

The goal of this newsletter is to share information with teachers about the Georgia Student Assessment Program in order to deepen understanding of the program, its purpose, and its uses.

## Test Development

### Test Design & Expectations

The first step in the test development process is determining the test design and expectations. This step is crucial in the development of a new assessment or when major revisions are required, such as when new state content standards are adopted. During a Test Design and Expectations meeting, committees of Georgia educators inform how the state content standards are addressed on an assessment and determine specific rules and characteristics that guide the development of a test's content and format.

During this phase of development, decisions are made about what will be assessed and how it will be assessed by developing each grade and content area's achievement level descriptors, test blueprints, and item specifications.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

With new English Language Arts content standards expected to be adopted in spring 2023, Test Design & Expectations meetings are planned for all state assessments in Summer/Fall 2023.

### Item Development

Have you ever wondered how test items are developed for Georgia's state assessments? Test items are initially drafted by item writers employed by the state's testing contractor. These item writers must have at least three years' teaching

experience in the content area for which they will be creating items and be approved by GaDOE prior to beginning item development.

**FUN FACT**

All items are written specifically for Georgia assessments and are not used by any other states or testing programs.

Item specifications that have been developed in collaboration with Georgia teachers are provided to item writers to ensure that items align to Georgia standards and meet the expectations of the assessment for which they are written.

All items undergo a series of reviews by GaDOE assessment and curriculum staff. The items are then revised by the testing vendor based on GaDOE feedback. Items approved by the Department are taken to an Item Review meeting for further review by Georgia educators.

### Item Review

Each item is reviewed by educator committees for alignment to Georgia content standards, grade level difficulty, and content accuracy, as well as appropriate cognitive complexity.

It is also important to ensure that test items are accessible to a diverse student population with respect to gender, race, ethnicity, geographic region, socioeconomic status, language,

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disability, and other factors. Committees also consider any issues of bias or sensitivity and the linguistic and visual accessibility of the items.

Committees work to reach consensus and determine whether to accept, revise, or reject each item.

**Every single test item is reviewed by committees of Georgia teachers before it is included on a test form.**

## Field Testing

Items accepted by the item review committee are eligible to be field tested with Georgia students. Field test items are embedded within the overall test, and not identified as field test items, to ensure that student performance on the items is not impacted by students' knowledge that the item does not count towards their score.

**Have you ever wondered how information from the field test is used?**

Student responses to constructed-response field test items are used by committees of Georgia educators during the rangefinding process to establish the scoring

guidelines for all future administrations of those items. All constructed-response items from the field test are then hand-scored using the training materials developed during rangefinding.

Once all field test responses are scored, including constructed-response and all other item types, student performance data are analyzed for various statistical properties. Items that are flagged for any of these properties are then reviewed by committees of Georgia educators to determine if the items should be accepted into the item bank for use on future assessments. The statistical properties determined during field testing are later used to ensure that operational

test forms are built according to the same parameters as previously administered test forms. For example, the difficulty of each item (as determined by student performance during field testing) is used to ensure that the overall difficulty is comparable for all test forms in a given grade and content area.



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## Assessment Resources

### Georgia Milestones Writing Resources

A variety of resources are available to acquaint educators with the types of writing prompts included on the Georgia Milestones English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.

Item & Scoring Samplers provide examples of each type of constructed-response item on the assessments. For each sample item, at least three sample student responses are provided for each score point as well as an annotation explaining why each response received that particular score.

Item & Scoring Samplers are available for:

- Reading and Evidence-Based Writing
- Narrative Writing

Additional sample items can be found in the Assessment Guides and Study/Resource Guides for each grade course.

The following documents help educators locate sample items within the available resources:

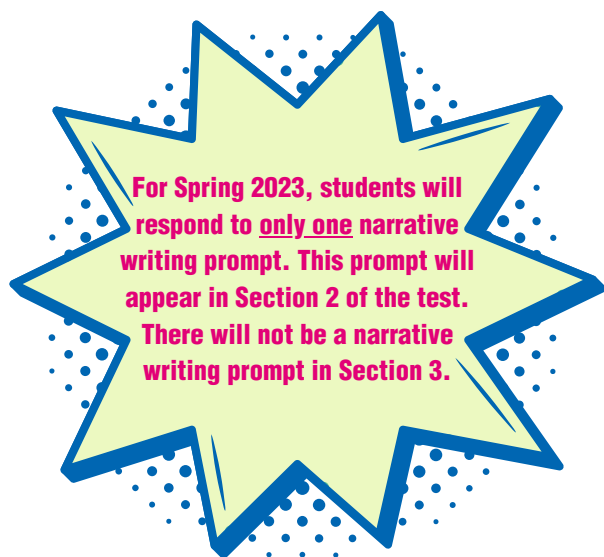
- Reading and Evidence-Based Writing Passage Types
- Narrative Prompt Passage Types



Both [Writing Rubrics](#) and [Writer's Checklists](#) are also available and may be used in the classroom to complement existing writing instruction throughout the school year. Students can practice interacting with all item types in the online testing environment by visiting [Experience Online Testing Georgia](#).



A professional learning series, [Evaluating and Improving Student Writing](#), further explores the characteristics and expectations of writing on the Georgia Milestones ELA assessment.



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## Georgia Milestones Mathematics Updates

Due to the implementation of Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, updates have been made for Spring 2023 Georgia Milestones mathematics assessments to allow for field testing of items aligned to the new standards.

### Calculators

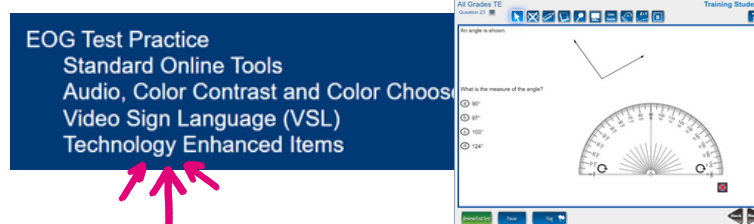
In Section 1, Part B and Section 2, calculators are allowed as follows:

- Grades 6 & 7
  - basic or scientific calculator
- Grade 8, Algebra I, and Coordinate Algebra
  - scientific or graphing calculator



### Protractor Tool

The Grade 7 mathematics assessment will include field test items that require the use of a protractor tool. Students can practice with this new tool in [Experience Online Testing Georgia](#) by selecting the Technology Enhanced Items practice test. The protractor tool is available in Question 23.



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## Professional Learning

Visit our [Professional Learning](#) webpage to learn about offerings from the Assessment Division available in the [GaDOE Professional Learning Events](#) catalog.

### Understanding Assessment

- Assessment Foundations
- Formative Assessment Processes
- Summative Classroom Assessment
- Standardized Assessments
- Balanced Assessment Systems

### Understanding Georgia Milestones

- [English language arts](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Social Studies](#)

### Evaluating and Improving Student Writing

- [Reading and Evidence Based Writing](#)
- [Narrative Writing](#)

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