What grades and subjects does this affect?

Grades 3–8 and high school. This document will focus on the changes at grades 3–8. The changes also affect several areas of study, including Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, and Social Studies.

When will the new tests be administered?

Reading: Grades 3, 4, 6, 7: April 25; Grades 5 & 8: March 28
Mathematics: Grades 3, 4, 6, 7: April 24; Grades 5 & 8: March 27
Writing: Grades 4 & 7: March 27 (Day 1) and March 28 (Day 2)
Science: Grades 5 & 8: April 26
Social Studies: Grade 8: April 27

How are the tests changing?

Overall changes
- The test will be more rigorous with greater item complexity to reflect the goal of better preparing students for college and career readiness.
- Test length will increase, with the number of items increasing by as much as 15%.

Assessment of higher-order thinking
- In Reading, critical analysis will be emphasized more than literal understanding.
- In Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, process skills will be assessed in context, not in isolation, allowing for more authentic assessment of these content areas.
- In Mathematics and Science, the number of open-ended (griddable) items will increase.
- In Writing, students will need to write two essays instead of one.

Performance measurement
- Three new student labels will categorize student performance—Unsatisfactory (I), Satisfactory (II), and Advanced (III).
- Cut scores will be set in 2012 and may be higher than in the past to reflect greater rigor.

How many items were on the old test and how many will be on the new?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Reading TAKS # of Items</th>
<th>Reading STAAR # of Items</th>
<th>Mathematics TAKS # of Items</th>
<th>Mathematics STAAR # of Items</th>
<th>Writing TAKS # of Items</th>
<th>Writing STAAR # of Items</th>
<th>Science TAKS # of Items</th>
<th>Science STAAR # of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28 multiple choice; 1 writing prompt</td>
<td>28 multiple choice; 2 compositions</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>40 multiple choice; 1 writing prompt</td>
<td>40 multiple choice; 2 compositions</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How have the test objectives changed?

The overall structure of the standards has changed. Objectives are now called Reporting Categories, and all standards are now categorized as Readiness or Supporting Standards. The Readiness Standards were identified by TEA as skills to be assessed and emphasized on the STAAR™ test. The Supporting Standards are assessed, but not heavily emphasized.

How do STAAR™ test items differ from TAKS™ items?

The STAAR™ test items are much more rigorous and complex, asking students to use higher-order thinking skills in order to answer the items correctly. See below for two sample items—one math and one reading—that illustrate the complexity of the STAAR™ test items.

**Mathematics, Grade 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAKS test released item (2009)</th>
<th>STAAR™ test released item (2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During math class, 4 students used 60 tiles to play a math game. Each student received the same number of tiles at the start of the game. How many tiles did each student receive?</td>
<td>Maricella buys 75 tickets at a carnival. She keeps 35 tickets for herself and gives the remaining tickets to her 2 sisters. If each of Maricella’s sisters gets the same number of tickets, how many tickets does each sister get?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 12</td>
<td>A 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 64</td>
<td>B 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 56</td>
<td>C 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 15</td>
<td>D Not here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students must:
1. Divide (60/4) to find the answer.

*TEKS Standard 4.4.E*

**Reading, Grade 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAKS test released item (2009)</th>
<th>STAAR™ test released item (2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The difference between the article and the story is that the story —</td>
<td>What is one difference between the poem and the selection?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F shows where the center is located</td>
<td>A Carmen knows Grams personally, while Zach does not know the people he helps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G explains the important work done at the center</td>
<td>B Carmen shares her ideas with others, while Zach does not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H gives facts about endangered animals</td>
<td>C Carmen’s plan requires other people, while Zach’s does not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J describes a personal experience</td>
<td>D Carmen ignores Miss D’s question, while Zach responds to the people around him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*TEKS Standard 4.11.D*
Q How many test days will there be for each subject? Will there be time limits?

A Students in grades 3–8 taking the reading and mathematics STAAR™ assessments will have the same number of test days—one per subject—as they did under the TAKS Assessment Program. Students in grades 4 and 7 taking the STAAR™ writing assessment will now have an additional day—two days total—to take the test. Unlike the TAKS test, which did not place a time limit on students, each STAAR™ assessment will have a four-hour time limit.

Q How does STAAR Ready Test Practice compare to the new STAAR™ test items?

A The STAAR® Ready Test Practice questions closely mirror the items from the STAAR™ test in both rigor and complexity. See below for two examples—one math and one reading—of how the STAAR™ Ready Test Practice items match the STAAR™ test items.

**STAAR Ready Test Practice item (2011)**

A candy store gives away 4 lollipops to each person who enters the store between 10:00 a.m. and noon. At 10:00 a.m., the store has 350 lollipops. By noon, the store has 154 lollipops. How many customers entered the store between 10:00 a.m. and noon?

- **F** 49
- **G** 51
- **H** 98
- **J** 196

Students must:
1. Subtract (350–154), and then
2. Divide (40/2) to find the answer.

**TEKS Standard 4.4.E**

**Requirements:**
- Students must be able to subtract and divide.
- Students must be able to calculate the number of customers who entered the store.

**STAAR Ready Test Practice item (2011)**

What is one difference between the selection and the story?

- **F** The article describes Mae’s work as a doctor, but the story tells about Mae’s experiments in space.
- **G** The article tells about Mae’s many years of school, but the story focuses only on the moment Mae first flew into space.
- **H** The article tells about Mae’s many achievements, but the story imagines what it was like as Mae listened to the countdown and looked back at her childhood dream.
- **J** The article describes how important Mae’s family was to her success, but the story describes special teachers that Mae remembers.

Students must:
1. Subtract (196/4) to find the answer.

**TEKS Standard 1.19.F**

**Requirements:**
- Students must be able to identify specific details in both passages.
- Students must be able to compare and contrast the selection and the story.
How do I know that the products our students are using are aligned to the 2012 STAAR™ test and are the most up to date?

In Reading
- For practice items, you should see answer choices that are much more similar to one another, meaning that it is harder for students to discern the real answer from the distractor. This requires students to read the passage in more detail and draw higher-order conclusions.
- Content should require students to compare multiple literary tools. If, for example, you see questions that test theme or setting in isolation, then the product is not preparing students for the higher-order analysis required for the STAAR™ test.
- You should also see a heightened focus on drama, poetry, and distinct genres.

In Math
- You should not see separate lessons or separate practice items on Underlying Processes and Mathematical Tools. (The STAAR™ test does not assess these standards separately.)
- You should see content addressing Geometry and Spatial Reasoning at grade 5, as this is an important new Readiness Standard.
- TEA released updated math reference sheets on 8/30/11. This should be reflected in any practice test materials you purchase.

In Science
- Approximately 40% of the STAAR™ test questions are aligned to the Scientific Investigation and Reasoning Skills.

In Writing
- Students “write two essays addressing different purposes for writing rather than one longer personal essay, which TAKS required.” (STAAR™ Q&A, updated 10/31/2011)
- New writing rubrics have been developed for each writing type (personal and expository).

Is there anything else I need to know?

Curriculum Associates has followed the test changes closely to ensure that students are prepared for the more rigorous STAAR™ test. If you purchase now, you can be certain STAAR™ Ready already matches the format, content, and rigor addressed in the latest TEA STAAR™ updates. In addition, we always guarantee that we will provide our customers with updated test practice products.

With STAAR™ Ready Reading, Math, Science, and Writing, you can be sure that you have materials that most accurately match the STAAR™ test.

Please visit CurriculumAssociates.com/STAARReady for the latest news.

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