

TCAP Science

End of Course Assessment Overview

Science Assessment Overview

This fact sheet provides information about the TCAP Biology End-of-Course (EOC) assessment. The science assessment will assess the Tennessee Academic Standards through measurement of student mastery and will require students to demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of the three dimensions of science education: disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts and support the vertical alignment embedded within the standards.

The Biology EOC assessment is administered in one subpart and calculators are allowed.

All TCAP end-of-course assessments will be administered using the online testing platform. For more information on TCAP EOC assessments, click [here](#).

Students to be Tested

Students who are enrolled in an EOC class, regardless of grade level, must take the assessment pertinent to that class. The Tennessee State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103 ([here](#)) states that “Only students who are enrolled in a course with an associated End of Course examination shall take the End of Course examination. Students enrolled in a substituting course without an End of Course examination explicitly tied to the State Board of Education-approved curriculum content standards of that course shall not take an End of Course examination. This exemption applies to all substituting courses, including, but not limited to, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, and dual credit courses.

In summation, students in substituting courses are not obligated to take these assessments.

Test Administration Schedule

For a full schedule of all statewide assessments, see the administration windows on the department’s [website](#).

Within the state testing window, testing schedules are established **by the district at the school and/or district level**. It is the district’s discretion to allow schools to set their own testing schedules, independent of a district testing schedule.

Test Administration Subpart Timing and Structure

The following timing details are applicable to the Biology EOC. The testing structure below

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reflects the total of both the number of operational assessment items and the number of field test assessment items.

Subpart	Test Length	Timing	Allowable Resources
One subpart	52-56 items	75 minutes	calculator

Performance Levels and Scale Scores

Student performance on Tennessee’s statewide assessments is categorized into four performance levels.

The table below provides information regarding student achievement at each performance level for the TCAP science tests. This information is provided on student reports so that students, parents, and educators may interpret student results in a meaningful way.

Level 1 (Below Expectations)	Level 2 (Approaching Expectations)	Level 3 (Met Expectations)	Level 4 (Exceeded Expectations)
The student did not meet Tennessee’s grade level expectations and has little knowledge of the skills and concepts in the subject.	The student is approaching Tennessee’s grade level expectations and has a partial understanding of the skills and concepts in the subject.	The student met Tennessee’s grade level expectations and has a thorough understanding of the skills and concepts in the subject.	The student met Tennessee’s grade level expectations and understands the most complex skills and concepts in the subject.

Performance level scale score ranges for the TCAP EOC Biology assessment is provided in the table below.

Assessment	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Biology	200-300	300-330	330-375	375-450

Assessment Blueprints

Assessment blueprints are designed to show educators a summary of what will be assessed on each assessment. This resource is designed to help educators as they plan for the upcoming school year. Assessment blueprints can be found [here](#).

Item Types

The TCAP Biology assessment is administered using **Discrete** and **Cluster** items which are **Selected Response**. It may also include **Technology Enhanced** items. These item types are used in multiple ways to elicit responses that demonstrate understanding of the Tennessee Academic Standards for science.

Discrete items contain a single question paired with a stimulus or phenomenon. Discrete items can be *Multiple Choice*, *Multiple Select*, or *Technology Enhanced* and will assess more than one dimension of the Tennessee Academic Standards for Science.

Cluster items contain a series of up to eight consecutive questions which share a stimulus or phenomenon. Cluster item sets are designed to fully address the multidimensionality of the Tennessee Academic Standards for Science. The only item types that will appear as part of the cluster item sets are *Selected Response* items. Individual questions within a cluster are worth one point each and are independent of one another for reporting purposes.

Selected Response items used for the TCAP EOC Biology assessment can include:

- *Multiple Choice* – These are items with four answer options, only one of which is correct. Multiple Choice items are worth one point each.
- *Multiple Select* – These are items with more than four answer choices with multiple correct answers. Multiple Select items are worth two points each.

Technology Enhanced items utilize online assessment platform capabilities. A sampler containing the various types of Technology Enhanced items students may encounter can be found on SchoolNet and [here](#). Use the directions below for access:

- Select Tutorials (below the login prompt).
- Under TCAP Samplers, click Start.
- Enter your name as “Guest” and select Start.

Practice Tests

The department has provided the following practice tools to support educators and students:

- **Paper practice tests:** PDF versions of practice tests are available on the Assessment Development LiveBinder ([here](#)).

Additional Information

Please visit the [department's website](#) for more information about the statewide assessment program.