

TCAP Science Grades 6-8 Assessment Fact Sheet

Science Assessment Overview

This fact sheet provides information about the TCAP science grades 6-8 assessments. The science assessments will assess the Tennessee Academic Standards in science 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 science assessments are administered in one subpart and calculators are allowed in all grades 6-8, following the appropriate guidelines found [here](#).

For more information on TCAP assessments for grades 6-8, click [here](#).

Test Administration Schedule

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

Test Administration Times

The timing and details for each subpart for science grades 6-8 is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Mode of Test Administration and Timing

Grades/Course	Delivery Mode	Test Length and Timing
Grade 6	Paper-based assessment and separate answer document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One subpart • 51-55 items • 75 minutes
Grade 7	Paper-based assessment and separate answer document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One subpart • 51-55 items • 75 minutes
Grade 8	Paper-based assessment and separate answer document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One subpart • 51-55 items • 75 minutes

Performance Levels

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

Table 2 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.

Table 2: Performance Levels

Level 1 (Below)	Level 2 (Approaching)	Level 3 (On-track)	Level 4 (Mastered)
Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has a minimal understanding and has a nominal ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student is approaching understanding and has a partial ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has a comprehensive understanding and has a thorough ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.	Performance at this level demonstrates that the student has an extensive understanding and has an expert ability to apply the grade/course-level knowledge and skills defined by the Tennessee Academic Standards.

Scale scores used to define performance levels for the science assessment have not been designated at this time. A standard setting committee composed of Tennessee educators will be held during the summer of 2020 to determine the range of scores at each performance level.

These will be implemented for student score reporting during the 2020-21 school year.

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 for 2019-20 can be found on the department website [here](#).

Test Administration Information

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

Item Types

The science assessments for grades 6-8 will consist of the following **Selected Response** item types:

- Multiple choice – item with four answer options and only one correct answer.
- Multiple select – item with five answer options and either two or three correct answers.
 - The item stem will always indicate number of correct answers by asking, “Which two” or “Which three”.

For all grades, a series of consecutive items may also share a stimulus or phenomenon. These types of items are called “cluster items”. Cluster items 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.

- As many as eight consecutive items may share a common stimulus, context or phenomenon.
- These items are independent of one another for reporting purposes and will be worth one point each.

Practice Tests

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

- **Paper practice tests:** PDF versions of practice tests will be available beginning September 2019 on the Assessment Development LiveBinder ([here](#)).

Additional Information

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