collect your test materials when you finish. You may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until the rest of the class completes Section 1. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

You may begin.

Note: Students who finish early may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until all students have finished. Reading for pleasure includes magazines along with fiction text, such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc. Reading anything that may include information related to the content area being assessed is not allowed. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.

While students are taking the assessment, be available to repeat test directions and/or direct students to the correct section of the test. TAs may encourage the group of students without providing any individual or group help that might suggest the correct answer to a question. Do not communicate to a student that the student should “check” an answer or that the student has answered an item incorrectly. You may, however, provide clarification of test directions and/or direct the student to the correct section of the test. The directions on pages 2 and 3 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 1. Each Section has a shape or shapes in the header with the number of the Section inside the shape(s) so the Section can be easily identified. There is one circle in the header of all pages in Section 1. While students are taking the assessment, ensure that students are working in the correct section of the test.

Encourage students to try all of the tasks (questions) and to complete the assessment. An incorrect answer is scored the same as a blank answer.

The testing time for this section is estimated to be 70 to 80 minutes, but the actual administration time may vary. Collect test materials, including scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written, when students are finished testing rather than keeping booklets closed on the students’ desks. TAs should ask the students if they have completed all of the items listed for this section. The TAs should ask the question as completed materials are collected from or returned by individual students. End the session when all students have completed the section or you are at the end of the scheduled time. Since each student is to be provided sufficient time to finish the assessment, additional time must be allowed on an individual basis if one or more students are continuing to make reasonable progress on the assessment. For more information about Extended Testing Time, see Part II: General Assessment Information of this manual. When you have confirmed that approximately five minutes remain in the testing time for the group and not all students have finished, say:

This session will end in about five minutes. Make sure that you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet. If you need additional time to complete this section, direction will be provided for you.

At the end of the scheduled time, say:

Close your test booklet and answer booklet. You will use the same booklets for the remaining sections of the assessment, so make sure your name is on the front cover of each booklet. Place your answer booklet inside the test booklet. If you are finished, I will collect your booklets, scratch paper, and any other paper on which you have written. If you need more time, let me know, and you will be provided with an extended session and given additional direction.

- Only students who have completed Section 1 may move on to Section 2. Students who need additional time should be provided an extended session setting. For students moving on to Section 2, say:

You are going to take Section 2 at another time (the same day or a different day). I will now collect any remaining test materials.

Collect any remaining booklets and scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written, making sure that answer booklets have been placed inside the test booklets and that each student’s name is on the test booklet. All assessment materials must remain secure at all times.

Return all secure materials (booklets) immediately to the SAC or the SAC’s designee for secure storage. Return reference sheets, used scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written, to the SAC or the SAC’s designee, and keep them in a secure location until they can be destroyed by the SAC (or the SAC’s designee) or DAC (or the DAC’s designee). **Note:** Do **NOT** review student responses to test questions **for any reason**. Do **NOT** review answer booklets for stray marks. Do **NOT** place scratch paper inside the test booklet or answer booklet.

D. Administer Section 2—ELA

Make sure all students have two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers. Make certain that no student is in possession of a cell phone, camera, smartphone, smartwatch, earbuds, or other unauthorized electronic device. **Collect all unauthorized electronic devices prior to distributing any assessment materials.** Distribute booklets to students, making certain each student has the correct booklets. The scratch paper must be blank, and the reference sheets must have no additional writing.

Say:

Check to make sure that your name is on the front cover of both the test booklet and the answer booklet. Also, check the number in the upper right-hand corner of your test booklet. Make sure that this number is the same as the number shown near the upper left-hand corner of the answer booklet.

When all students have the correct test and answer booklets, say:

I will now distribute scratch paper and reference sheets.

Distribute scratch paper and reference sheets (with the Text-Dependent Analysis Writer’s Checklist facing up).

When all students are ready, say:

Now we are ready to begin Section 2—ELA. You will read passages and answer questions about the passages. For some of the questions, you will choose your answer from among a set of four answer choices. Some questions will have more than one part, and you will select one or more answers in each part. For one question, you will write your own response. You will record your responses to the questions in your answer booklet only. Only responses recorded in your answer booklet will be scored. The PSSA is an untimed assessment. You may take as much time as you need to complete this section. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 36.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 36 and 37 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 2. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 36. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are three types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 36. It is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 34.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 34 and 35 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 2. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 34. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are three types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 34. It is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 32.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 32 and 33 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 2. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 32. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are three types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 32. It is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- ***First, read the passage carefully.***
- ***Read each question and choose the best answer.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided is correct.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.***
- ***Record your choice in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 36, which is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 34, which is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 32, which is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

Other questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- ***Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.***
- ***Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.***
- ***Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.***
- ***Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Now look at the box on page 37, which is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Now look at the box on page 35, which is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Now look at the box on page 33, which is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- ***Be sure to read the passage and TDA prompt carefully.***
- ***Review the Writer’s Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.***
- ***You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.***
- ***Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.***
- ***Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.***
- ***Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

Now look at the reference sheet that I passed out along with your scratch paper.

Pause while students look at the English Language Arts reference sheet. When all students are ready, say:

This reference sheet contains a copy of the Writer’s Checklist that is included in your answer booklet on the page facing your text-dependent analysis prompt. Also included are the text-dependent analysis scoring guidelines.

GRADES 4 & 6 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to the text-dependent analysis prompt. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 62 and 63 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to the text-dependent analysis prompt. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 64 and 65 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

GRADES 7 & 8 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to the text-dependent analysis prompt. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 60 and 61 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 2. Turn to page 38 in your test booklet and page 9 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 2. Turn to page 36 in your test booklet and page 9 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 2. Turn to page 34 in your test booklet and page 9 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

Point to the arrow in the booklet that you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the arrow.

This arrow indicates that you are not yet finished with Section 2 and you are to continue on to the next page. Follow the “GO ON” arrows and follow the directions that tell you which questions are in your test booklet and which questions are in the answer booklet. Continue until you complete all of the multiple-choice questions and evidence-based selected-response questions and the text-dependent analysis question in Section 2. At the end of Section 2, you will see a “STOP” sign in your test booklet and in your answer booklet.

Point to the stop sign on the last page of Section 2 in the test booklet and page 13 of the answer booklet you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the stop sign.

GRADES 4 & 6 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 30 through 40 in Section 2 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question and completely answer each open-ended question in your answer booklet.

GRADES 5, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 29 through 39 in Section 2 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question and completely answer each open-ended question in your answer booklet.

If you complete Section 2 before the testing session is over, you may check your work for questions ONLY in Section 2. Do not look back or ahead to any other parts of the test booklet or answer booklet. After you have checked your work, make sure you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet. Then close your answer booklet and place it inside your test booklet so I will know you have finished. I will collect your test materials when you finish. You may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until the rest of the class completes Section 2. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

You may begin.

Note: Students who finish early may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until all students have finished. Reading for pleasure includes magazines along with fiction text, such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc. Reading anything that may include information related to the content area being assessed is not allowed. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.

While students are taking the assessment, be available to repeat test directions and/or direct students to the correct section of the test. TAs may encourage the group of students without providing any individual or group help that might suggest the correct answer to a question. Do not communicate to a student that the student should “check” an answer or that the student has answered an item incorrectly. You may, however, provide clarification of test directions and/or direct the student to the correct section of the test. The directions in the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 2. Each Section has a shape or shapes in the header with the number of the Section inside the shape(s) so the Section can be easily identified.

There are two half circles in the header of all pages in Section 2. While students are taking the assessment, ensure that students are working in the correct section of the test.

Encourage students to try all of the tasks (questions) and to complete the assessment. An incorrect answer is scored the same as a blank answer.

The testing time for this section is estimated to be 65–75 minutes, but the actual administration time may vary. Collect test materials, including scratch paper and any other paper on which students have written, when students are finished testing rather than keeping them closed on the students' desks. TAs should ask the students if they have completed all of the items listed for this section. The TAs should ask the question as completed materials are collected from or returned by individual students. End the session when all students have completed the section or you are at the end of the scheduled time. Since each student is to be provided sufficient time to finish the assessment, additional time must be allowed on an individual basis if one or more students are continuing to make reasonable progress on the assessment. For more information about Extended Testing Time, see Part II: General Assessment Information of this manual. When you have confirmed that approximately five minutes remain in the testing time for the group and not all students have finished, say:

This session will end in about five minutes. Make sure that you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet. If you need additional time to complete this section, direction will be provided for you.

At the end of the scheduled time, say:

Close your test booklet and answer booklet. You will use the same booklets for the remaining section of the assessment, so make sure your name is on the front cover of each booklet. Place your answer booklet inside the test booklet. If you are finished, I will collect your booklets, reference sheets, scratch paper, and any other paper on which you may have written. If you need more time, let me know, and you will be provided with an extended session and given additional direction.

- Only students who have completed Section 2 may move on to Section 3. Students who need additional time should be provided an extended session setting. For students moving on to Section 3, say:

You are going to take Section 3 at another time (the same day or a different day). I will now collect any remaining test materials.

Collect any remaining booklets, English Language Arts reference sheets, scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written, making sure that answer booklets have been placed inside the test booklets and that each student's name is on the test booklet. All assessment materials must remain secure at all times.

Return all secure materials (booklets) immediately to the SAC or the SAC's designee for secure storage. Return reference sheets, used scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written, to the SAC or the SAC's designee, and keep them in a secure location until they can be destroyed by the SAC (or the SAC's designee) or DAC (or the DAC's designee). **Note:** Do **NOT** review student responses to test questions **for any reason**. Do **NOT** review answer booklets for stray marks. Do **NOT** place scratch paper inside the test booklet or answer booklet.

E. Administer Section 3—ELA

Make sure all students have two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers. Make certain that no student is in possession of a cell phone, camera, smartphone, smartwatch, earbuds, or other unauthorized electronic device. **Collect all unauthorized electronic devices prior to distributing any assessment materials.** Distribute booklets to students, making certain each student has the correct booklets. The scratch paper must be blank, and the reference sheets must have no additional writing.

Say:

Check to make sure that your name is on the front cover of both the test booklet and the answer booklet. Also, check the number in the upper right-hand corner of your test booklet and the number in the box shown near the upper left-hand corner of the answer booklet to make sure that they match.

When all students have the correct test and answer booklets, say:

I will now distribute scratch paper and reference sheets.

Distribute scratch paper and reference sheets (with the Text-Dependent Analysis Writer’s Checklist facing up).

When all students are ready, say:

Now we are ready to begin Section 3—ELA. For some of the questions, you will choose your answer from among a set of four answer choices. For other questions, you will read passages and answer questions about the passages. Some questions will have more than one part, and you will select one or more answers in each part. For one question, you will write your own response. You will record your response to the questions in your answer booklet only. Only responses recorded in your answer booklet will be scored. The PSSA is an untimed assessment. You may take as much time as you need to complete this section. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 50.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 50 and 51 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 3. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 50. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are four types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 50. It is labeled “Conventions of Standard English Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 48.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 48 and 49 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 3. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 48. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are four types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 48. It is labeled “Conventions of Standard English Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Open your test booklet to page 46.

Pause while students find the correct page in their test booklets. The directions on pages 46 and 47 of the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 3. When all students are ready, say:

Look at the directions on page 46. Read the directions silently as I read them aloud.

Directions: On the following pages are the English Language Arts questions. There are four types of questions in this section.

Now look at the first box on page 46. It is labeled “Conventions of Standard English Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the first box silently as I read them aloud.

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- ***Read each question and choose the best answer.***
- ***Only one of the answers provided is correct.***
- ***Record your choice in the answer booklet.***

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 50, which is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 48, which is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 46, which is labeled “Reading Passage Multiple-Choice Questions.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- *First, read the passage carefully.*
- *Read each question and choose the best answer.*
- *Only one of the answers provided is correct.*
- *You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.*
- *Record your choice in the answer booklet.*

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Now look at page 51.

Pause while students look at the correct page in their test booklets. When all students are ready, say:

**The first box on page 51 is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.”
Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.**

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Now look at page 49.

Pause while students look at the correct page in their test booklets. When all students are ready, say:

**The first box on page 49 is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.”
Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.**

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Now look at page 47.

Pause while students look at the correct page in their test booklets. When all students are ready, say:

**The first box on page 47 is labeled “Reading Passage Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions.”
Read the directions in the box silently as I read them aloud.**

Continue speaking and say:

Other questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- **Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.**
- **You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.**
- **Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.**
- **Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.**
- **Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.**
- **You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.**
- **Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.**

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 51. It is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 49. It is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Now look at the second box on page 47. It is labeled “Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompt.” Read the directions in the second box silently as I read them aloud.

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- **Be sure to read the passage and TDA prompt carefully.**
- **Review the Writer’s Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.**
- **You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.**
- **Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.**
- **Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.**
- **Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.**

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

Now look at the reference sheet that I passed out along with your scratch paper.

Pause while students look at the English Language Arts reference sheet. When all students are ready, say:

This is a copy of the Writer’s Checklist that is included in your answer booklet on the page facing the text-dependent analysis prompt. Also included are the text-dependent analysis scoring guidelines.

GRADE 4 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to text-dependent analysis prompts. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 62 and 63 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to text-dependent analysis prompts. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 64 and 65 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

GRADE 6 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to text-dependent analysis prompts. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 58 and 59 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

GRADES 7 & 8 ONLY:

This is an example of the scoring guidelines that professional scorers will use to evaluate your responses to text-dependent analysis prompts. These scoring guidelines can also be found on pages 60 and 61 of your test booklet. You may refer to this reference sheet at any time while responding to the prompt.

Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

GRADE 4 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 3. Turn to page 52 in your test booklet and page 15 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

GRADE 5 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 3. Turn to page 50 in your test booklet and page 15 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

GRADES 6, 7, & 8 ONLY:

We are now ready to start Section 3. Turn to page 48 in your test booklet and page 15 in your answer booklet. In the bottom right-hand corner, you will see a “GO ON” arrow.

Point to the arrow in the booklet that you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the arrow.

This arrow indicates that you are not yet finished with Section 3 and you are to continue on to the next page. Follow the “GO ON” arrows and follow the directions that tell you which questions are in your test booklet and which questions are in the answer booklet. Continue until you complete all of the multiple-choice questions and evidence-based selected-response questions and the text-dependent analysis question in Section 3. At the end of Section 3, you will see a “STOP” sign in your test booklet and in your answer booklet.

Point to the stop sign on the last page of Section 3 in the test booklet and page 19 of the answer booklet you are using for demonstration purposes. If necessary, walk around the room to ensure that all students see the stop sign.

GRADES 4 & 6 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 41 through 53 in Section 3 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question and completely answer each open-ended question in your answer booklet.

GRADES 5, 7, & 8 ONLY:

Remember to complete questions 40 through 53 in Section 3 and to mark only the required number of correct answers for each multiple-choice question and completely answer each open-ended question in your answer booklet.

If you complete Section 3 before the testing session is over, you may check your work for questions ONLY in Section 3. Do not look back to any other part in your test booklet or answer booklet. After you have checked your work, make sure you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet or written on your reference sheet. Then close your answer booklet and place it inside your test booklet so I will know you have finished. I will collect your test materials when you finish. You may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content related materials until the rest of the class completes Section 3. Are there any questions?

Answer all questions. When all students are ready, say:

You may begin.

Note: Students who finish early may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until all students have finished. Reading for pleasure includes magazines along with fiction text, such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc. Reading anything that may include information related to the content area being assessed is not allowed. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.

While students are taking the assessment, be available to repeat test directions and/or direct students to the correct section of the test. TAs may encourage the group of students without providing any individual or group help that might suggest the correct answer to a question. Do not communicate to a student that the student should “check” an answer or that the student has answered an item incorrectly. You may, however, provide clarification of test directions and/or direct the student to the correct section of the test. The directions in the test booklet may be repeated to students as needed during the administration of Section 3. Each Section has a shape or shapes in the header with the number of the Section inside the shape(s) so the Section can be easily identified. There are three triangles in the header of all pages in Section 3. While students are taking the assessment, ensure that students are working in the correct section of the test.

Encourage students to try all of the tasks (questions) and to complete the assessment. An incorrect answer is scored the same as a blank answer.

The testing time for this section is estimated to be 70 to 80 minutes, but the actual administration time may vary. Collect test materials, including scratch paper, English Language Arts reference sheets, and any other paper on which students have written, when students are finished testing rather than keeping them closed on the students' desks. TAs should ask the students if they have completed all of the items listed for this section. The TAs should ask the question as completed materials are collected from or returned by individual students. End the session when all students have completed the section or you are at the end of the scheduled time. Since each student is to be provided sufficient time to finish the assessment, additional time must be allowed on an individual basis if one or more students are continuing to make reasonable progress on the assessment. For more information about Extended Testing Time, see Part II: General Assessment Information in this manual. When you have confirmed that approximately five minutes remain in the testing time for the group and not all students have finished, say:

This session will end in about five minutes. Make sure that you have completely erased wherever you have changed an answer or have made a stray mark in your answer booklet or written on your reference sheet. If you need additional time to complete this section, direction will be provided for you.

At the end of the scheduled time, say:

This concludes the 2025 English Language Arts Assessment. Close your test booklet and answer booklet. Do not place your answer booklet inside the test booklet. I will now collect your booklets. If you need more time, let me know, and you will be provided with an extended session and given additional direction.

Collect any remaining booklets, making sure that each student's name is on the test booklet and answer booklet. Say:

I will now collect your reference sheet, scratch paper, and any other paper on which you have written.

Return all secure materials (booklets) immediately to the SAC or the SAC's designee, for secure storage. Return reference sheets, used scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written, to the SAC or the SAC's designee, and keep them in a secure location until they can be destroyed by the SAC (or the SAC's designee) or DAC (or the DAC's designee). **Note:** Do **NOT** review student responses to test questions **for any reason**. Do **NOT** review answer booklets for stray marks. Do **NOT** place scratch paper inside the test booklet or answer booklet.

A. After Testing Is Complete

After testing is complete:

1. Make sure each student turns in the answer booklet and test booklet.
2. Make sure student identification information is complete and correct on all students' booklets. Make sure the name on the test booklet corresponds with the name on the answer booklet for each student.
3. If a student answer booklet has a barcode label with a colored stripe (a District/School Label), make sure that the SAC or the SAC's designee has completed the applicable portions of the front cover and page 2 of the answer booklet by printing the student's name (as found in PIMS) and filling in the bubbles. (See your SAC if you have questions or require further direction.)
4. If a student used any accommodation listed on page 3 of the answer booklet during the administration of the exam, make sure that applicable portions of page 3 of the answer booklet are completed by filling in the bubbles. (See your SAC if you have questions or require further direction.)
5. Do **NOT** review test booklets or check the response pages of the answer booklets for content, accuracy, completeness, or stray marks.
6. Review the *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* (Appendix B). Contact your SAC if you need more information.

B. Return Materials

Test materials must be kept secure. Any unused test materials related to this assessment must be returned to the SAC or the SAC's designee. This manual may be retained by the Test Administrator.

Return all test materials to the SAC or the SAC's designee for secure storage. This includes used and unused booklets, English Language Arts reference sheets, used scratch paper, and any other paper on which students have written. Test materials must be returned to the SAC immediately at the end of the assessment session.

Reminder: All used answer booklets returned to DRC for processing **must** have a barcode label (District/School, Student Precode, **or** Do Not Score) affixed to the front cover of the answer booklet. Do **not** affix a barcode label to any unused answer booklet.

Remember: Every TA/Proctor involved in the administration of the Spring 2025 English Language Arts Assessment **must** sign and date a *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)*. When a TA/Proctor signs and dates the *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)*, that person certifies that all security measures have been followed for this PSSA administration. TAs/Proctors should return the signed and dated *PSSA Test Security Certification (Test Administrator and Proctor)* to the SAC or the SAC's designee upon completion of their assigned duties during the testing window.

If a test security violation is suspected, contact the SAC immediately. If you believe the SAC may have involvement in the violation, immediately contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) directly at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov. The email should include a detailed subject line. Please ensure that you only utilize the email account provided here for security violations. Please do not send a question to multiple email accounts. This causes a delay in response.

Note: The SAC has all information on returning assessment materials to DRC.

Appendix A:

Handbook for Secure Test Administration



Handbook for Secure Test Administration

Security Statement

State assessments rely on the measurement of individual achievement. Any deviation from procedures meant to ensure test validity and security (e.g., group work, teacher coaching, teaching or release of any test items, use of previously administered Pennsylvania assessments as preparation tools) is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security. Local Education Agency (LEA)/school personnel with access to the assessment materials must not review, discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents to anyone. (This prohibition excludes the *Item and Scoring Samplers* available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE's) website.)

Any action by a professional employee or commissioned officer that is willfully designed to divulge test questions, falsify student scores, or compromise the integrity of the state assessment system will be subject to disciplinary action under the Educator Discipline Act, 24 P.S. §§ 2070.1a *et seq*, which may include a private reprimand, a public reprimand, a suspension of the employee's teaching certificate(s), a revocation of the employee's teaching certificate(s), and/or a suspension or prohibition from being employed by a charter school.

Training and Test Administration Procedures

The purpose of this handbook is to assist in the training of LEA/school personnel to properly and securely administer state assessments. This handbook is also an important and valuable resource in implementing testing successfully from planning and preparing to collecting and returning tests.

Roles and Responsibilities: Training

The District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) is responsible for completing all of the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Trainings (PSTATs) provided by PDE for the DACs, SACs, and TAs/Proctors. DACs must complete the Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) training on receiving and packaging materials, and any DAC specific training provided by the PDE. The DAC is then responsible for coordinating all training that takes place in the LEA and for determining specifics related to test administration such as a schedule, type of administration (paper and pencil or online) and other LEA-level administrative aspects of the testing. The DAC is responsible for ALL training in the LEA with primary responsibility for the direct training of SACs. In some LEAs the DAC may train the LEA-level staff who handle and/or have access to secure test material.

The SAC receives training from the DAC and must also complete both the PSTAT training for SACs and for TAs/Proctors. The SAC is then responsible to oversee all aspects of test administration in a building, including training Test Administrators (TAs), proctors, and other building level staff.

The TAs/Proctors must complete the PSTAT training for TAs/Proctors. The TAs/Proctors are responsible for administering the assessment and monitoring students during the assessment.

Translators, interpreters, and scribes must complete the PSTAT training for TAs/Proctors and must also complete the training offered by the school/district.

The *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* provides more information related to training.



Roles and Responsibilities: Test Administration

The following lists the general roles and responsibilities for DACs, SACs/Principals, TAs/Proctors, and general personnel before, during, and after test administration. The lists are not exhaustive but provide a general overview of the most important responsibilities of each individual in test administration. In some cases the responsibilities may overlap between or among DACs, SACs, and/or TAs/Proctors. In these cases it is the responsibility of the DAC to determine who has the primary responsibility and is accountable for specific duties, especially when duties may be shared.

A. DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

General Statement: Administer the assessment using the best practices and with fidelity to the administrative guidelines; keep the assessment materials secure and confidential; prevent any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment; and promote a fair and equitable testing environment in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores.

Before Test Administration – DAC

Complete the PSTAT trainings for the administration of the assessments annually.

Complete the *Accommodations Guidelines* training annually.

Update DRC INSIGHT portal accounts for LEA and school users.

Review the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* (HAC), *Directions for Administration* (DFA), *Accommodations Guidelines*, *Online User Guides* (if online testing) and other test-related documents necessary to conduct training for test administration.

Review the LEA's policy/procedures for home-schooled students.

Review the LEA's policy/procedures for handling cyber-charter schools' requests to test their students.

Develop and maintain the LEA's procedure for parental requests to view tests (opt-outs).

Develop and maintain the LEA's procedure for handling breaks during test administration and keeping test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets secure.

Develop and maintain the LEA's procedure for handling disruptions during test administration and keeping test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets secure.

Develop and maintain the LEA's procedure for handling emergencies during test administration.

Develop the LEA's master test schedule (including make-ups) that falls within PDE established test windows for each administration and include it in training. Ensure that the test schedule is developed so that sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets.

Develop a training agenda and train SACs and other LEA-level staff involved in test administration or the handling of secure material prior to conducting any of their assigned work. (See *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* for more information).



Ensure that SACs are trained on the test accountability and security information contained in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*.

Ensure that SACs are trained on the *Accommodations Guidelines*.

Ensure that all individuals involved in the handling of assessment materials and/or the administration of the assessment are instructed in test security protocols and procedures.

Ensure that any individual who will administer and/or proctor the assessment completes the online PSTAT annually (each school year).

Ensure that all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment receive instruction that all assessment materials, including all assessment booklets and other materials containing secure assessment questions and student responses, are to be kept secure and precisely accounted for in accordance with the procedures specified in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*.

Ensure that SACs receive instruction on the policy regarding all electronic devices (cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, cameras, etc.).

Ensure that all individuals who assist in the administration of the assessment and all individuals who have access to the secure assessment materials have been made aware that they are not in any manner to alter or cause the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

Communicate to students, parents, and the community that which the assessment does and does not measure, when and how it will be administered, and how the results will be used. Refer to the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* for a sample Parent Letter.

Notify and ensure that all students and parents/guardians have been provided the policy regarding all electronic devices (cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, cameras, etc.).

Consider having a teacher other than the teacher-of-record administer the assessment to students. If local circumstances do not allow that option, consider assigning a Proctor to be in the classroom with the TA. (In some circumstances LEAs have been directed by PDE not to use the teacher-of-record to administer the assessment to students they instruct in the present school year.)

Inventory secure materials without breaking the shrink wrap (ship-to-district).

Report any items not received.

Distribute tests to SAC(s) (ship-to-district).

During Test Administration – DAC

Monitor testing sites to ensure administration of the assessments in accordance with PDE policies and procedures.

Ensure that sections/modules are started and completed in the same day as per the LEA testing schedule.

Instruct all school staff to minimize distractions, including intercom announcements.



Suspected testing irregularities/security breaches must immediately be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Irregularities and/or allegations should be reported to PDE via ra-edirregularities@pa.gov.

After Test Administration – DAC

Collect tests from SAC(s) (ship-to-district).

Complete the Materials Accountability Form after inventorying, packaging, and returning the materials to the vendor.

NOTE: DACs should not open or look into test booklets, answer booklets, or combined test/answer booklets.

Record the UPS Tracking Number for each package, noting the assessment(s) for which it was used and the content of each box. Please keep the number(s) for future reference to document the materials returned to DRC.

Sign the *Test Security Certification (District Assessment Coordinator)*. The DAC should sign the *Test Security Certification* at the end of each testing window.

Failure to account for and/or return assessment materials constitutes a breach in security, the consequences of which can be severe, up to and including remuneration should it be determined loss of or misappropriation of materials has compromised the integrity of test items.

B. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR AND/OR BUILDING PRINCIPAL TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

General Statement: Maintain the security and integrity of all assessment materials, prevent any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promote a fair and equitable testing environment in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores.

Before Test Administration – SAC

Attend the annual training for SACs provided by the DAC.

Complete the PSTAT training for SACs and for TAs/Proctors annually.

Review DFA's, the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, *Accommodations Guidelines*, and *Online User Guides* (if testing online).

Develop a building level master test schedule (including make-ups) that falls within PDE established testing windows for each administration and include it in training. Ensure that the test schedule is developed so that sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets.

Develop an agenda and train TAs/Proctors and other building level personnel (review the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* for more information).

Ensure that all individuals involved in the handling of assessment materials and/or the administration of the assessment receive instruction regarding test security protocols and procedures.

Ensure that all TAs/Proctors receive a copy of the *TA/Proctor Test Security Certification*.



Ensure that all individuals who will administer and/or proctor the assessment complete the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training (PSTAT). Translators, interpreters, and scribes must complete the PSTAT training for TAs/Proctors and must also complete the training offered by the school/district.

Ensure that all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment receive instruction that all assessment materials must remain secure. This includes all assessment booklets and other materials containing secure assessment questions and student responses that must be kept secure and precisely accounted for in accordance with the procedures specified in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*.

Ensure that all TAs/Proctors are instructed on the policy regarding electronic devices (cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, cameras, etc.).

Ensure that all individuals who assist in the administration of the assessment and all individuals who have access to the secure assessment materials are instructed that they are not in any manner to alter or cause the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

Create and maintain the PAsecureID list (refer to the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* for specific instructions).

Ensure all students are scheduled for the appropriate assessment. For the online administration, ensure the students have the correct test ticket for subject and section or module.

Ensure TAs/Proctors understand that each assessment returned will be linked to the TA who administered the assessment. For paper and pencil assessments, TA initials will be collected on the back page of each answer or combined test/answer booklet. For online testing, teacher (TA) names must be included with each online test session created. This will link the TA to the online session prior to test tickets being generated.

Ensure that students testing online have prior experience with the online practice test and tools that model the testing mode (online).

Maintain a contingency plan for breaks and for disruptions during testing.

Ensure monitoring software or spyware is disabled or removed from computers, iPads, and Chromebooks to be used for testing.

Ensure all instructional materials that could aid students in answering test items are covered with opaque material or removed from classrooms and hallways.

Make sure the testing environment is secure and educationally appropriate.

Know the required accommodations and those allowable accommodations for each student with an IEP or 504 Service Plan and/or for each English Learner being assessed and communicate this to the appropriate personnel.

Provide the appropriate testing environment for each student requiring an accommodation.

Inventory tests received in ship-to-district sites. If additional materials are needed, notify DRC. In a ship-to-school site the SAC should order additional materials, if needed.

Report any shipping or ordering mistakes immediately to DRC.

Create Test Sessions in the DRC INSIGHT portal (if testing online). Make sure to list the correct TA when creating test sessions in the DRC INSIGHT portal.



Put labels on answer and combined test/answer booklets (Do not open test booklets while labeling).

Place a “Testing—Do Not Disturb” sign on doors where testing is occurring.

During Test Administration – SAC

Develop and maintain a procedure for distribution and collection of secure test materials to TAs each day utilizing a sign-out/sign-in process. It is recommended that TAs count the test booklets in the presence of the SAC or the SAC’s designee.

Ensure that TAs are following proper testing protocols.

Make sure students are supervised at all times during testing and all breaks. This supervision requirement includes those students who need additional time to complete any test session.

If there is a disruption (e.g., fire alarm, power outage) ensure the safety of students at all times, and take appropriate precautions concerning the security of the test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets.

Ensure secure processes and procedures for extended time. Do not allow students to move to an extended time location without a TA and do not allow students to carry materials to an extended time session/location.

Make sure that sections/modules are started and completed in the same day.

Minimize distractions, including intercom announcements.

Ensure tests are stored in a locked area with controlled and limited access.

Report suspected testing irregularities/security breaches to the DAC. If the DAC is unavailable for an extended time or has any involvement in the testing irregularity, PDE must be contacted directly. Irregularities and/or allegations should be reported to PDE via ra-edirregularities@pa.gov.

After Each Testing Session – SAC

Collect all materials from TAs excluding copies of the DFA.

Account for all student test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets daily. It is recommended that the SAC or the SAC’s designee count the booklets and/or test tickets in the presence of the TA.

Store testing materials in a locked, secure location.

Destroy scratch/grid paper, rough drafts, online administration test tickets, and any other paper on which students have written.



After Test Administration – SAC

Inventory and return tests to the DAC (ship-to-district) or follow pack and ship procedures to return tests to DRC (ship-to-school).

NOTE: SACs should not open test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets or review test items.

In ship-to-school LEAs, SACs should record the UPS Tracking Number for each package, noting the assessment(s) for which it was used and the content of each box. Maintain the number(s) for future reference to document that the materials were returned to DRC.

Failure to account for and/or return assessment materials constitutes a breach in security, the consequences of which can be severe; up to and including remuneration should it be determined loss of or misappropriation of materials has compromised the integrity of test items.

Sign the *Test Security Certification (School Assessment Coordinator and Principal)*. The SAC should sign the *Test Security Certification* at the end of each testing window.

Ensure all TAs, Proctors, Translators, Interpreters, Scribes, and other individuals with access to secure testing materials sign the *Test Security Certification*. If someone cannot or does not sign the *Test Security Certification*, immediately report that fact to the Chief School Administrator to report to the Department of Education. Allegations should be referred to ra-edirregularities@pa.gov.

C. TEST ADMINISTRATOR/PROCTOR TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

General Statement: Maintain the security and integrity of all assessment materials, prevent any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promote a fair and equitable testing environment in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores.

Before Test Administration – TA/Proctor

Attend the annual training for TAs/proctors provided by the SAC.

Annually (each school year) complete the PSTAT.

Review the *Directions for Administration Manual* for the test to be administered.

Read and understand the *Test Security Certification*.

Know and understand that each assessment returned will be linked to the TA who administered the assessment. For paper and pencil assessments, TA initials will be collected on the back page of each answer or combined test/answer booklet. For online testing, teacher (TA) names must be included with each online test session created. This will link the TA to the online session prior to test tickets being generated.

Remove or cover with opaque materials all classroom instructional materials or any other materials that could aid students in answering test items.

Make sure the testing environment is secure and educationally appropriate.



Review the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* with students prior to the day of testing and respond to all student questions.

Review the *Calculator Policy* and ensure calculators (other than calculators provided within the online testing engine) meet the requirements of the *Calculator Policy*. Clear the calculator memory. For calculators with exam mode capability, place the calculator in exam mode.

Know and prepare to appropriately implement the required accommodations for each student with an IEP or 504 Service Plan and for each English Learner being assessed in your room.

Review with students the possible local sanctions the district will enforce for student misconduct (e.g., cheating and recording test questions).

During Test Administration – TA/Proctor

Collect cell phones, smartphones, and other unauthorized electronic devices as students enter the testing site.

Ensure students are seated for optimal security and at the assigned workstation (online test).

Appropriately implement required accommodations.

During the administration of the mathematics assessment, collect all used scratch/grid paper and any other paper on which students have written after the non-calculator portion to ensure students have not recorded non-calculator items on scratch/grid paper. Provide new scratch/grid paper to students.

Actively monitor testing. Closely monitor to ensure students do not return to non-calculator questions. These pages are labeled with a bright border for ease in identification. TAs should take positions with the best vantage points and continually move around the testing site to ensure students are adhering to the instructions given and are in the correct session. Ascertain that students are not using inappropriate item elimination strategies or making stray marks in the answer bubbles. TAs/Proctors must not be engaged in off task activities such as working on electronic devices, talking with colleagues, or grading student work.

Make sure students are supervised at all times during testing and all breaks. This supervision requirement includes those students who need additional time to complete any test session.

If there is a disruption (e.g., fire alarm, power outage) ensure the safety of students at all times, and take appropriate precautions concerning the security of the test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets.

Collect test materials when students are finished testing rather than keeping them closed on the students' desks.

Students who finish early may sit quietly, read for pleasure, or read non-content-related materials until all students have finished. Reading for pleasure includes magazines along with fiction text such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc. Reading anything that may include information related to the content area being assessed is not allowed. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.

Immediately report suspected testing irregularities/security breaches to the SAC/Building Principal.



After Each Testing Session – TA/Proctor

Return all scratch/grid paper, rough drafts or any other paper on which students have written to the SAC to be destroyed.

Account for all student test booklets, answer booklets, combined test/answer booklets, and test tickets daily and return all secure testing materials to the SAC immediately after the testing session each day. It is recommended that the SAC or the SAC’s designee count the test booklets and/or test tickets in the presence of the TA.

Failure to account for and/or return assessment materials constitutes a breach in security, the consequences of which can be severe, up to and including remuneration should it be determined loss of or misappropriation of materials has compromised the integrity of test items.

Clear the memory of calculators and set the calculators in testing or exam mode before and after each testing session.

After Test Administration – TA/Proctor

Sign the *Test Security Certification (Test Administrator/Proctor)* and return it to the SAC. The TA/Proctor should sign the *Test Security Certification* at the end of each testing window.

D. GENERAL TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

The assessments rely on the measurement of individual achievement. Any deviation from assessment procedures is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security.

School administrators, teachers, and any other education personnel who are involved in the assessment program must maintain the security of all assessment materials at all times.

Because the assessment must remain secure, teachers/TAs should not have assessment materials in their possession at any time other than during the actual assessment administration.

Before Test Administration

DO NOT:

Teach students a test-taking technique that would require them to bubble more than one response to a test question and then return and erase all but one response.

Review student test booklets except for purposes as stated in the *Directions for Administration Manual* and any of the accommodations guidelines documents. Knowledge or review of test items is not necessary for valid test administration and is prohibited.

Note: Interpreters may have access to test materials three days prior to test administration to prepare for accurate interpretation of the test.

Reveal any part of copyrighted materials to anyone.

Copy or otherwise reproduce any part of copyrighted materials.

Review and/or provide answers to test items to students. This includes using any of the test items for instructional purposes.



Possess unauthorized copies of state tests.

Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report immediately any of the actions prohibited in this document.

During Test Administration

DO NOT:

Leave students unattended with testing materials or permit any student to leave the testing site with testing materials for any reason.

Permit students to have unauthorized electronic devices in their possession or accessible to them.

Permit students to look ahead to another section or module of the test before being instructed to do so, or allow students to look back in a test booklet once a test section or module has been completed.

Discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal contents of the test to anyone.

Possess secure test materials at any time other than during the actual administration of the test. TAs should be given the secure materials immediately prior to the administration of the test, and the materials must be collected and counted by the SAC immediately after the testing session ends each day.

Coach or provide feedback to students (e.g., answer any questions pertaining to the content of the test, review rough drafts, or give students feedback of any kind including indicating items students may not have answered correctly). This prohibition applies to, but is not limited to, Personal Care Aides (PCA), Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS), or any other one-on-one aide who is assigned to a student.

Define or clarify a word in a test item.

Deviate from any of the read-aloud rules for any portion of the assessments. (The *Pennsylvania Read-Aloud and Scribing Guidelines for Operational Assessments* can be found on the PDE website.)

Read aloud any part of the assessments that will cue the correct answer(s) or provide a hint for the test taker.

Read-aloud the parts of the assessment that are not permitted to be read-aloud.

Return a test booklet to any student after it has been turned in to the TA, unless approval is granted by PDE, or for the reasons noted in the following sentence. Test booklets will be returned to students for makeup sessions for absences and for students who go to another testing site for extended time.

Alter, influence, or interfere with a test response in any way; fill in any unanswered item, or instruct the student to do so.

Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report any of the actions prohibited in this document.

Play music while students are taking the test.



After Test Administration

DO NOT:

Discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents of the test to anyone.

Keep/save, copy, reproduce, or use any test, test item, specific test content, or examinee responses to any item or any section of a secure test in any manner inconsistent with the instructions provided by and through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This includes using any of the test items for instructional purposes.

Review student responses in the answer or combined test/answer booklet.

Read or review test booklets, answer booklets, or combined test/answer booklets containing the test items.

Alter, influence, or interfere with a test response in any way, fill in any unanswered items, or instruct the student to do so.

Discuss or provide feedback regarding test items.

Copy or reproduce any portion of the secure test materials or prepare/provide answer keys.

Erase or change student answers.

Make false or misleading statements about assessment results, including inappropriate interpretations, inaccurate reports, or unsubstantiated claims.

Erase stray marks or darken bubbles or make any alteration to a student's test.

Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report any of the actions prohibited in this document.

DO:

Immediately report suspected testing irregularities/security breaches. TAs/Proctors should report to the SAC/Building Principal; SACs should report directly to the DAC. In either case if the appropriate coordinator, whether SAC or DAC, is unavailable for an extended time or has any involvement in the testing irregularity, contact PDE directly. Irregularities and/or allegations should be reported to PDE at ra-edirregularities@pa.gov.

Sign the *Test Security Certification (General)*. Those involved with testing should sign the *Test Security Certification* at the end of each testing window.

Appendix B:

PSSA Test Security Certification

(Test Administrator and Proctor)



2025 PSSA Test Security Certification

(Test Administrator and Proctor)

District: _____

School: _____

AUN: _____

Maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials, preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment are essential in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores. In that regard, I certify the following:

Prior to the administration of the assessment, I completed the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training, and I understand that the assessment materials are secure, confidential, and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

I have not reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I have not removed any assessment materials from the school building unless I was specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction. I have not kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I have not provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question. I have not in any manner altered or caused the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

I understand that any breach in assessment security could result in the invalidation of assessment results, professional discipline, and/or criminal prosecution.

I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904.

Administrator/Proctor Name

Administrator/Proctor Signature

Date of Signature

Appendix C:

Code of Conduct for Test Takers



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEST TAKERS

DO ...

- Listen to, read, and follow all directions given.
- Ask questions if you do not understand the directions.
- Read each question carefully, especially multiple-choice items that ask for the “best answer.” Also, be sure to read any open-ended items carefully before responding.
- Be careful when marking your answers so that you do not skip spaces or fill in the wrong sections.
- Make sure to completely fill in the bubble for the answer(s) you select and erase completely any answers you change.
- Keep your eyes on your own test.
- Try to answer each test item.
- Check that you have completed all the test items in the test section before closing your test booklet or submitting your final responses online.
- Report any suspected cheating to your teacher or principal.

DO NOT ...

- Have notes in your possession during the test.
- Have any unapproved electronic devices (cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds, etc.) in your possession during the test. Note, you may have approved calculators, if applicable, during the test.
- Share a calculator with others.
- Use the bubbles in the answer booklet to either eliminate possible incorrect answers or possible correct answers by making marks in multiple bubbles and erasing. Mark only the bubble for the correct answer(s) you have chosen.
- Talk with others about questions on the test during or after the test. (Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.)
- Take notes about the test to share with others.
- Leave an online test session until the session is complete or until instructed to do so.
- Use social media to post information about the test and/or test items.

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SPRING 2025
GRADES 4–8—PSSA
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
DIRECTIONS FOR PAPER AND PENCIL ADMINISTRATION