

## Louisiana Guide to the PARCC Assessments for Grades 3-5 English Language Arts/Literacy

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### I. Purpose of Assessment Guide

This document is designed to assist Louisiana educators in understanding the PARCC assessments for grades 3-5, which will be implemented beginning in spring 2015. **This document will continue to be updated, with a more detailed version available in summer 2014.**

### II. Introduction to PARCC

In grades 3-8 for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, Louisiana has chosen to adopt the assessments developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is a group of states working together to develop high-quality assessments driven by the following priorities:

- Determine whether students are college- and career-ready or “on track”
- Assess the full range of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), including standards that are difficult to measure
- Measure the full range of student performance, including the performance of high- and low-performing students
- Provide data during the academic year to inform instruction, interventions, and professional development
- Provide data for accountability, including measures of growth
- Incorporate innovative approaches throughout the assessment system
- Allow our students a chance to show what they can do when compared to students across the country

Louisiana has been a member of the PARCC consortium since its inception. As a result, many Louisiana educators at the school, district, state, and college/university levels have and are continuing to serve on

various committees. These include, but are not limited to, the development of PARCC’s policies and procedures and the extensive review of PARCC’s assessment items.

### III. PARCC ELA/Literacy Summative Assessments

The PARCC ELA/Literacy assessments focus on an integrated approach to reading and writing and are based on assessment advances that reflect an effective ELA classroom:

- careful, close reading of authentic complex literary and informational texts, not artificially produced or commissioned passages
- a full range of reading and writing across the disciplines, including science and social studies texts, and a research task that asks for the synthesis of ideas across a range of informational resources
- questions worth answering, ordered in a way that builds meaning
- a focus on students citing evidence from texts throughout the assessment (including selected-response items)
- a focus on words that matter most in the texts, which include words essential to understanding a particular text and academic vocabulary that can be found throughout complex texts
- writing tasks that require students to write to sources and allow for a range of responses that demonstrate what students know and can do
- use of technology to allow students to construct meaning for computer-scored items

These changes are incorporated into the PARCC summative assessments for ELA/Literacy which include two sections:

The **Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)** is administered after approximately 75% of the school year is completed. The ELA/Literacy PBA at each grade level will focus on writing effectively when analyzing texts and will include three tasks: a literary analysis, a research simulation, and a narrative task. For each task, students will be asked to read one or more texts, answer several comprehension and vocabulary questions, and write an essay that requires them to draw evidence from the text(s).

The **End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)** is administered after approximately 90% of the school year is completed. The ELA/Literacy EOY at each grade level will include 4-5 texts, both literary and informational, and the questions will focus on reading comprehension. To be able to provide results quickly, the EOY will consist entirely of computer-scored items.

### IV. Design of the ELA/Literacy Assessments

PARCC released [specifications documents](#) that detail the design of each section.

The PBA specifications identify the number and types of passages and the claims and sub-claims measured (which make up the reporting categories). The EOY specifications describe the number and types of texts; the standards, claims, and sub-claims measured; and the item types and number of points.

**Glossary for Specifications Documents**

- **Claims and Sub-Claims:** the reporting categories that categorize the standards
- **EBSR** (evidence-based selected response): two questions about the same text that scaffold in difficulty and require textual evidence; they are 'selected response' which mean students select, rather than write, their answers
- **TECR** (technology-enhanced constructed response): an item type that requires the use of technology (e.g. drag and drop, cut and paste, highlighting of text) to answer questions
- **PCR** (prose constructed response): asks students to create an extended and complete written response

**Grade 4 Form Specifications (PBA)**

Task Type	# of Passages	Claims/Sub-Claims	Item Types		Maximum # of Points from PCRs <sup>1</sup>	Standards Measured
			# of EBSR/TECR Items (total points)	# of PCR Items		
A Literature Analysis Task	2 (1 short text and 1 extended text)	Reading Literature	4 (8)	1	3	4A1: Analysis of structure RL1, 2, 3, 5 4A2: Central idea/lesson RL1, 2, 3, 5 4A3: Character, setting, events RL1,2,3,5 4A4: Author's study RL1, 2, 3, 5, 9 4A5: Connecting a text and visual or oral presentation of that text RL1, 2, 3, 7
		Reading Vocabulary	2 (4)		0	RL4 and L4, 5, 6 (any combination)
		Writing/Written Expression	0		9	W1 and/or W2 W4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
		Writing/ Knowledge Language and Conventions	0		4	L1, 2, 3, 6
B Research Simulation Task	3 (2 short texts 1 extended text)	Reading Information	6 (12)	1	3	4B1: Analyzing relationship between a series of concepts RI 1- 3, 5-6, 8- 9 4B 2: Analyzing the role of illustrations RI 1-3, 5-9
		Reading Vocabulary	3 (6)		0	RI4 and L4, 5, 6 (any combination)
		Writing/Written Expression	0		9	W1 and/or W2 focus W4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8, 10
		Writing/Knowledge Language and Conventions	0		4	L1, 2, 3, 6
C Narrative Writing Task	1 short text	Reading	5 (10)	1	3	4C1: Narrative story, any combination of RL standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9
		Writing/Written Expression	0		9	W3 and /or W2 focus W4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
		Writing/Knowledge Language and Conventions	0		4	L1, 2, 3, 6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>20 (40) Reading</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9 Reading 39 Writing 48 CCR</b>	<b>NA</b>

<sup>1</sup>Note: The maximum number of points is dependent on the rubric score point ranges, which cannot be determined until after field testing.

### Grade 4 Form Specifications (EOY)

# of Texts	Type of Text	Standards to Measure	Claims/Sub-Claims	Item Types
				# EBSR/TECR items (total points)
1 short/medium text 200-400 words	Literary	RL 2, 3 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Literature	4 (8)
		RL 4 and L 4, 5, 6 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Vocabulary	1 (2)
1 medium/long length text 400-800 words *may be substituted with two paired texts <sup>1</sup>	Literary	RL 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Literature	7 (14)
		RL 4 and L 4, 5, 6 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Vocabulary	1 (2)
1 short/medium text 200-400 words	Informational	RI 2,3, 5 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Information	4 (8)
		RI 4 and L 4, 5, 6 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Vocabulary	1 (2)
A medium/long length text 400-800 words *may be substituted with two paired texts <sup>1</sup>	Informational	RI 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Information	7 (14)
		RI 4 and L 4, 5, 6 (any combination)	Reading/Reading Vocabulary	1 (2)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>26 (52)</b>

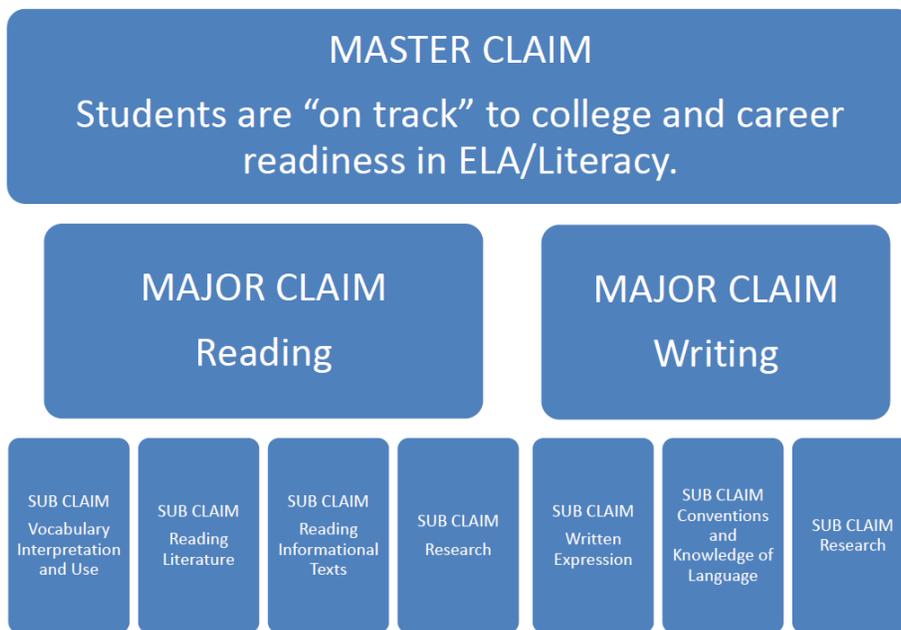
<sup>1</sup>Note- See Text Selection Guidelines for Assessing CCSS ELA for more information about pairing passages. At each grade level, each student will read one set of paired texts. The pairing may be two literary texts or two informational texts or one literary and one informational text. Note, those items that measure Reading Information and Reading Literature standards will not have points attributed to sub-claims, but instead the points from these items will be attributed to the major reading claim. This will mean that while the points annually for the overall major reading claim and master claim for CCR will remain constant, year to year and form to form, the number of points in the reading sub-claims will vary.

## V. Overview of PARCC ELA/Literacy Claims and Reporting Information

Many of the PARCC documents refer to **claims** when describing the way PARCC will measure and report student performance. Instead of an assessment that focuses on specific and isolated skills, PARCC tests are designed to determine if students are achieving the claims. Each claim, by using a combination of standards, calls for students to demonstrate their understanding of the text. Within the PARCC ELA/Literacy Assessment System, there are three types of claims:

- **Master Claim:** measures the overall goal—students must demonstrate that they are “on track” for college and career readiness.
- **Major Claims:** identify the extent to which students are “on track” by measuring
  - Reading –close, analytic reading and the comparison and synthesis of ideas that are at the heart of understanding complex literary works and informational texts, and
  - Writing –the ability to write effectively when using and/or analyzing sources.
- **Sub-Claims:** additional skills and understandings included in the major claims (The sub-claims integrate all of the specific standards.)

The graphic below shows the relationships between the claims:



PARCC ELA/Literacy assessment results will be based on these claims, and student performance will be reported according to five levels, captured in PARCC’s [Draft Performance Level Descriptors](#) (PLDs).

## VI. Evidence Statements

To further assist educators, PARCC has released evidence tables for the [Reading and Vocabulary](#) and [Writing](#) claims noted above. These tables break down the standards into smaller parts to illustrate how each standard will be assessed. See a sample of a grade 3 evidence table on the following page.

### Example of Evidence Table (Grade 3)

Grade: 3	
Claim: Reading Information: Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level complex informational texts.	
Items designed to measure this claim may address the standards and evidences listed below:	
Standards:	Evidences to be measured on the PARCC Summative Assessment The student's response:
<b>RI 1:</b> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides questions and answers that show understanding of a text. (1)</li> <li>Provides explicit references to the text as the basis for the answers. (2)</li> </ul>
<b>RI 2:</b> Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a statement of the main idea of a text. (1)</li> <li>Provides a recounting of key details in a text. (2)</li> <li>Provides an explanation of how key details in a text support the main idea. (3)</li> </ul>
<b>RI 3:</b> Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a description of the relationship between <b>a series of historical events</b>, using language that pertains to time, sequence and/or cause/effect. (1)</li> <li>Provides a description of the relationship <b>between scientific ideas or concepts</b>, using language that pertains to time, sequence and/or cause/effect. (2)</li> <li>Provides a description of the relationship <b>between steps in technical procedures in a text</b>, using language that pertains to time, sequence and/or cause/effect. (3)</li> </ul>
<b>RI 5:</b> Use text features and search tools (e.g., keywords, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates use of <b>text features</b> to locate relevant information (e.g., key words, sidebars). (1)</li> <li>Demonstrates use of <b>search tools</b> to locate relevant information (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks). (2)</li> </ul>

## VII. PARCC Policies Affecting Test Administration

### Testing Format and Administration for ELA/Literacy Summative Assessments

In Louisiana, our goal is for all PARCC assessments to be taken online by 2015-16. Given feedback from educators around the state, Louisiana will make a gradual transition to online testing.

To support a gradual transition, in 2015, students will participate in the following:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade PARCC assessments in **paper and pencil** form (LEAs/schools may administer online, if ready).
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade PARCC assessments in **paper and pencil** form (LEAs/schools administer online, if ready).
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade PARCC assessments **on computers** (LEAs can apply for a waiver to administer the assessment in paper and pencil form).

The table that follows provides a breakdown of the testing sessions by grade level, including an estimate of the amount of time a typical student will need to complete each session. These estimates may be refined based on the results of the field tests and are summarized from PARCC’s [Assessment Administration Guidance](#).

Component	Format and Administration (Grades 3-5)
<p><b>Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)</b></p> <p>Hand- and Computer-Scored Items</p>	<p><b>Format</b></p> <p>Approximately 75% of the way through the school year 3 ELA/Literacy sessions, one for each task (from 40-60 minutes per session for grade 3 and 50-80 minutes per session for grades 4-5)</p> <p><b>Administration</b></p> <p>20-day testing window for Computer-Based Tests (CBT): March 2-27, 2015 5-day testing window for Paper-Based Tests (PBT): March 16-20, 2015</p>
<p><b>End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)</b></p> <p>Computer-Scored Items Only</p>	<p><b>Format</b></p> <p>Approximately 90% of the way through the school year 2 ELA/Literacy sessions (60-70 minutes per session based on grade level)</p> <p><b>Administration</b></p> <p>20-day testing window for Computer-Based Tests (CBT): April 27-May 22, 2015 5-day testing window for Paper-Based Tests (PBT): May 4-8, 2015</p>

For 2015 only, results will not be available until early fall. Therefore, no summer retests will be offered for Summer2015.

While it is anticipated that most students will complete the test sessions within these estimated times, all participating students will have a set amount of additional time for each session. Students with disabilities who have a documented (e.g., IEP) extended time accommodation will be given time beyond the set additional time.

### Permitted Testing Materials

Students will be permitted to have school-issued scratch paper. All scratch paper is to be collected by the test administrator at the conclusion of testing each day. The test administration manuals will provide more specific information needed to administer the assessments.

### Computer-Based Materials

Headphones are required for students taking the ELA/Literacy test. Students may bring these from home.

### 2014 Pencil-and-Paper Tests for Grades 3 and 4

Students in grade 3 will enter answers in their test booklets. Students in grade 4 will enter answers on a separate document.

## VIII. Student Technology Skills

Students taking the PARCC online assessments have an opportunity to practice using the computer tools provided in PARCC’s online testing system. These tools include both the enhanced-technology and accessibility features available to all students. PARCC has developed a Tutorial and Sample Tasks for the purpose of learning how to use these tools. Both are accessible at <http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/#>.

The computer operating system and web browser requirements for viewing the online Tutorial and Sample Tasks are the same as those for the general online testing system. For a complete set list of supported systems, see [http://www.pearsononlinetesting.com/TestNav/8/requirements\\_testnav\\_8\\_0\\_4.html](http://www.pearsononlinetesting.com/TestNav/8/requirements_testnav_8_0_4.html). Check with your district technology coordinator for questions regarding equipment compatibility issues.

## IX. PARCC ELA/Literacy Item Types

The PARCC ELA/Literacy summative assessments will include three different types of test items. The examples that follow each explanation are taken from the [PARCC sample items](#); an asterisk appears next to the correct answer(s) in each example.

- 1) **Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)**—This item type combines a traditional selected-response question with a second selected-response question that asks students to provide textual evidence that supports the answer they provided to the first question. This underscores the importance of Reading Anchor Standard 1 (evidence) for implementation of the CCSS.

### EBSR Sample Item, Grade 5 (from EOY)

Part A: What is the purpose of the braces described in paragraph 6 of the article?

- a. They fix broken tree limbs, so a tree house will not fall down.
- b. They lock several trees together, so almost any kind of tree can be used.
- c. They join two trees into one unit, so a tree house looks secure.
- d. They help trees hold up a tree house, so the trees will not break.\*

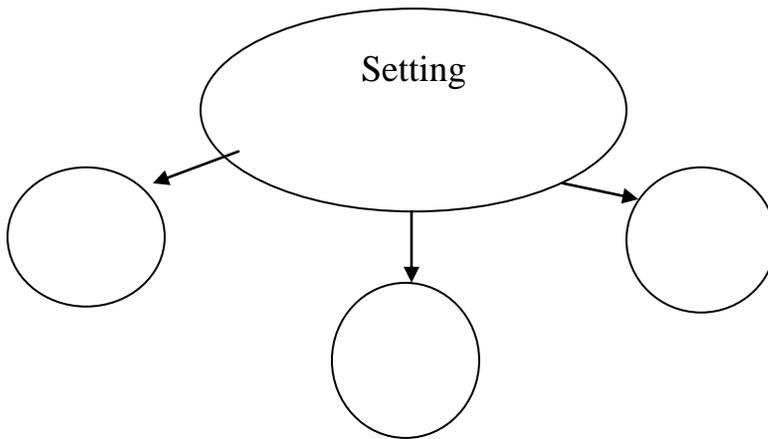
Part B: Which two details from the article help support the answer to Part A?

- a. “Designing unique tree houses may sound tough, but Jonathan says it’s no sweat.”
- b. ”Hardwoods such as oak, maple, or hickory make the best trees for houses—but I did once build a wonderful tree house in a crabapple tree.”
- c. “My tree house is in two trees—an oak and a fir—and has three posts to support the weight.”\*
- d. “As a certified arborist, Jonathan tries to never harm the trees.”\*
- e. "The tree's center of gravity is at the top and the ends of its branches, so I build a house down at the center of the tree. . . .”
- f. "The tree grows over the artificial limbs, and they become part of the tree, . . .”

- 2) **Technology-Enhanced Constructed Response (TECR)**—This item type uses technology to capture student comprehension of texts in authentic ways that until now have been difficult to score for large-scale assessments. When answering these items, students will be able to drag and drop, cut and paste, highlight text, and move items to show relationships.

**TECR Sample Item, Grade 4 (from PBA, Literary Analysis Task)**

Drag and drop three details from the story that describe the setting of this story.



“Cougar is the mightiest of the animals in the forest.”\*

“The next day, when the sun was high, Cougar came back along the same trail.”\*

“The mosquito began to bite the soft inner ear of the cougar, and drank from his blood.”

“The mosquito bit him again and again.”

“The cougar pawed at his ear, and ran around in a circle shaking his head.”

“Cricket, come out! Let me meet your mighty cousin!”

“Cougar ran off down the trail, and never went that way again.”\*

- 3) **Prose Constructed Response (PCR)**—This item type appears at the end of each of the PBA tasks and asks students to create an extended and complete written response. It elicits evidence that students have understood a text or texts they have read and can communicate that understanding well both in terms of written expression and knowledge of language and conventions.

**[PCR Sample Item, Grade 3](#) (from PBA, Research Simulation Task)**

**Question:**

You have read two texts about famous people in American history who solved problems by working to make a change.

Write an article for your school newspaper describing how Eliza and Carver faced challenges to change something in America.

- In your article, be sure to describe in detail why some solutions they tried work and others did not.
- Tell how the challenges each one faced were the same and how they were different.

Draft scoring rubrics ([Grade 3](#) and [Grade 4-5](#)) are included in the PARCC materials to help support a stronger understanding of what the Prose Constructed Response items are asking students to know and be able to do. The rubrics have been revised since PARCC’s initial release to reflect understandings achieved through two research studies. The rubrics remain in draft form but can be used as a reference until they are refined by additional student responses during the completion of the field test. The draft rubrics are general and will be used as the basis for creating item-specific rubrics for each operational PARCC item.

The original versions of the samples presented in this document and additional sample items, along with annotations and rubrics, are available in pdf format at <http://www.parcconline.org/samples/ela>.

## X. Glossary

**Claim:** A statement about student performance based on how students respond to test questions. PARCC tests are designed to elicit evidence from students that support valid and reliable claims about the extent to which they are college and career ready or on track toward that goal and are making expected academic gains based on the Common Core State Standards. To support such claims, PARCC assessments are designed to measure and report results in multiple categories called master claims, major claims, and sub-claims.

**College and Career Readiness Claim (CCR):** For ELA/Literacy, the way the Master Claim—students are “on track” to college and career readiness—is represented on the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) specifications documents.

**End of Year Assessment (EOY):** End-of-year assessments are administered after approximately 90 percent of the school year. The ELA/Literacy EOY will focus on reading comprehension.

**Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR):** An item type that combines a traditional selected-response (multiple-choice) question with a second selected-response question that asks students provide textual evidence that supports the answer they provided to the first question. This underscores the importance of Reading Anchor Standard 1 (evidence) for implementation of the CCSS.

**Local Education Agency (LEA)** – An LEA is an agency or other organization responsible for administrative control or direction of a school.

**Major Claims:** The two measures (Reading and Writing) that show the extent to which students are “on track” for college and career readiness.

**Master Claim:** The overall performance goal for the PARCC ELA/Literacy Assessment System—students must demonstrate that they are “on track” for college and career readiness. The Master Claim ensures students have the literacy skills and understandings required for success in multiple disciplines.

**Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC):** PARCC is a consortium of 18 states working together to develop an assessment system for English language arts and mathematics anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers.

**Performance-Based Assessment (PBA):** For PARCC, the performance-based assessment will be administered approximately 75 percent of the way through the academic study of the grade or course content. Student results on the PBA will be combined with their results on end-of-year assessment (EOY) to produce overall PARCC scores in each content area.

**Prose Constructed Response (PCR):** An item type that appears at the end of each of the PBA tasks and asks students to create an extended and complete written response. It elicits evidence that students have understood a text or texts they have read and can communicate that understanding well both in terms of written expression and knowledge of language and conventions.

**Standard Setting:** The process used to establish performance (achievement) level cut scores.

**Sub-Claims:** Additional skills and understandings that are extensions of the major claims: Vocabulary Interpretation and Use, Reading Literature, Reading Informational Texts, Written Expression, Conventions and Knowledge of Language; and Research.

**Summative Assessment:** A summative assessment is designed to measure a student’s knowledge and skills at the end of an instructional period, such as an entire school year or at the conclusion of a course. The PARCC summative assessment will include two components — the performance-based assessment (PBA) component and the end-of-year assessment (EOY) component. The results of the two components will be combined to produce overall summative assessment results.

**Technology-Enhanced Constructed Response (TECR)**—This item type uses technology to capture student comprehension of texts in authentic ways that until now have been difficult to score for large scale assessments. When answering these questions, students will be able to drag and drop, cut and paste, highlight text, and move items to show relationships. TECR items take advantage of the computer-based environment to present situations and capture responses in ways that are not possible on a paper-based test.