

***Louisiana Educational Assessment Program  
for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century :  
LEAP 21 & GEE 21***

***TEST DESIGN:  
English Language Arts***

***INTRODUCTION***

This document describes the overall design of the English Language Arts tests for the LEAP 21 state criterion-referenced tests to be administered to students in grades 4, 8, and 10. The document provides detailed specifications for the test at each grade level and sample test questions, so that teachers may align classroom assessment practices with state assessment strategies to ensure that students are adequately exposed to testing formats prior to taking the test. Scoring rubrics are also included.

Traditionally, the state criterion-referenced tests in English Language Arts concentrated on multiple-choice test questions based on relatively short reading passages. LEAP 21 demands more of students by including longer reading passages and a greater variety of item types, including open-ended questions requiring written responses to what they read. In addition, students at each grade are expected to write a composition in response to a writing prompt.

***OVERVIEW OF THE TESTS***

The English Language Arts assessment for each grade has four parts or sessions:

- Session 1: Writing
- Session 2: Using Information Resources
- Session 3: Reading and Responding
- Session 4: Proofreading

Each session of the test is described below. More specific information about the content of the test at each grade is provided in the assessment framework for the respective grade levels. (See ensuing sections of this document.)

Standard 4 (demonstrating competence in *speaking and listening*) is not currently incorporated in state testing. The Department of Education is exploring ways to encourage and support assessment of this standard at the local level, as well as the feasibility of measuring this standard in future state-level testing.

## ***SESSION 1: WRITING***

Session 1 of the test is designed to measure key aspects of Standards 2 and 3, as defined below.

### **Standard 2**

Students write competently for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **Standard 3**

Students communicate using standard English grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and handwriting.

Session 1 requires students to produce a composition in response to a writing prompt.

### **Writing Prompt**

The particular mode of writing assessed at a given grade (narrative, descriptive, expository, or persuasive) will alternate from one assessment cycle to another, as indicated in the Assessment Framework for each grade.

Compositions are scored for composing, style/audience awareness, sentence formation, as well as specific attributes of standard English grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling. Dictionaries and thesauruses will be available in the classroom for students' use *only* during Session 1, Writing.

## ***SESSION 2: USING INFORMATION RESOURCES***

In Session 2, students are required to respond to items designed to measure Standard 5, as defined below.

### **Standard 5**

Students locate, select, and synthesize information from a variety of texts, media, references, and technological sources to acquire and communicate knowledge.

Students are provided reference sources – such as encyclopedia articles, parts of books, charts, and maps – to use to answer a series of multiple-choice and short-answer items.

The benchmark on using available technology to produce, revise, and publish a variety of works (ELA-5-E4, ELA-5-M4, and ELA-5-H4), as well as aspects of other Standard 5 benchmarks calling for technological resources, currently are not incorporated in the state tests. At such time as technological resources are more uniformly available in schools statewide, the Department of Education will revisit the feasibility of assessing these skills on state tests.

## ***SESSION 3: READING AND RESPONDING***

Session 3 of the test at each grade includes four reading passages (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry) and a variety of types of items, such as multiple-choice items with four responses (a, b, c, d) and short-answer items. Also, Session 3 at grades 8 and 10 has an essay question based on at least *two* of the passages requiring students to comprehend and react to the content of the reading material.

Questions in Session 3 measure key aspects of Standards 1, 6, and 7, as defined below.

### **Standard 1**

Students read, comprehend, and respond to a range of materials, using a variety of strategies for different purposes.

### **Standard 6**

Students read, analyze, and respond to literature as a record of life experiences.

### **Standard 7**

Students apply reasoning and problem-solving skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing.

All reading passages are authentic and grade-appropriate. Selections represent the full text of previously published work, fully-developed excerpts from longer published works, or well-developed text written specifically for the test.

The length of the reading passages falls within the range specified in the Assessment Framework for each grade. Passages for a given grade level reflect a balance among length, readability level, and interest level of the topic. Moreover, readability and passage length are balanced across the selections in each test.

## ***SESSION 4: PROOFREADING***

In Session 4, students read a text that includes mistakes in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling; then students answer multiple-choice questions that require them to choose the best way to correct each mistake. Session 4 of the test is designed to measure key aspects of Standard 3, as defined below.

### **Standard 3**

Students communicate using standard English grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and handwriting.

The following sections of this guide present the assessment frameworks for grades 4, 8, and 10, respectively. Each section concludes with a set of sample test items keyed to particular standards/benchmarks, including illustrative exercises for Sessions 1 and 2 of the test.

For ease of reference, a list of all benchmark statements for all grade clusters (K–4, 5–8, and 9–12) is provided in the appendix.

## ***LEAP 21 Scoring Information***

LEAP 21 assesses the critical knowledge and skills that are reflected in the content standards. These standards prescribe not only what students should know at certain points in their schooling, but also what they should be able to do with that knowledge. To measure student learning more effectively, both constructed-response items and multiple-choice items are included on LEAP 21. Constructed-response items appear on LEAP 21 assessments in each content area: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These **constructed-response items** require students to apply their knowledge and to solve problems through written communication. Hand-written student responses are scored by trained readers, as opposed to **multiple-choice items** that are scanned by a machine. This section of the *Teachers' Guide* provides information on Louisiana's general scoring rubrics and the process used to score Louisiana students' responses.

For each constructed-response item, with the exception of Writing, a scoring rubric (a guide or model for scoring the response) that is specific to each test item must be developed. These **item-specific rubrics** are based on **general rubrics** (provided in this section) that were approved by committees of Louisiana educators. The test items are developed by a testing contractor, and then, reviewed by committees of Louisiana educators, mostly composed of teachers. As the constructed-response test items are reviewed, the committees also review the scoring rubrics that have been developed for those particular items. Upon the committees' completion of item development, the items are first administered to a sample of students across the state in an Item Tryout. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) and the testing contractor review the results of the Item Tryout and the "live" student responses to determine the changes that need to be made to the items and the scoring rubrics before the items are field tested on a much larger sample of students. After the items have been field tested, the testing contractor prepares materials to use in training the readers who score the student responses. To prepare the scoring guides, the LDE and the testing contractor participate in a process called "**range-finding**," which is described below.

Range-finding is conducted prior to the scoring of the field and operational tests. The testing contractor's Scoring Director for a given content area convenes a grade- and content-specific range-finding committee that is composed of Louisiana teachers. The Scoring Director and LDE staff facilitate the meeting. The meetings begin with discussion of the item-specific rubrics (or the six-dimensional scoring model for Writing); and then the committees proceed to review the responses. Each participant reads and scores samples of student responses; and then the committee reaches common agreement on the score that each response should receive based on the scoring rubric. Only the responses with high levels of agreement are used to train the readers. The committee meets over a period of several days to read the number of responses needed to construct training sets. As a result of this activity, the scoring contractor gets student responses that represent the range of score points for each test item and a rationale for each score point. Once the contractor has a collection of scored responses, the scoring guides with annotations that explain the rationale for the score and the training sets for the readers are compiled.

To qualify as a reader for Louisiana's testing program, one must hold a Bachelor's Degree and must meet the criteria to become a reader, which includes scoring multiple training sets and scoring the qualifying sets with 70% perfect agreement.

The scoring contractor determines the number of readers needed based on the volume of tests and the time frame in which they are to be scored, as specified in the contract. LDE staff members who were involved in the range-finding process travel to the contractor's scoring site to assist in the training of the readers and to ensure that Louisiana's scoring specifications are being met.

**Note:**

- Only the written response to the Writing prompt is scored for the conventions of writing: i.e., sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling. All other written responses for the English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies assessments are scored for content only.
- All student responses to the Writing prompt are scored by two readers. If the readers' scores are non-adjacent, a third reader scores the paper. All four-point items on the English Language Arts and Mathematics tests are scored by two readers, with a third reading if the scores are non-adjacent. The two-point (short answer) items are scored by one reader. For the Science and Social Studies tests, all student responses are scored by one reader.

Louisiana's General Scoring Rubrics for two-point and four-point constructed-response items are included on the following page. These rubrics represent models that are used to develop item-specific rubrics for LEAP 21. These models are among many that can be used by teachers to develop appropriate rubrics for classroom assessments.

## Scoring Constructed-Response Items

All written student responses are hand-scored based on rubrics that are item specific. There are three general scoring rubrics used when developing item-specific rubrics for constructed-response items on the English Language Arts Test. Short-answer items are scored on a 0–2 point scale. The extended-response essay question, given only at the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade levels, is scored on a 0-4 point scale. The written composition is worth twelve points and is scored with the general writing rubric.

### ELA GENERAL SCORING RUBRICS

#### Score Points – Open-Response Items

**0–2 points scale** – scoring for **short-answer** items in English Language Arts (ELA)

**0–4 points scale** – scoring for **extended-response** items (ELA essay—8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades)

#### Short-Answer Items

- 2 • The student’s response provides a complete and correct answer.
- 1 • The student’s response is partially correct.  
• The student’s response demonstrates limited awareness or contains errors.
- 0 • The student’s response is incorrect, irrelevant, too minimal to evaluate, or blank.

#### Extended-Response Items

- 4 • The student’s response demonstrates in-depth understanding of the relevant content and/or procedures.  
• The student completes all important components of the task accurately and communicates ideas effectively.  
• Where appropriate, the student offers insightful interpretations and/or extensions.  
• Where appropriate, the student uses more sophisticated reasoning and/or efficient procedures.
- 3 • The student completes most important aspects of the task accurately and communicates clearly.  
• The response demonstrates an understanding of major concepts and/or processes, although less important ideas or details may be overlooked or misunderstood.  
• The student’s logic and reasoning may contain minor flaws.
- 2 • The student completes some parts of the task successfully.  
• The response demonstrates gaps in the conceptual understanding.
- 1 • The student completes only a small portion of the tasks and/or shows minimal understanding of the concepts and/or processes.
- 0 • The student’s response is incorrect, irrelevant, too brief to evaluate, or blank.

## WRITING

The Writing section of the test requires the student to write a composition in response to a specific topic, referred to as a writing prompt. The writing prompt is selected from among those field tested specifically for use in LEAP 21. The administration procedures for the Writing section require the student to develop a draft of the composition in the test booklet, edit the draft, and then write a final draft on two lined pages in the answer document.

### Writing Scoring Criteria

For scoring the Writing section of the test, a 12-point model is used. Scoring rules have been developed for the dimensions of Composing and for Style/Audience Awareness. Also, Sentence Formation, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling dimensions are scored. For each administration of LEAP 21, the Writing section is scored by at least two readers.

For the Composing dimension and for the Style/Audience Awareness dimension, the following score points are used:

- 4 The writer demonstrates **consistent**, though not necessarily perfect, control of almost all of the dimension's features.
- 3 The writer demonstrates **reasonable**, but not consistent, control of most of the dimension's features, indicating some weakness in the dimension.
- 2 The writer demonstrates enough **inconsistent** control of several features to indicate significant weakness in the dimension.
- 1 The writer demonstrates **little or no** control of most of the dimension's features.

For the purposes of scoring, **control** is defined as the writer's ability to use a given feature of written language effectively at the appropriate grade level.

The Composing dimension includes the focusing, supporting, and structuring that a writer does to construct an effective message for a reader. The writer crafts that message by focusing on a central idea, providing elaboration of ideas to support the central idea, and delivering the central idea and its support in a unified, organized text. Specific features of Composing are as follows:

- Central idea
- Support/Elaboration
- Unity
- Organization.

The Style/Audience Awareness dimension comprises features of linguistic expression: how a writer purposefully shapes and controls language to affect readers. This domain focuses on the expressiveness, specificity, and rhythm of the piece and on the writer's attitude and presence.

In particular, features of Style/Audience Awareness are as follows:

- Selected vocabulary (diction or word choice)
- Selected information
- Sentence variety (syntactic variety)
- Tone
- Voice.

In addition to the Composing Dimension and the Style/Audience Awareness Dimension, several writing dimensions are scored with either a + (receiving a score point of 1) or – (receiving a score point of 0) on the LEAP 21 test. These dimensions are Sentence Formation, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling. Specifically, their features are as follows:

Sentence Formation: Desirable features are completeness and construction of a variety of patterns.

- + The response exhibits **acceptable control** of sentence formation. Most sentences are correct; there are few, if any, run-on sentences or fragments. Additionally, there is a variety of sentence patterns, indicating that the writer can construct more than one type of sentence competently.
- The response exhibits **unacceptable control** of sentence formation. There are run-on sentences, fragments, and/or poorly constructed sentences that indicate that the writer does not have adequate skill in sentence formation. There may be evidence of control of only one type of sentence pattern (usually simple).

Usage: Features are agreement, standard inflections, and word meaning.

- + The response exhibits **acceptable control** of usage. Subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, forms of adjectives and adverbs, and word meaning are generally correct. If errors are present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of usage errors.
- The response exhibits **unacceptable control** of usage. There are errors in subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, forms of adjectives and adverbs, and/or word meaning. The pattern of errors is evidence of a lack of control of the features of usage.

Mechanics: Features are punctuation, capitalization, and formatting.

- + The response exhibits **acceptable control** of mechanics. Punctuation, capitalization, and formatting are generally correct. If errors are present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of mechanics errors.
- The response exhibits **unacceptable control** of mechanics. There are errors in punctuation, capitalization, and/or formatting. The pattern of errors is evidence of a lack of control of the features of mechanics.

### Spelling:

- + The response exhibits **acceptable control** of spelling. The majority of grade-appropriate words are spelled correctly. There is no pattern of spelling errors.
- The response exhibits **unacceptable control** of spelling. There is a pattern of spelling errors. There are errors in spelling grade-appropriate words.

In some cases, a paper may not be scorable. For example, if a paper is illegible, it will not be scored in any dimension and will receive a score of zero. A paper may be off-topic and cannot be scored for Composing or Style/Audience Awareness dimensions, but it may be scored for Sentence Formation, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling. Such a paper could receive a maximum of 4 of 12 points.

## **Additional Scoring Criteria for Writing**

### **No “Double Jeopardy”**

*During scoring, one word will constitute only one error. In situations in which it is difficult to determine to which dimension the error should be assigned, the scorer will take into account priority, context clues, and error patterns that are evident in the paper.*

- *Priority is given to the more serious grammatical errors.*
- Context clues may indicate the writer’s intention.
- Error patterns already evident in the paper indicate a skill weakness in that dimension.

### **Sentence Formation**

If a sentence with omissions, extra words, or wrong words can be corrected by changing *one word*, the error should count as a **usage** error.

Example: When it’s no school, I play all day.

If a sentence requires the rearrangement, omission or addition of *more than one word*, the error should count as a **sentence formation** error.

Example: I saw those boys fighting while driving my car.

If a sentence begins with a lower-case letter but is preceded by a period, the error counts as a **mechanics** error.

Example: Teddy is the youngest in the family. he is my only nephew.

If a sentence begins with a capital letter but is *not* preceded by a period, the error counts as a **mechanics** error.

Example: Martha went to the well and looked inside Far below, something was sparkling in the water.

If a sentence fragment is deliberately presented for effect, the error is *not counted* as an error.

Example: What a break!

Non-parallel structure, often in a series, is a **sentence formation** error.

Example: We will live better lives, coping with our sorrows, and how to be joyful of our happiness.

In grades that are not responsible for mastery of colons, a sentence that contains a series that should have been preceded by a colon would count as a **sentence formation** error. The alternate correct construction would be another sentence.

Example: Janet is a good librarian because of all three of these reasons she is helpful, she is smart and she is courteous.

A *pattern of awkward syntax* (word order) should be considered a **sentence formation** error.

### **Quotations**

All **spelling** and **grammar** errors that appear in a direct quotation are assumed to be the errors of the speaker, not the writer. They are *not counted in any dimension*. Errors in **mechanics** that appear in a direct quotation *do count*.

Example: “You aint got no reason ta be here Manny!” shouted the foreman.

Direct quotations *should not* be preceded by “that.” Indirect quotations *should* be preceded by “that.” These count as errors in **mechanics**.

Example: Then Mom said that, “We cannot go along.” After we returned, she said we are in trouble.

### **Usage, Spelling and Mechanics**

Usage and mechanics errors count each time they occur in an essay. However, spelling errors count only once, even if a word is misspelled in more than one way.

Use of double comparatives or double negatives is a common **usage** error.

Example: I’m even more better at soccer than at football. None of them are not my friend.

Use of the wrong preposition is a common **usage** error.

Example: He went for the house.

Both “T.V.” and “tv” are **acceptable** and **not a mechanics** error.

Interchanging “*will*” with “*would*” and “*can*” with “*could*” is **acceptable** and **not a usage** error.

Use of “*so they*” instead of “*so that they*” is **acceptable** and **not a usage** error.

Agreement errors of compound pronouns or collective nouns with possessives are **usage** errors.

Examples: **Correct:** “people’s lives,” “everyone’s hope,” “everybody’s house,” “their lives”

Agreement errors with collectives, phrases, and conjunctions are **usage** errors.

Example: **Incorrect:** None of the teachers are good role models or a hero.

A word may be both a **usage** and a **spelling** error, or it may not be possible from *context clues* to determine whether the error is in spelling or in usage. In such instances, the error should be counted in **usage only**.

Example: She allway comes to work on time.

If a misused word in a sentence is a real word, it is a **usage** error. If it is not a real word, it is a **spelling** error.

Example: We all went to the skating ring. (**usage**) We joined my parnets and were reddy to leave. (**spelling**)

An error in which a *homonym* takes the place of the correct word is counted as a **spelling** error.

Example: Martin gave him a peace of his chocolate bar.

Some words, although they are not real homophones, are so phonetically similar that they are frequently misspelled. Context clues should indicate whether the skill weakness is **spelling** or **usage** (wrong word).

Example: I would rather have a vacation then a raise! (**spelling**) She was late for her piano listens. (**usage**)

A word may be either a **spelling** or a **mechanics** error. Use either *context clues* or *error patterns* to determine which dimension would be most appropriate.

Example: All the hero's aren't in the movies. (**spelling**)

A word may be either a **usage** or a **mechanics** error. Use either *context clues* or *error patterns* to determine which dimension would be most appropriate.

Example: Were going to Disneyland on our vacation. (**mechanics**)

In a series, a *comma before "and"* is optional; both ways are considered **correct**.

Example: The birds, cats and dogs... The birds, cats, and dogs...

In some series, the placement of the comma *is not optional because it affects the sense* of the sentence.

Example: The pet shop was filled with birds, cats and dogs (kenneled), and fish of every color, shape and size.

A word at the end of a line that is not broken at the end of a syllable or is broken and has only one syllable is a **mechanics** error.

Example: I worked at the National Fou-  
ndation for the Blind.

## **Other Issues**

**Jargon** that is in common use in contemporary speech is permitted in on-demand essays.

Example: After he cut the lights, we locked the door and left the house.

**Dialect** is counted as a **usage** error unless it is in a direct quotation.

Example: I'm very happy y'all are reading my test and I hope y'all pass me.

Since the purpose of writing assessments is to determine how well students can demonstrate and maintain writing skills in an original on-demand essay, the rules of **standard, written English** apply and override foreign language, regional, ethnic, and colloquial speech patterns.

Students must produce an **essay** to participate in the test. Plays, poems, lyrics, and drawings are **not** acceptable. One or two sentences do **not** satisfy the requirements of an essay. Copies are not allowed.

Essays will be considered **on-topic** if the scorer can determine that the student attempted to respond to the prompt.

## Six-Dimensional Rubric for Scoring the Writing Section of LEAP 21

### Dimensions

### Possible Points by Dimension

**(Standard 2)**

- Composing 4 points (on a 1 to 4-point scale)
- Style/Audience Awareness 4 points

**(Standard 3)**

- Sentence Formation 1 point (on a zero to 1-point scale)
- Usage 1 point
- Mechanics 1 point
- Spelling 1 point

**Total = 12 points**

The student's composition is read by two readers. The readers' scores are averaged for each dimension.

Example:

<u>Dimension</u>	<u>Reader 1</u>	<u>Reader 2</u>	<u>Score</u>
Composing	3	4	3.5
Style/Audience Awareness	2	2	2 (5.5)
Sentence Formation	1	0	.5
Usage	1	1	1
Mechanics	0	1	.5
Spelling	1	1	1 (3)
<b>Total Score</b>			<b>8.5 (of 12)</b>

## Composing Dimension

Score Point	Central Idea	Elaboration	Organization and Unity
<b>4</b>  <b>Consistent Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharp focus</li> <li>• clarity of purpose</li> <li>• strategy (preplanning and foreshadowing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selected information</li> <li>• thorough elaboration</li> <li>• ideas are developed (examples)</li> <li>• necessary information</li> <li>• specific details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wholeness throughout</li> <li>• ideas related to central idea</li> <li>• beginning, middle, end</li> <li>• logical order</li> <li>• transitions</li> <li>• sense of completion</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>  <b>Reasonable Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear central idea</li> <li>• clear focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas are developed</li> <li>• necessary information</li> <li>• relevant</li> <li>• may have uneven development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning, middle, end</li> <li>• logical order</li> <li>• simple transitions</li> <li>• wholeness (may have a weak ending)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>  <b>Inconsistent Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vague central idea</li> <li>• shifts in focus</li> <li>• digressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listing</li> <li>• information may be superficial, incomplete, and/or irrelevant</li> <li>• idea clusters</li> <li>• little or uneven development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weak beginning, middle, end</li> <li>• retreats and/or repetitions</li> <li>• gaps</li> <li>• random order</li> <li>• no ending</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>  <b>Little or No Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unclear central idea</li> <li>• confusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• automatic writing without selection</li> <li>• relevant information missed</li> <li>• little or no development</li> <li>• minimal information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no beginning or end</li> <li>• severe gaps</li> <li>• random order</li> <li>• too little to demonstrate</li> </ul>

### Style/Audience Awareness Dimension

Score Point	Selected Vocabulary	Selected Information	Sentence Diversity	Tone and Voice
<b>4</b> <b>Consistent Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word choice is appropriate, relevant, vivid, power verbs</li> <li>• stylistic techniques (imagery, similies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selected for relevance and/or impact</li> <li>• vivid examples or anecdotes</li> <li>• appropriate to audience</li> <li>• manipulates audience (humor)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some variety in structure (beginnings, endings), complexity, length</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistent, clear, vibrant tone and voice</li> <li>• individual personality</li> <li>• engages and/or manipulates audience</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>Reasonable Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear</li> <li>• appropriate</li> <li>• relevant</li> <li>• some variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some selected information</li> <li>• some examples</li> <li>• appropriate to audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some variety in structure and/or complexity and/or length</li> <li>• And, But beginnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistent tone</li> <li>• aware of audience</li> <li>• clear voice</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> <b>Inconsistent Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generic</li> <li>• overused</li> <li>• some may be inappropriate</li> <li>• wrong word</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contradictions</li> <li>• bare bones</li> <li>• lists information</li> <li>• irrelevant</li> <li>• superficial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sentence patterns</li> <li>• simple sentences</li> <li>• over-extended sentences</li> <li>• And, But beginnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vague</li> <li>• weak awareness of audience</li> <li>• inappropriate</li> <li>• monotonous</li> <li>• inconsistent tone</li> </ul>
<b>1</b> <b>Little or No Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• functional</li> <li>• inappropriate</li> <li>• wrong word</li> <li>• omission errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• automatic writing</li> <li>• too little</li> <li>• inappropriate</li> <li>• abrupt change from central idea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple</li> <li>• patterns</li> <li>• on and on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confusing</li> <li>• absent</li> <li>• no awareness of audience</li> <li>• unengaged</li> </ul>

## LEAP 21 Scoring Considerations: Grade 4

Sentence Formation	Usage	Mechanics	Spelling
<p>Errors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete sentences</li> <li>• Fragments</li> <li>• Run-ons</li> <li>• Syntax problems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Inflections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct verb tense</li> <li>• Comparisons (-er, -est, more, most)</li> <li>• Possessive form of singular and plural nouns</li> </ul> <p>Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject/verb</li> </ul> <p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A/an</li> <li>• Pronoun case: a nominative pronoun as the subject, an objective pronoun as the object of the verb or preposition</li> <li>• Use nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs correctly</li> </ul> <p>Word Meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use words that fit the sentence position and meaning</li> <li>• Errors count each time they occur</li> <li>• An extra word or an omission</li> </ul>	<p><b>Capitalization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Days, months, holidays</li> <li>• Names of people</li> <li>• I</li> <li>• First word of a sentence</li> <li>• Titles of respect</li> <li>• Titles of books, movies, songs, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End punctuation (period, question mark)</li> <li>• Comma between city, state</li> <li>• Comma in dates</li> <li>• Comma in series</li> <li>• Comma after the salutation and closing of a letter</li> <li>• Periods after abbreviations or titles</li> <li>• Apostrophes in contractions</li> <li>• Apostrophes in possessives</li> <li>• Words should be divided at the syllable at the end of a line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homonyms</li> <li>• High frequency words</li> <li>• Colors</li> <li>• Days of the week</li> <li>• Common abbreviations</li> <li>• Grade-appropriate words</li> </ul>

## LEAP 21 Scoring Considerations: Grade 8

Sentence Formation	Usage	Mechanics	Spelling
<p>Errors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete sentences</li> <li>• Fragments</li> <li>• Run-ons</li> <li>• Syntax problems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Inflections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct verb tense</li> <li>• Comparisons (-er, -est, more, most)</li> <li>• Adverbs, adjectives (real, really, or good/well except with “feel”)</li> <li>• Possessive form of singular and plural nouns</li> </ul> <p>Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject/verb</li> <li>• Pronoun/antecedent</li> </ul> <p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid double negatives</li> <li>• A/an</li> <li>• Pronoun case: a nominative pronoun as the subject, an objective pronoun as the object of the verb or preposition</li> <li>• Use nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs correctly</li> </ul> <p>Word Meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use words that fit the sentence position and meaning</li> <li>• Errors count each time they occur</li> <li>• An extra word or an omission</li> </ul>	<p><b>Capitalization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Days, months, holidays</li> <li>• Street, town city, state, country</li> <li>• Geographical names</li> <li>• Names of people</li> <li>• Names of companies, buildings, and monuments</li> <li>• Initials and nicknames</li> <li>• I</li> <li>• First word of a sentence</li> <li>• First word of a direct quote</li> <li>• Titles of respect</li> <li>• Titles of books, movies, songs, etc.</li> <li>• Salutation and closing of a letter</li> </ul> <p>Punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End punctuation</li> <li>• Comma between city, state</li> <li>• Comma in dates</li> <li>• Comma in series</li> <li>• Comma after introductory elements</li> <li>• Comma to separate independent clauses</li> <li>• Comma to set off direct address</li> <li>• Comma after the salutation and closing of a letter</li> <li>• Semicolon to separate independent clauses</li> <li>• Quotation marks around direct quotes</li> <li>• Periods after abbreviations or titles</li> <li>• Apostrophes in contractions</li> <li>• Apostrophes in possessives</li> <li>• Words should be divided at the syllable at the end of a line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homonyms</li> <li>• High frequency words</li> <li>• Colors</li> <li>• Days of the Week</li> <li>• Common abbreviations</li> <li>• Grade-appropriate words</li> </ul>

## Test Design for English Language Arts (ELA)\* Grade 4

Content Standard	Points	Subtest			
		Writing	Using Information Resources	Reading and Responding	Proofreading
1. Read, comprehend, and respond	10	-	-	10 points	-
2. Write competently	8	8 points	-	-	-
3. Use conventions of language	12	4 points	-	-	8 points
4. Apply speaking/listening skills	not assessed	-	-	-	-
5. Locate, select, and synthesize information	9	-	9 points	-	-
6. Read, analyze, and respond to literature	8	-	-	8 points	-
7. Apply reasoning and problem-solving skills	18	-	-	18 points	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>12 points</b>	<b>9 points</b>	<b>36 points</b>	<b>8 points</b>

<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>44 items</b>	<b>1 item</b>	<b>7 items</b>	<b>28 items</b>	<b>8 items</b>
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The following is an explanation of this chart, which presents the distribution of the 65 points across the six standards that are measured on the grade 8 English Language Arts test:

- Standard 1 (Read, comprehend, and respond): Ten (10) points relate to multiple-choice (MC) and short-answer (SA) items.
- Standard 2 (Write competently): Eight (8) points (of the twelve [12] points in the Writing section of the test)
- Standard 3 (Use conventions of language): Of the twelve (12) points, four (4) points relate to the Writing section of the test; the other eight (8) points relate to the Proofreading section of the test.
- Standard 5 (Locate, select, and synthesize information): Of the nine (9) points, five (5) points relate to MC items, and four (4) points relate to SA items.
- Standard 6 (Read, analyze, and respond to literature): Eight (8) points relate to MC and SA.
- Standard 7 (Apply reasoning and problem-solving skills): Eighteen (18) points relate to MC and SA items.

**NOTE:** Reading and Responding: Standards 1, 6, and 7 = 36 points  
 Writing: Standards 2 and 3 = 12 points  
 Using Information Resources: Standard 5 = 9 points  
 Proofreading: Standard 3 = 8 points      **Total points: 65**

\*The ELA test design remains constant from year to year.

## Test Design for English Language Arts (ELA)\* Grades 8 and 10

Content Standard	Points	Subtest			
		Writing	Using Information Resources	Reading and Responding	Proofreading
1. Read, comprehend, and respond	10	-	-	10 points	-
2. Write competently	8	8 points	-	-	-
3. Use conventions of language	12	4 points	-	-	8 points
4. Apply speaking/listening skills	not assessed	-	-	-	-
5. Locate, select, and synthesize information	9	-	9 points	-	-
6. Read, analyze, and respond to literature	12	-	-	12 points	-
7. Apply reasoning and problem-solving skills	18	-	-	18 points	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>12 points</b>	<b>9 points</b>	<b>40 points</b>	<b>8 points</b>

Number of Items	45 items	1 item	7 items	29 items	8 items
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The following is an explanation of this chart, which presents the distribution of the 69 points across the six standards that are measured on the grade 8 English Language Arts test:

- Standard 1 (Read, comprehend, and respond): Ten (10) points relate to multiple-choice (MC) and short-answer (SA) items.
- Standard 2 (Write competently): Eight (8) points (of the twelve [12] points in the Writing section of the test)
- Standard 3 (Use conventions of language): Of the twelve (12) points, four (4) points relate to the Writing section of the test; the other eight (8) points relate to the Proofreading section of the test.
- Standard 5 (Locate, select, and synthesize information): Of the nine (9) points, five (5) points relate to MC items, and four (4) points relate to SA items.
- Standard 6 (Read, analyze, and respond to literature): Twelve (12) points relate to MC, SA, and essay.
- Standard 7 (Apply reasoning and problem-solving skills): Eighteen (18) points relate to MC and SA items.

<b>NOTE:</b> Reading and Responding:	Standards 1, 6, and 7	=	40 points	
Writing:	Standards 2 and 3	=	12 points	
Using Information Resources	Standard 5	=	9 points	
Proofreading:	Standard 3	=	8 points	<b>Total points: 69</b>

\*The ELA test design remains constant from year to year.