

A photograph of a woman and a young girl sitting together on a couch, looking at a tablet. The woman is wearing a yellow sweater and the girl is wearing a black and white striped shirt. The image is slightly faded and serves as a background for the text.

STAAR Redesign

January 18, 2022

Accelerating learning continues to be as important as ever and educators are doing incredible and difficult work

- Students have unprecedented needs
- The daily work of operations is consuming an outsized share of time and energy
- Efforts to improve alignment will help improve our ability to accelerate learning



Changes are coming to help improve alignment

- Classroom practices that over-use multiple choice questions, rely on only short reading passages, and limit student writing can get small, short-term gains on STAAR, but evidence has shown they don't lead to high performance or long-term student mastery
- Strong instructional practices lead to increased student understanding and stronger performance on STAAR
- **It is possible for the state summative assessment to be designed so that it better aligns with strong instructional practices, while still accurately measuring student mastery**

STAAR has been proven **valid, reliable, aligned** to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), with passage **readability** on grade-level

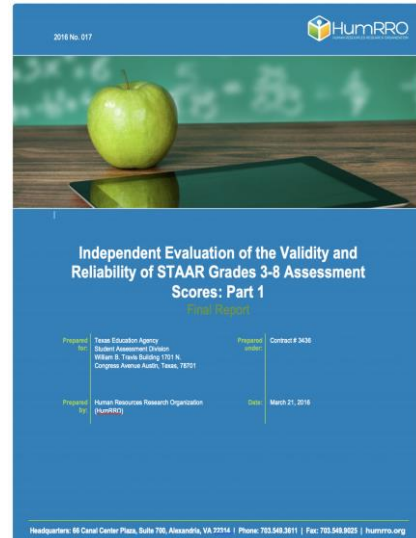
House Bill 743, Rep. Huberty/Sen. Seliger

84th Texas Legislature

“The assessment instrument must, on the basis of empirical evidence, be determined to be **valid and reliable** by an entity that is independent of the agency and of any other entity that developed the assessment instrument.”

Analysis Completed in 2016

Findings: STAAR was found to be valid. The evaluation confirmed the “**test bears a strong association with on-grade curriculum requirements.**”



House Bill 3, Rep. Huberty/Sen. Taylor

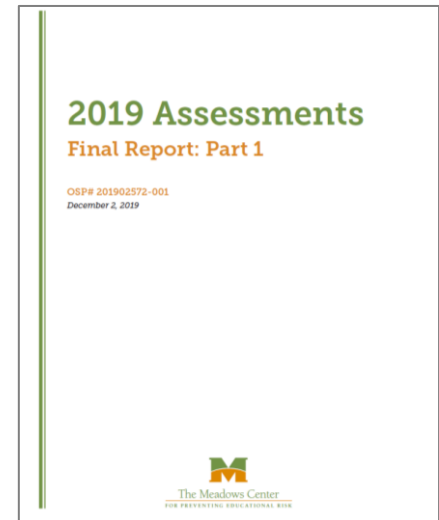
86th Texas Legislature

Required an institution of higher education to conduct a study on the state assessment instruments to independently evaluate the readability and alignment.

Analysis Completed in 2019

Findings: Across grade levels and subjects, all tests included in the study **were aligned with the TEKS** for the grade level tested.

- **91% of passages met the criterion for readability** as defined in the study in terms of text complexity



State and Federal laws require a redesign of Texas's state summative assessment (STAAR), **effective 2022-23**

HB 3906 in 2019 created **transformative changes to improve the STAAR program.**

- 75% multiple choice cap
- Transition to 100% online testing
- Through-year assessment pilot
- Interim and formative assessments

Additionally, the federal government requires Texas to assess the breadth of the TEKS, which for RLA includes **writing**.

These policies are intended to ensure **assessments engage students in the same ways they are learning in the classroom and reward good instruction** while continuing to accurately measure student mastery.

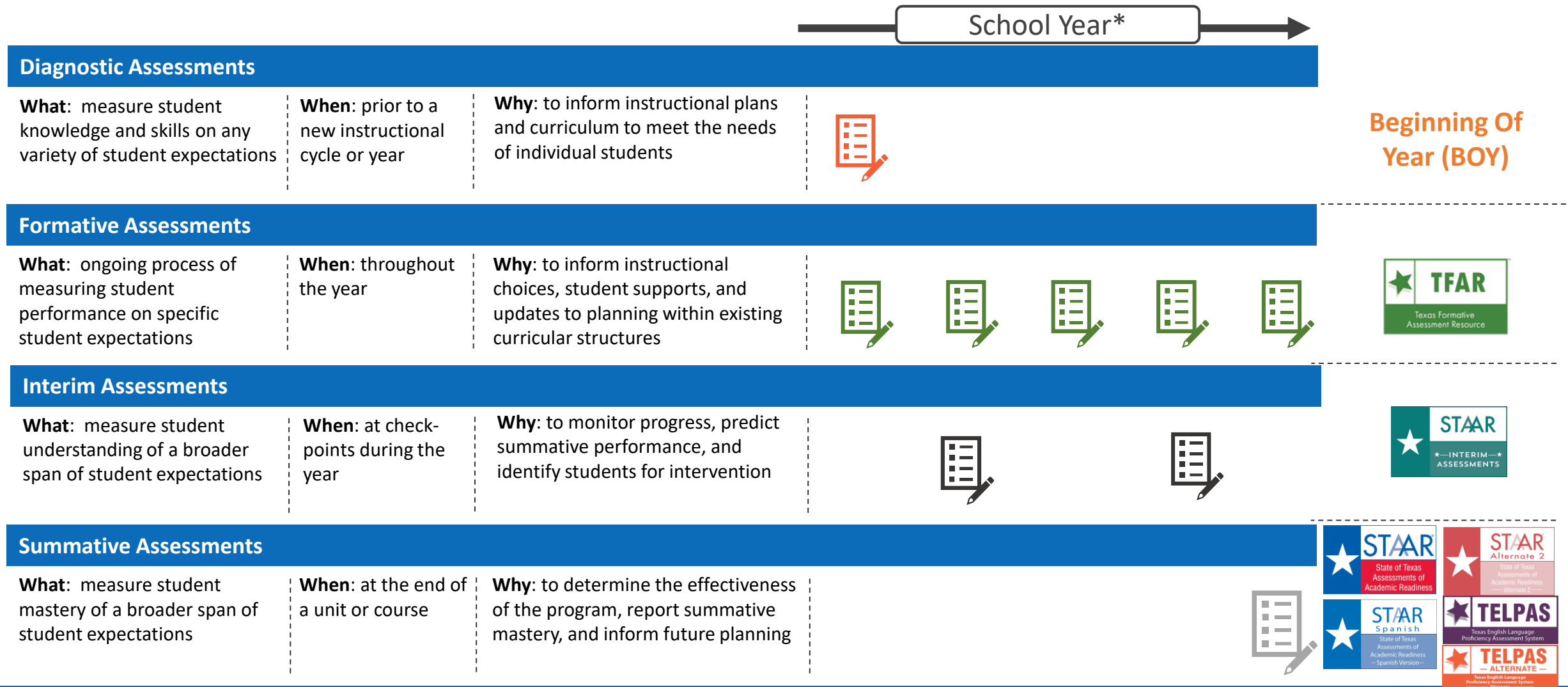
STAAR is a state "summative" assessment

Assessments provide educators and parents with helpful information to support strong teaching and guide students to their full potential.

State summative assessments serve several primary purposes:

- To determine mastery of a breadth of knowledge & skills for students
- To determine the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction programs after delivery (at the end of a unit or course)
- To help determine which individual students should receive additional holistic supports
- To serve as a bar for rigor and standards alignment in planning

Different types of assessment serve different purposes



The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

- 1 Coherently building students' **background knowledge and vocabulary** in all subject areas...
- 2 Asking students to **write about what they read using evidence from text**...
- 3 Providing **various open-ended formats** for students to respond to questions...
- 4 Supporting the learning needs of all students by providing **appropriate accommodations**...

...and avoid less effective practices by...

...not just having students **read passages on random topics**

...not just **reading without writing**

...not just having students **select among multiple choices**

...not requiring all students to perform without **appropriate supports**

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

- 1 Coherently building students' **background knowledge and vocabulary** in all subject areas
- 2 Asking students to **write about what they read using evidence from text**
- 3 Providing **various open-ended formats** for students to respond to questions
- 4 Supporting the learning needs of all students by providing **appropriate accommodations**



The STAAR redesign will...



Prioritize **cross-curricular passages** in RLA that reference topics that students have learned about in other classes



Include **writing in all RLA tests**, reflecting our updated TEKS, and having **students write text-based responses**



Add **new, non-multiple-choice questions** that are more like questions teachers ask in class








Move to **online assessments** that provide a full suite of robust accommodations for students with specific learning needs

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

The STAAR redesign will...

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Coherently building students' background knowledge and vocabulary in all subject areas | ➔ |  Prioritize cross-curricular passages in RLA that reference topics that students have learned about in other classes |
| 2 | Asking students to write about what they read using evidence from text | ➔ |  Include writing in all RLA tests , reflecting our updated TEKS, and having students write text-based responses |
| 3 | Providing various open-ended formats for students to respond to questions | ➔ |  Add new, non-multiple-choice questions that are more like questions teachers ask in class |
| 4 | Supporting the learning needs of all students by providing appropriate accommodations | ➔ |  Move to online assessments that provide a full suite of robust accommodations for students with specific learning needs |
| 5 |  Moving to online assessments supports all the changes above and provides faster test results to support accelerated learning. | | |

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

1

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

1

Coherently building students' **background knowledge and vocabulary** in all subject areas

Knowledge is essential for success as learners and critical thinkers

- 1988, two young researchers and 64 students in Wisconsin changed how we think about reading comprehension.
- The researchers created a replica of a baseball field furnished with wooden figures.
- The students were handed the same story covering half an inning of made-up baseball and asked to reenact it.



Here's the passage they read

“Churniak swings and hits a slow bouncing ball toward the shortstop. Haley comes in, fields it, and throws to first, but too late. Churniak is on first with a single, Johnson stayed on third. The next batter is Whitcomb, the Cougar’s left-fielder. The ball is returned to Claresen. He gets the sign and winds up and throws a slider that Whitcomb hits between Manfred and Roberts for a hit. Dulaney comes in and picks up the ball. Johnson has scored, and Churniak is heading for third. Here comes the throw and Churniak is out. Churniak argues but to no avail.”

Who do you think did the best at correctly reconstructing the story?

- A. Strong readers
- B. Kids with good knowledge of baseball
- C. It made no difference



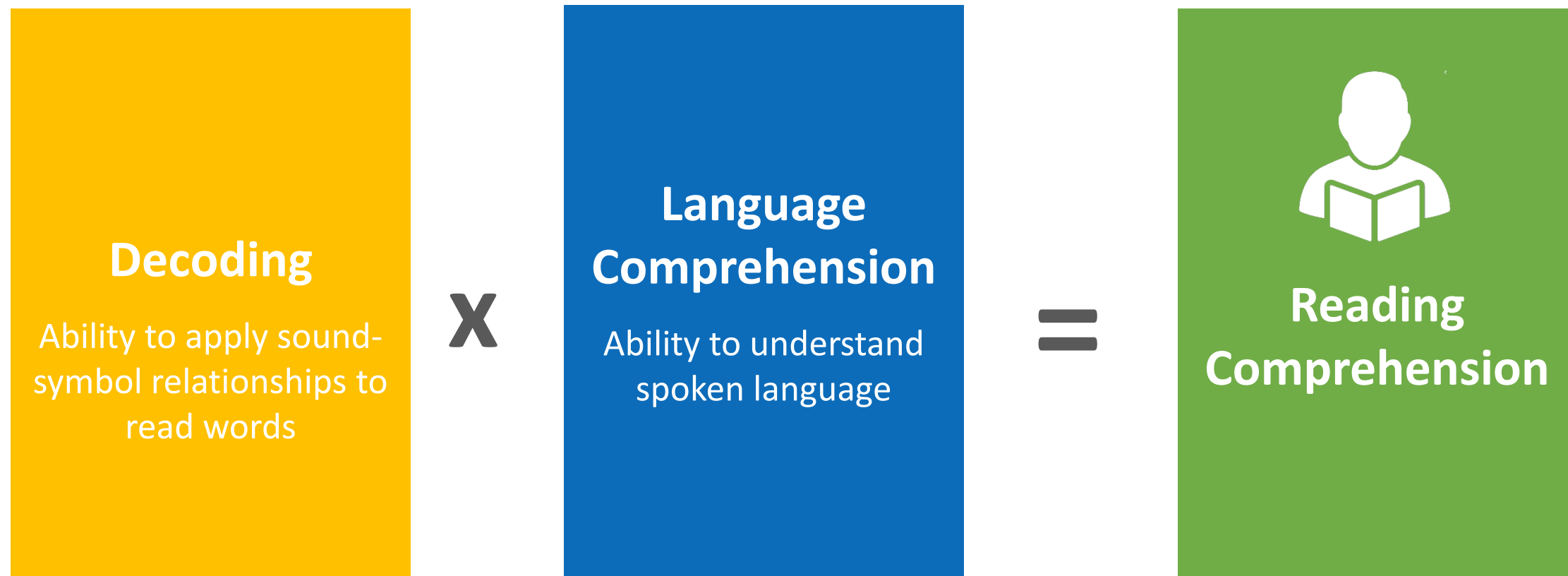
Let's look at another example

“Much depended on . . . the two overnight batsmen. But this duo perished either side of lunch-the latter a little unfortunate to be adjudged leg-before--and with Andrew Symonds, too, being shown the dreaded finger off an inside edge, the inevitable beckoned, bar the pyrotechnics of Michael Clarke and the ninth wicket. Clarke clinically cut and drove to 10 fours in a 134-ball 81, before he stepped out to Kumble to present an easy stumping to Mahendra Singh Dhoni.”

What happened in this passage?

How Do Children Learn To Read?

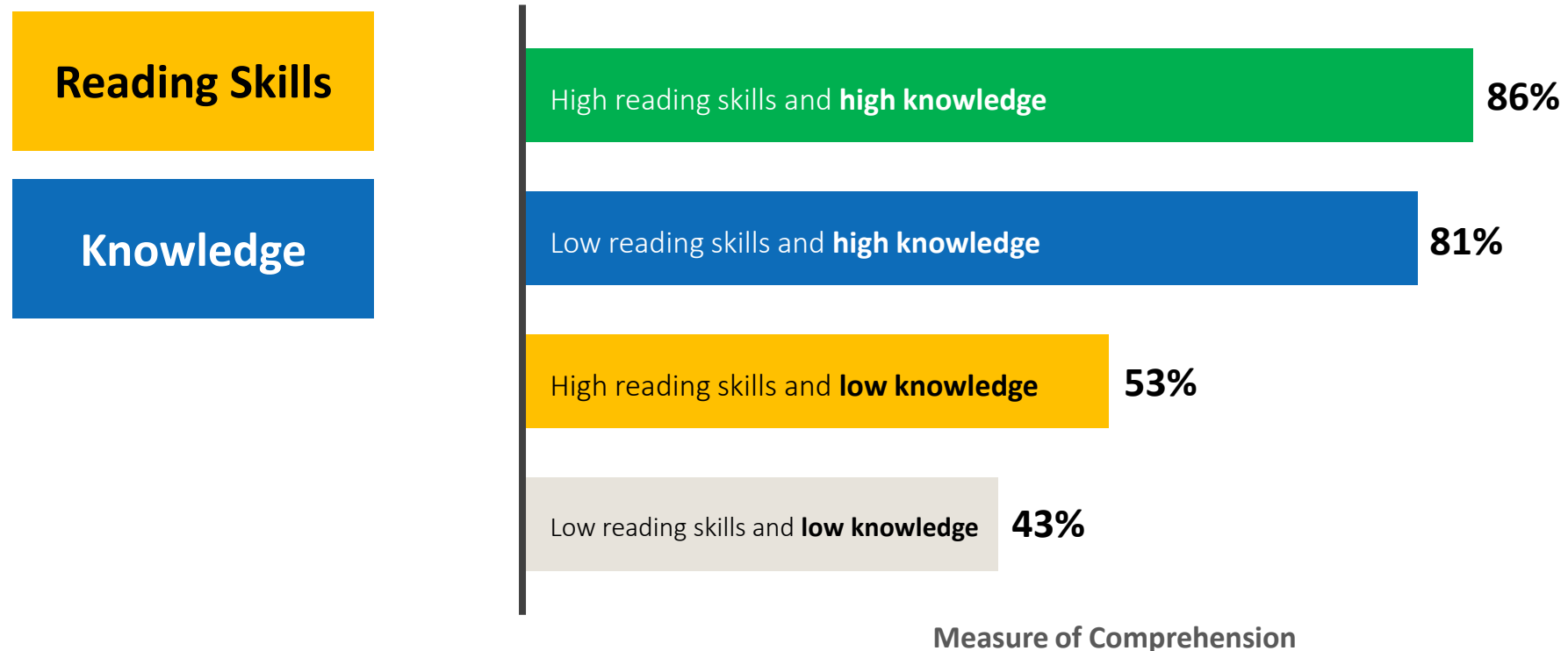
Simple View of Reading



Knowledge of the topic had a much bigger impact on comprehension than generalized reading ability.

1

But background knowledge is critical.



Recht, D. R. and Leslie, L. "Effect of Prior Knowledge on Good and Poor Readers' Memory of Text." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80(1), (1988): p.16.

In effective classrooms, teachers are building students' background knowledge and vocabulary across subjects

4th Grade - Student A

ELA



Stories of the nautical adventures of a sailor that is also a giant

Student A learns different things in Science, Social Studies, and ELA that don't connect to each other

Science



Lesson about the sun as a source of energy

Social studies



Lesson about the battle of the Alamo

4th Grade - Student B

ELA

For scientists interested in continental drift, it was the slowly moving material in the middle of the mantle that caught their attention. Did material movement in the mantle contribute to crust movement, too? Could this be part of the reason why continents drift? Some scientists thought so. Before they could be sure, however, they needed evidence that Earth's crust was actually moving.

Writing lesson to explain the characteristics of earth's layers as part of geology unit

Science



Weathering lesson describing changes in the earth's surface

Social studies

Canoes played an essential role in the culture and lifestyle of nearly every California tribe. Different regions made different kinds of canoes. In southern California, they built big *tomols* out of wooden planks. Only specially trained craftsmen could build them, and they never shared their secrets! *Tomols* could carry several paddlers and hundreds of pounds of trade goods. Best of all, the sturdy, speedy *tomols* were seaworthy, so southern tribes could paddle up the coast and trade with northern tribes.



Tomols carried several paddlers.

Discussion of terrain and adaptations made by Native Americans to navigate the land

Student B is building background knowledge through connections across subjects

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

1

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

1

Coherently building students' **background knowledge and vocabulary** in all subject areas



The STAAR redesign will...



Prioritize **cross-curricular passages** in RLA that reference topics that students have learned about in other classes

Passages already must meet several requirements and get approved by Texas teachers before appearing on STAAR RLA tests

1

*Excerpt from Sample Grade 5 RLA Passage, **The Cholla Cactus***

Searching for Water

3 Regardless of the cholla's size, desert animals have learned to rely on it for survival. Chollas have many stems that are similar to tree branches. Precipitation is scarce in the desert, but cholla stems store rainwater that is absorbed through the plant's root system. Some desert animals depend on the water stored in cholla stems.

4 The desert bighorn sheep, for example, has learned to get water from the cholla cactus. Like many other desert animals, the bighorn rests when the temperatures rise and then goes in search of a cholla when the temperatures cool. The animal uses its large curled horns and its hooves to tear off pieces of a cholla and remove the spines. The bighorn gets water by eating the moist insides of the cholla.



A Desert Bighorn Sheep

Passages are developed, and then reviewed and approved by Texas educators to ensure they:

- represent polished, high-quality writing and are considered exemplary samples of eligible genres
- include reliable and accurate information
- are unbiased against or toward any group
- are as engaging as possible for students
- are appropriate for the intended grade level, including readability indicators such as Lexile range
- contain enough content to assess multiple student expectations

Now, passages will also be intentionally selected to cover cross-curricular content

Excerpt from Sample Grade 5 RLA Passage, *The Cholla Cactus*

Searching for Water

- 3 Regardless of the cholla's size, desert animals have learned to rely on it for survival. Chollas have many stems that are similar to tree branches. Precipitation is scarce in the desert, but cholla stems store rainwater that is absorbed through the plant's root system. Some desert animals depend on the water stored in cholla stems.
- 4 The desert bighorn sheep, for example, has learned to get water from the cholla cactus. Like many other desert animals, the bighorn rests when the temperatures rise and then goes in search of a cholla when the temperatures cool. The animal uses its large curled horns and its hooves to tear off pieces of a cholla and remove the spines. The bighorn gets water by eating the moist insides of the cholla.



A Desert Bighorn Sheep

Direct connections to grade four science TEKS 4.10.A: explore how structures and functions enable organisms to survive in their environment

Direct connections to grade five science TEKS 5.9.A: observe the way organisms live and survive in their ecosystem by interacting with the living and nonliving components

Questions will continue to assess RLA TEKS

Excerpt from Sample Grade 5 RLA Passage, *The Cholla Cactus*

Searching for Water

- 3 Regardless of the cholla's size, desert animals have learned to rely on it for survival. Chollas have many stems that are similar to tree branches. Precipitation is scarce in the desert, but cholla stems store rainwater that is absorbed through the plant's root system. Some desert animals depend on the water stored in cholla stems.
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Although the passage content is connected to science TEKS, students will continue to be assessed only on RLA TEKS

Sample Question from Grade 5 RLA Passage, *The Cholla Cactus*

Grade 5 Reading TEKS 5.R.7.C: Use text evidence to support an appropriate response.

Which sentences from paragraphs 4 through 6 show that the cholla cactus is difficult to harvest?

Select **TWO** correct answers.

- 4 The desert bighorn sheep, for example, has learned to get water from the cholla cactus. Like many other desert animals, the bighorn rests when the temperatures rise and then goes in search of a cholla when the temperatures cool. The animal uses its large curled horns and its hooves to tear off pieces of a cholla and remove the spines. The bighorn gets water by eating the moist insides of the cholla.

A Prickly Feast

- 5 The cholla cactus also provides tasty meals for many other desert animals. Bees enjoy the pollen of its colorful blooms. Birds, insects, reptiles, and mammals dine on the cholla's juicy fruit.
- 6 The cholla also provides nutritious food for people. Members of the O'odham tribe and other desert-dwelling people eat the flower buds of some types of chollas. They roll the buds on a hard surface to remove the spines and then roast them slowly on an open fire. Once the buds have been thoroughly roasted (usually for a day), they are ready to eat. Cholla buds contain protein, calcium, and fiber—all of which are important to good health.

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

2

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

2

Asking students to **write about what they read using evidence from text**

In the classroom, strong teachers are supporting students in becoming better readers by...

2

1






Having students write in
all grade levels and all
subject areas

2

Having students write
using evidence from texts
they are reading

STAAR is getting redesigned based on these two practices

Learning to read well means grounding reading, writing, and speaking in evidence from text

-  **Reading and writing are reciprocal processes.** Writing about what you read strengthens comprehension.
-  By grounding the discussion in the text, all students are **given an equal opportunity to engage.**
-  Support **knowledge building** in content-rich text, and point students toward the **most important parts of the text.**
-  The **length and quality of student recall improves** when responding to content-based lessons grounded in text.
-  The **ability to cite evidence differentiates strong from weak** student performance on National Assessment Education Progress, AP Exams, and other college-readiness assessments.

Basing writing (and speaking) in text better reflects effective instructional practices

Prompt based on personal knowledge and experience:

“What is your favorite place that you’ve traveled to?
What did it look like and what was your favorite part?”

Prompt based on text:

“Read these two articles about two different locations.
Using evidence from the articles, write a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each location and your recommendation on which one to visit.”

Which of these prompts is more aligned with the writing that you have been expected to do in your adult life?

Which of these prompts relies less on school-based instruction and more on outside-of-school experiences?

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

2

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

The STAAR redesign will...

2

Asking students to **write about what they read using evidence from text**



Include **writing in all RLA tests**, reflecting our updated TEKS, and having **students write text-based responses**

Previously, students were asked to write in response to a stand-alone question

The previous 4th and 7th grade writing prompts asked students to write in response to a stand-alone prompt, without being asked to read any associated passages.

*Grade 4 STAAR assessment, 2019

WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Expository

READ the information in the box below.

Thomas Edison is famous for inventing many things, including the lightbulb.

THINK about inventions that you believe are useful.

WRITE about one invention that is important in your life. Tell what the invention is and explain what makes it important.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your central idea
- organize your writing
- develop your writing in detail
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

Based on research and stakeholder feedback, redesigned STAAR will ask students to write using evidence from text

2

In the redesigned STAAR, writing prompts in **all grade levels** will ask students to write **using evidence from the text** to support their response.

The Spelling Test

Characters

NARRATOR
HERBIE JONES
MISS PINKHAM
MR. JONES
OLIVIA JONES
ANNABELLE LOUISA HODGEKISS

1 [Settings: Miss Pinkham's third-grade classroom; Herbie's house.]
2 [Time: One week in March.]
3 **MISS PINKHAM:** As a special bonus this week, I have a challenge. Spell your name, address, town, state, and zip code correctly, I will give you a special reward.
4 **HERBIE:** Hmmmmmm, I know I usually don't study my spelling words, but I want good news for Dad to find in the mail.
5 **NARRATOR:** Herbie's dad works the night shift at an airplane factory. He gets up around 2:00 p.m. and is look in the mailbox.
6 **HERBIE:** I can hear him now . . .
7 **MR. JONES:** Bills! Bills! Bills! There's nothing but bills!
8 **HERBIE:** I can do something about that.
9 **NARRATOR:** As soon as Herbie got home that afternoon, he practiced spelling words at his coffee table. His sister Olivia was shocked.
10 **OLIVIA:** What are you doing?
11 **HERBIE:** Studying.
12 **OLIVIA:** Studying? Since when?
13 **HERBIE:** Since I got my spelling list. How do you study spelling?
14 **OLIVIA:** You're asking my advice about something?
15 **HERBIE:** Well, you do make better grades than I do.
16 **OLIVIA:** Well, Herbie, I write the words down. . . .
17 **HERBIE:** Yeah?
...

Excerpt from Sample Grade 4
RLA Passage, *The Spelling Test*

Read the play "The Spelling Test." Based on the information in the play, write a response to the following:

Explain how Herbie's behavior changes and how this is developed by the playwright.

Write a well-organized informational essay that uses specific evidence from the play to support your answer.

Remember to —

- clearly state your central idea
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the selection in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

3

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

3

Providing **various open-ended formats** for students to respond to questions...

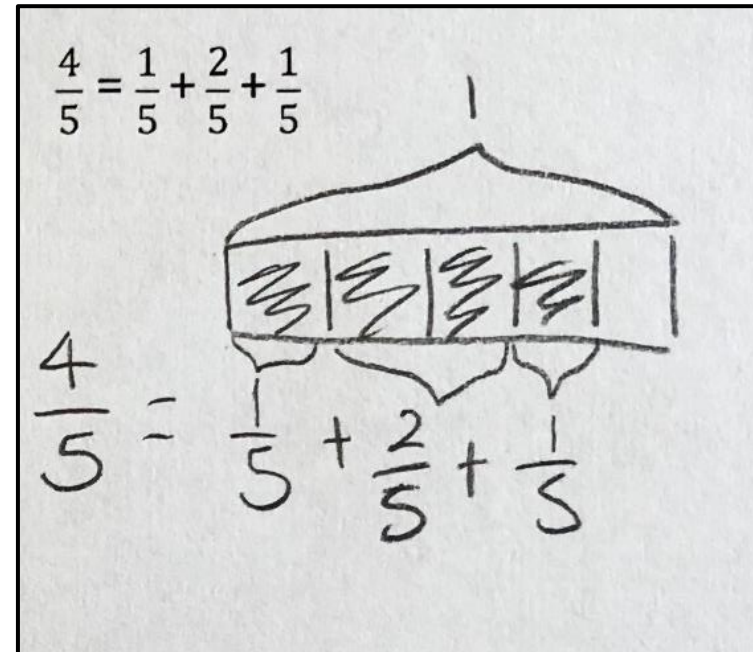
In the classroom, students are asked to engage with content in multiple ways to gain and express understanding

3

Grade 4 Math TEKS

- 4.3A: represent a fraction a/b as a sum of fractions $1/b$, where a and b are whole numbers and $b > 0$, including when $a > b$
- 4.3B: decompose a fraction in more than one way into a sum of fractions with the same denominator using concrete and pictorial models and recording results with symbolic representations.

Example: “Draw and label a strip diagram to model the decomposition”



In the classroom, students are asked to engage with content in multiple ways to gain and express understanding

3

Grade 4 RLA TEKS

- 4.6.F Make inferences and use evidence to support understanding;
- 4.8.A Infer basic themes supported by text evidence;
- 4.9.B Explain figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and personification that the poet uses to create images

Chapter 1

Bills to Pay

THE BIG QUESTION
Why did the British government tax the colonists, and why did that make the colonists angry?

To better understand the events that led to the American Revolution, we will have to travel back in time to the years between 1754 and 1763, when the British fought against the French in a different war on North American soil.

This war, known as the French and Indian War, was part of a larger struggle in other countries for power and wealth. In this **conflict**, the British fought the French for control of land in North America.

During the French and Indian War, many Native Americans chose sides. Some fought with the British, while others fought with the French. Battles were won and lost on both sides. However, as is often the case in war, there is a **turning point**. In this war, it was a battle fought in a part of Canada controlled by the French.

In 1759, British soldiers sailed up the St. Lawrence River and attacked the French city of Québec. The British were victorious in the Battle of Québec and then went on to take Montréal the next year. Montréal's fall signaled the end of large battles between the French and British in North America. Sporadic fighting continued until 1763, when the Treaty of Paris finally ended the French and Indian War.

Example: "Write a cause and effect paragraph explaining how the French and Indian War eventually led to the Stamp Act and colonial protests"

The British and the French wanted to gain more land in North America, so they began the French and Indian war. The British felt that that the colonists should help pay the costs of the war due to the amount of debt they got into protecting them. The colonists felt like this was unfair because no one asked what they wanted and had no representation in the decision making. They protested because they felt it was an injustice. Because of the continuous protesting, the British finally stopped the Stamp Act.

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

3

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

The STAAR redesign will...

3

Providing **various open-ended formats** for students to respond to questions...



Add **new, non-multiple-choice questions** that are more like questions teachers ask in class

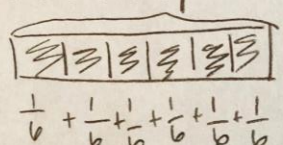
New STAAR question types are more like the kind teachers ask in class

3

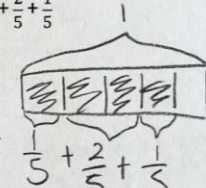
Math, Grade 4 Lesson

2. Draw and label strip diagrams to model each decomposition.

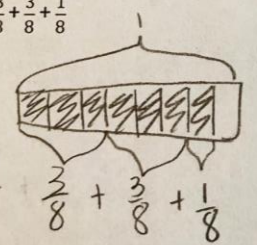
a. $1 = \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6}$



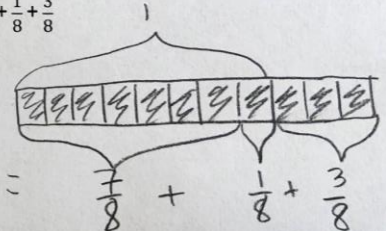
b. $\frac{4}{5} = \frac{1}{5} + \frac{2}{5} + \frac{1}{5}$



c. $\frac{7}{8} = \frac{3}{8} + \frac{3}{8} + \frac{1}{8}$



d. $\frac{11}{8} = \frac{7}{8} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{3}{8}$



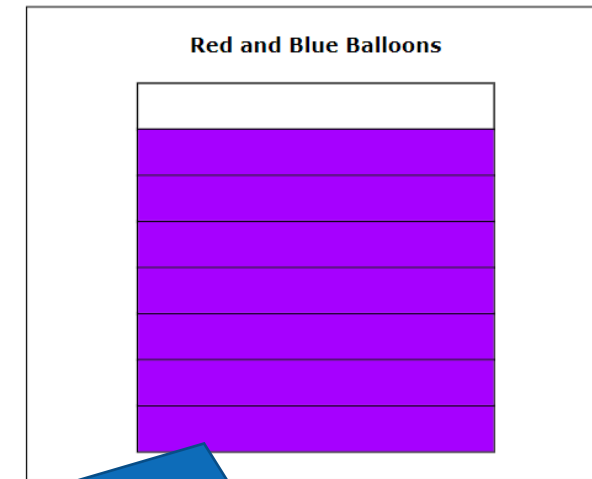
In this lesson, students are using shaded fraction models to show their understanding of adding fractions

Potential new STAAR question

In a bag of balloons, $\frac{2}{8}$ of the balloons are red and $\frac{5}{8}$ of the balloons are blue. What fraction of the balloons in the bag are either red or blue?

Complete the model so that it is shaded to represent the fraction of the balloons that are either red or blue.

Select the parts you want to shade.



This potential new STAAR question asks students to shade in a fraction model to represent the addition of two fractions

New STAAR question types are more like the kind teachers ask in class

3

Grade 4 Lesson

Chapter 1

Bills to Pay

THE BIG QUESTION
Why did the British government tax the colonists, and why did that make the colonists angry?

Draft a Paragraph

Use the space below to write a cause and effect paragraph, explaining how the French and Indian War eventually led to the Stamp Act and colonial protests.

- Use your own words.
- Use cause and effect transition words whenever possible.

To the Revolution of 1754 and the war on the British.

This war, known as the French and Indian War, was part of a larger struggle in other countries for power and wealth. In this conflict, the British fought the French for control of land in North America.

During the French and Indian War, many Native Americans chose sides. Some fought with the British, while others fought with the French. Battles were won and lost on both sides. However, as is often the case in war, there is a **turning point**. In this war, it was a battle fought in a part of Canada controlled by the French.

In 1759, British soldiers and General James Wolfe defeated French soldiers on the banks of the Lawrence River and were victorious in the war.

In this lesson, students are asked to write an open-ended response using evidence from the text

Potential new STAAR question

A Prickly Feast

5 The cholla cactus also provides tasty meals for many other desert animals. Bees enjoy the pollen of its colorful blooms. Birds, insects, reptiles, and mammals dine on the cholla.

6 The cholla cactus is also a home for many other animals. The cholla cactus has a hollow interior and other animals roll the bark off the cholla to build their nests. The cholla cactus is also ready to eat and is an important part of the desert ecosystem.

A Safe Haven

7 Food is not the only reason animals like the cholla cactus. The cholla cactus provides shelter from the sun and predators. The cholla cactus has sharp spines that keep predators away from their nests. The cholla cactus also helps the wood rats keep cool during the hot summer and maintain body heat during cold winter months.

8 The cholla cactus is also a home for many other animals. The cholla cactus has a hollow interior and other animals roll the bark off the cholla to build their nests. The cholla cactus is also ready to eat and is an important part of the desert ecosystem.

Excerpt from Sample Grade 5 RLA Passage, *The Cholla Cactus*

Read the question carefully. Then enter your answer in the box provided.

Based on paragraph 7 of the article "The Cholla Cactus," why does the wood rat use the cholla cactus to build its nest? Support your answer with evidence from the article.

The wood rat uses the cholla cactus to build its nest because the cactus protects it from other animals and the hot sun. "The sharp spines of the cactus keep predators away from their nests. And the thick covering of the cholla also helps the wood rats keep cool during the hot summer and maintain body heat during cold winter months."

This potential new STAAR question asks students to answer an open-ended question using evidence from the text

Any new question type will need to be able to meet our existing current rigorous requirements for STAAR questions AND provide additional benefits

3

New questions will need to meet our existing rigorous requirements for STAAR, including:

- Valid statistics from field tests
- Alignment with TEKS
- Grade level appropriateness
- Lack of bias
- Accessibility for all students
- Review and approval from group of Texas educators who teach the grade level and agree students should be able to answer these questions at the end of the year

TEA has worked closely with students and educators to determine which new question types best support students:

- **600** educators participated in focus groups on new question types
- **200+** students participated in input gathering around new question types including feedback sessions, think-alouds, and perception sharing
- **92%** of educators agree that the new question types allow students to better demonstrate their knowledge.
- **89%** of educators believe that the new question types are more engaging for students
- **80%+** of educators agree that new question types will impact instructional planning

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

4

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

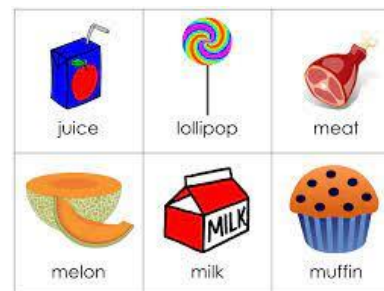
The STAAR redesign will...

4

Supporting the learning needs of all students through **appropriate accommodations**

In the classroom, strong teachers are supporting the unique learning needs of each of their students in many ways

- Visual anchors for vocabulary
- Pre-reading strategies
- Large print
- Calculation aids
- Line readers
- Reading text aloud
- Transcribing or speech-to-text
- And many more!



The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

4

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

The STAAR redesign will...

4

Supporting the learning needs of all students through **appropriate accommodations**



Move to **online assessments** that provide a full suite of robust accommodations for students with specific learning needs

Content and language supports and text-to-speech provide robust supports for students who need them

4

The screenshot displays a digital reading application interface. At the top, a navigation bar includes icons for back, forward, and search, along with a progress indicator showing '33% 2019 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Released Test'. Below this, a toolbar offers various accessibility features: 'Speak Passage', 'Highlight Selection', 'Dictionary', 'Notepad', 'Line Reader', 'Zoom Out', and 'Zoom In'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a reading passage titled 'Soaring to New Heights' with a small image of a pole vaulter at the bottom. The right column presents a question: 'Which sentence best expresses the main idea of paragraph 2?' with four multiple-choice options (A, B, C, D). The interface is designed to be user-friendly and accessible, with clear text and intuitive navigation tools.

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to the question.

High-school student Charlotte Brown competed in the Texas state track-and-field meet in 2013, where she won eighth place in the pole vault by jumping 10 feet 6 inches high. Charlotte, who is legally blind, created ways of communicating with her coach that can be used when Charlotte competes.

Read the selection to learn more about Charlotte Brown and her goals for the future.

Soaring to New Heights

1 Texas pole-vaulter Charlotte Brown is reaching new heights. As a sophomore in high school, 15-year-old Brown competed in the pole vault at a state track-and-field meet in Texas in 2013. She finished eighth with a vault of 10 feet 6 inches. What makes this accomplishment even more notable is that Brown is legally blind. Because she could distinguish between light and dark, she and her coach developed a system that enabled Brown to vault competitively. Her coach would roll out some dark artificial turf alongside Brown's running lane. This allowed Brown to be able to run in a straight line. She also had to count her steps in order to know when to plant the pole and listen carefully as her coach told her when to jump.

Use "Soaring to New Heights" to answer the following question.

Which sentence best expresses the main idea of paragraph 2?

A Brown adapted her technique as her vision worsened.

B Brown believed that being a junior in high school was easy.

C Brown succeeded at pole vaulting despite her disability.

D Brown competed in the Texas state championships twice.

Such online supports greatly simplify administration for staff as well

In addition to accommodations for students who need them, online testing also offers accessibility tools for all students

Accessibility Tools

- ★ Highlighter
- ★ Notepad
- ★ Help
- ★ Guideline
- ★ Color
- ★ Zoom
- ★ Mouse Pointer
- ★ Line Reader
- ★ Mark for Review
- ★ Answer Eliminator

Content-Specific Accessibility Tools

- ★ Basic, Scientific, and Graphing Calculators
- ★ Customary and Metric Rulers
- ★ Mathematics Reference Materials
- ★ Science Reference Materials
- ★ Spelling Assistance

Tools to Support Student-specific Accommodations

- ★ Content and language supports (pop-ups, rollovers, and pre-reads)
- ★ Text-to-speech
- ★ Speech-to-text
- ★ Refreshable braille
- ★ ASL videos
- ★ Basic calculators for certain tests

Online accommodations ensure that dyslexia or other learning disabilities don't prevent students from doing well on STAAR

Content and language supports

- Pre-reads that include any challenging vocabulary, novel phrases, and/or proper nouns from the passage
- Pop ups and rollovers that provide visual examples, simplified language, and definitions

Text to speech

The following can be read aloud to students:

	Direction Lines	Intro Paragraph	Passage	Test Questions	Answer choices
Reading	✓			✓	✓
Editing	✓				
Revising	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Both content and language supports and text to speech



Pre-reads are read aloud



Pop ups and rollovers on corresponding sections are read aloud



Parts of reading passages referenced within a question are read aloud

In addition to the online STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2 remains available for students with significant cognitive disabilities

There are multiple ways for educators and students to become familiar with the online testing platform

STAAR online practice tests

STAAR Interim Assessments - free, online tests that mirror the summative blueprint and predict students' performance on STAAR

Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR) - free, online tool used to create, administer, analyze, and share formative assessments.

Practice and Released Tests

Printable PDF Released Tests

Printable PDF versions of released tests for STAAR and STAAR Alternate 2 are available on the TEA website. Access PDF versions of the released STAAR tests by clicking the **STAAR Released Tests** card below. Access PDF versions of the released STAAR Alternate 2 tests by clicking the **STAAR Alternate 2 Released Tests** card.

Local education agencies may order printed versions of the STAAR released tests. Use the online order form below to order printed released tests.

Online Practice Tests

The online practice tests are designed to familiarize students with the online testing environment, the available tools, and the various types of test questions. These tests provide students with an opportunity to interact with the test interface, respond to questions, and locate and use available tools.

The practice tests are released tests that have been previously administered and are available for STAAR and TELPAS. In addition, small sets of test questions (smaller than an actual test) are available as practice sets. These practice sets are used to introduce students to new types of test questions like the new STAAR item types. Access the online practice tests and practice sets by clicking the **Practice Tests Login** card below.

Printable PDF Released Tests

INFORMATION

STAAR Released Tests

INFORMATION

STAAR Alternate 2 Released Tests

INFORMATION

Order Form for Printed Released Tests

Online Practice Tests

SYSTEM

Practice Tests Login
Access for students (and others) to the online practice tests.

SYSTEM

Test Administrator Practice Site
Access to the test administrator practice interface.

Your Tests

Select the test you need to take.

Student Grade Level:

STAAR Released and Practice Tests

Start 2018 STAAR Grade 5 Science Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Grade 5 Science Released Test

Start 2018 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Science Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Science Released Test

Start 2018 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Released Test

Start 2018 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Reading Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Reading Released Test

Start 2018 STAAR Grade 5 Mathematics Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Grade 5 Mathematics Released Test

Start 2018 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Mathematics Released Test

Start 2019 STAAR Spanish Grade 5 Mathematics Released Test

TELPAS Released and Practice Tests

Start 2017 TELPAS Grades 4-5 Reading Released Test

Start 2020 TELPAS Grades 4-5 Listening and Speaking Released Test

Start 2018 TELPAS Grades 4-5 Listening and Speaking Practice Set

Start 2020 TELPAS Grades 4-5 Reading Released Test

Online practice tests, administered on the same platform as STAAR, are available at www.texasassessment.gov

Moving to online assessments enables other components of the STAAR redesign and provides faster test results

5

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

The STAAR redesign will...

5



Moving to **online assessments** supports the changes above and provides faster test results to support accelerated learning.

The transition to online testing opens the door to a number of benefits

Primary benefits of online testing include...



Broader access to accommodations

For example, struggling readers have access to pop-ups that clarify vocabulary through the use of simpler language or pictures.



Faster test scores and results

Not having to ship and scan materials means that educators and parents can get student results quicker.



Improved test operations

Reduces the number of materials needed for special administrations of STAAR and eliminates the need to match test materials for oral administrations.



Allows for new, non-multiple-choice questions

Enables more interactive and engaging questions that give students more opportunities to show what they know.

70% of other states have already transitioned to full online testing, including a number of states with highly rural populations.

Previous studies have shown no difference in performance between students who test online and students who test on paper, except for English 1 and English 2 EOCs, which is taken into account during the scoring process.

The statewide feasibility study conducted in 2020 indicated that a two-year transition is feasible

5

- State benchmarking revealed that 70% of states currently have fully implemented online testing for their primary state assessments.
- The state of Texas is close to having the infrastructure necessary to fully implement online testing, with a small investment in internet connectivity needed for a subset of mostly small and rural districts. Across the state, an estimated \$4 million one-time network investment and \$13 million annual investment is needed beyond E-rate.
- A two-year transition will allow educators and students time to increase familiarity and comfort with online testing.



Video explaining the results of the study can be found on the [STAAR Redesign webpage](#).

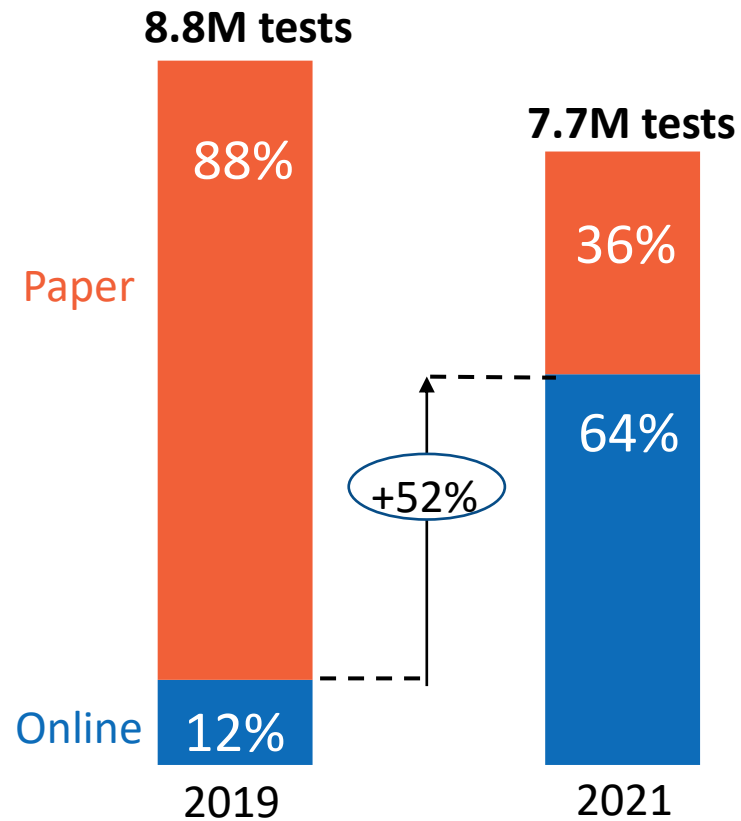
As a result of the study, the 87th Texas Legislature took action -

- Confirmed move to online testing by 2022-2023..
- Expand authorized use of the Technology and Instructional Materials Allotment (TIMA) to cover internet connectivity and training for online testing.
- Provides funding for TEA to implement a matching grant to support one-time network infrastructure investment

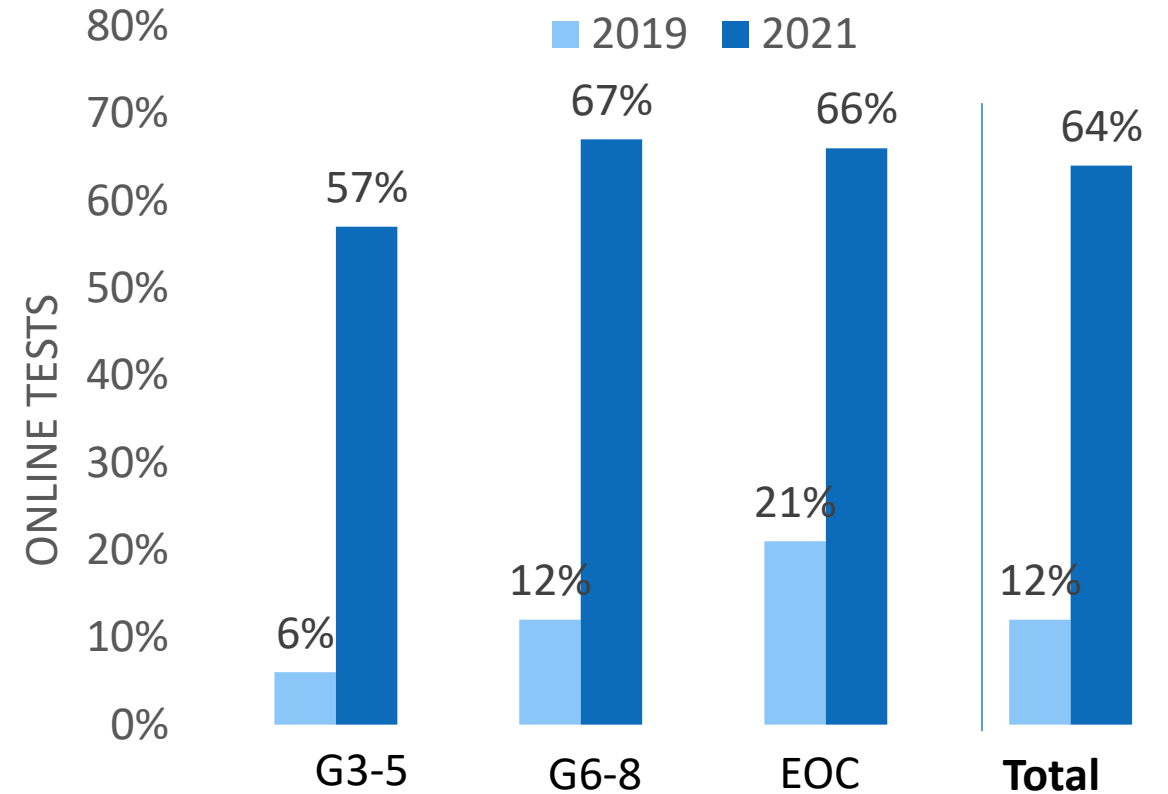
In 2021, Spring online testing increased from 12% in 2019 to 64%

5

STAAR online participation increased by **52 percentage points**



We saw increases in students testing online **across all grade bands**



To support districts, we have released a tool that includes next steps to be fully prepared for the transition to online

Step 1: System-level pre-requisites to implement full online testing

Prerequisite #2: Sufficient hardware	Key question	Next steps if goal not met
To be completed before the start of SY 2022-23	Does each campus have enough devices to support online testing?	CREATE A STAGGERED SCHEDULE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A staggered schedule allows all students to test within the administration window given the number of students that can test at the same time. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL DEVICES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap into other funding sources to re-allocate efforts towards network infrastructure (i.e., Technology and Instructional Materials Allotment, Emergency Connectivity Fund.) Devices that students are using for home-learning can also be brought in for online testing.
	Goal / Recommended Minimum	
	3:1 student-to-device ratio	
	How to determine if you've met the goal	
	Determine the ratio of student testers to devices. Check the minimum system requirements to determine which devices meet the hardware specifications	

Tool was shared on Nov 2, in a TAA titled, "2022–2023 Transition to Online and Other State Summative Assessment Redesign Resources"

Pre-requisites include -

- Adequate network infrastructure
- Sufficient hardware
- Software meets system requirements



Step 2: Suggested actions for successful implementation based on district experiences

Success criteria #1: Strategic planning	
Key characteristics	Suggested next steps if key characteristics are not present
<input type="checkbox"/> District leadership is clear on what is required for full online testing implementation and why it is important.	ALIGN ADMINISTRATORS AROUND A SHARED VISION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up strategic planning meeting for online assessment Ensure administrators clearly articulate the role of technology, inclusive of online assessments, in their overall vision and mission Assign clear initiative lead on transition to online to serve as point person and oversee end-to-end process, with district leadership backup
<input type="checkbox"/> District leadership has established a plan and timeline to moving online and has communicated this across staff.	CREATE A LAUNCH PLAN: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators create a detailed launch plan with timeline, milestones, and goals to transition to online testing (e.g., grade by grade, campus by campus). Load testing and increasing staff and students' familiarity with the system should be included in the plan.

Success criteria include -

- Strategic planning
- Training and familiarity
- Program maintenance

LEAs that do not meet the minimum bandwidth speeds for online testing have access to a matching grant to upgrade their network infrastructure






- Prioritizes rural districts that apply for E-Rate funds in FY22
- Maximum of \$1.3 million for fiber connection
- Remaining funds for upgrading network connections
- Timeline
 - Jan 18 – Grant posted to TEA.Texas.gov
 - Mar 21 – Applications due
 - May 23 – Awards announced, LEAs may begin grant-funded projects
 - July 21 – LEAs may begin drawing down funds

E-Rate funding	LEA budget	Matching grant
E-rate's reimbursement rate varies by district type (rural vs urban) and student demographics (% eligible for National School Lunch Program). On average across Texas, ~76% of eligible connectivity costs are covered by E-Rate funding.	The remaining balance is split between the LEA and matching grant funds.	

The STAAR redesign is based on improving alignment to the classroom experience

In effective classrooms, teachers are...

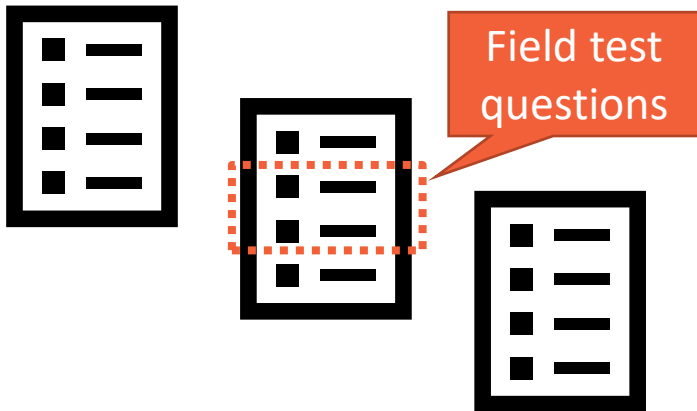
The STAAR redesign will...

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Coherently building students' background knowledge and vocabulary in all subject areas | ➔ |  Prioritize cross-curricular passages in RLA that reference topics that students have learned about in other classes. |
| 2 | Asking students to write about what they read using evidence from text | ➔ |  Include writing in all RLA tests , reflecting our updated TEKS, and having students write text-based responses |
| 3 | Providing various open-ended formats for students to respond to questions... | ➔ |  Add new, non-multiple-choice questions that are more like questions teachers ask in class |
| 4 | Supporting the learning needs of all students by providing appropriate accommodations | ➔ |  Move to online assessments that provide a full suite of robust accommodations for students with specific learning needs |
| 5 |  Moving to online assessments supports all the changes above and provides faster test results to support accelerated learning. | | |

The redesign does not mean the test will be harder

While individual items can be easier or harder in a given year, the mix of item difficulty is balanced across years by using field test results

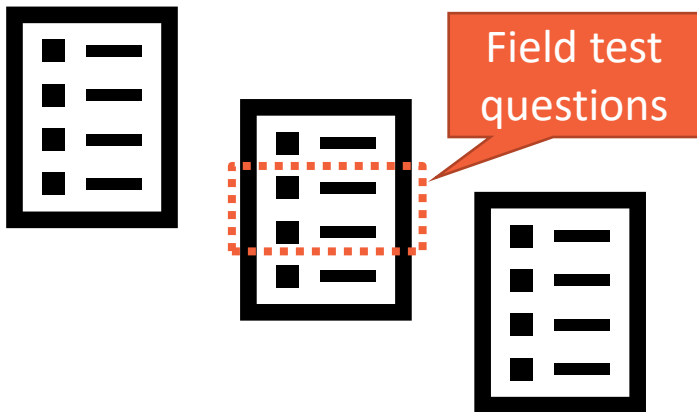
On each STAAR test, a small number of questions do not count towards the student's score. These are **field test questions**.



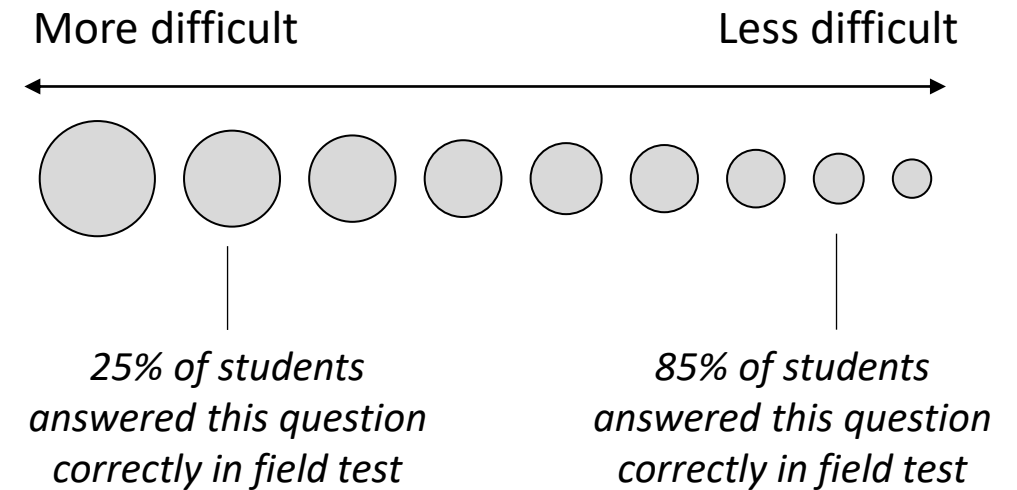
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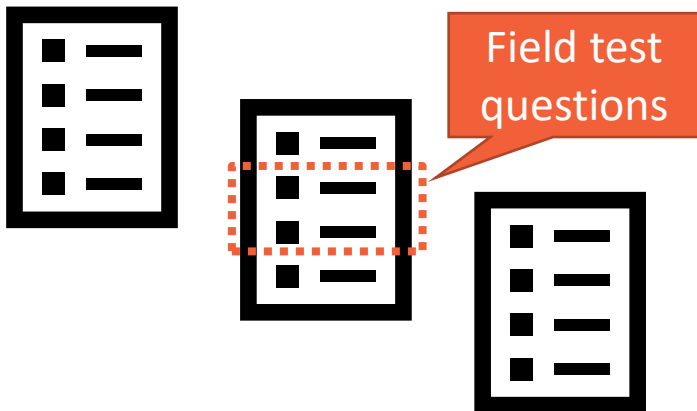
Through field testing, we determine how hard a question is (e.g., 80% of students got the question right).



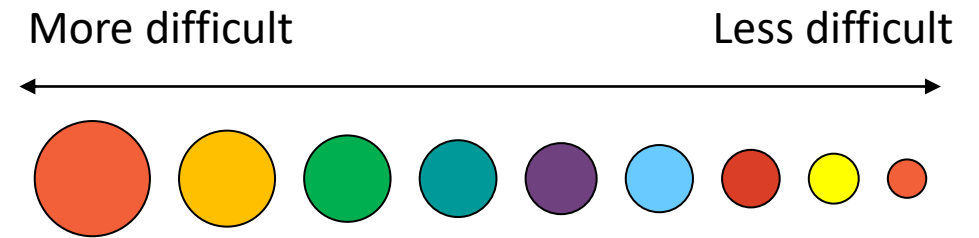
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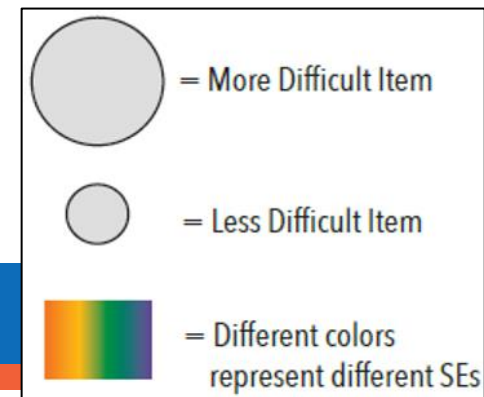
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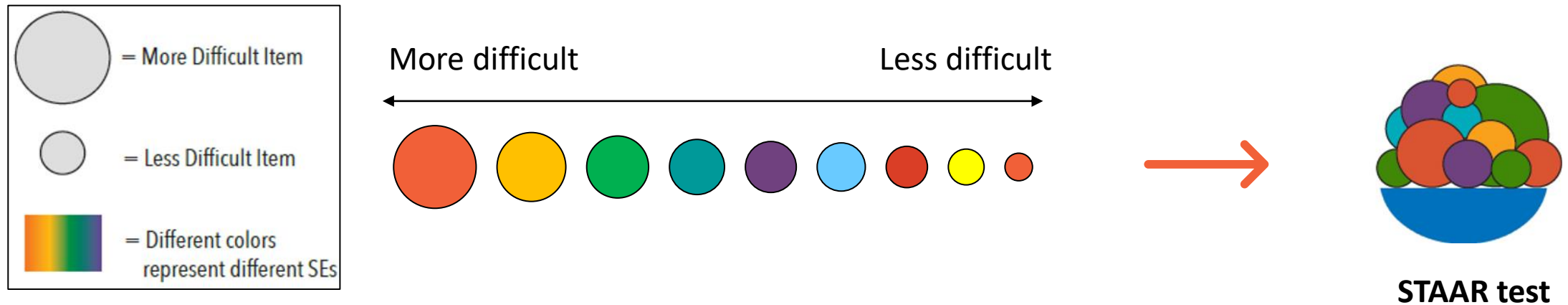
Questions also represent a variety of different student expectations



The redesign does not mean the test will be harder

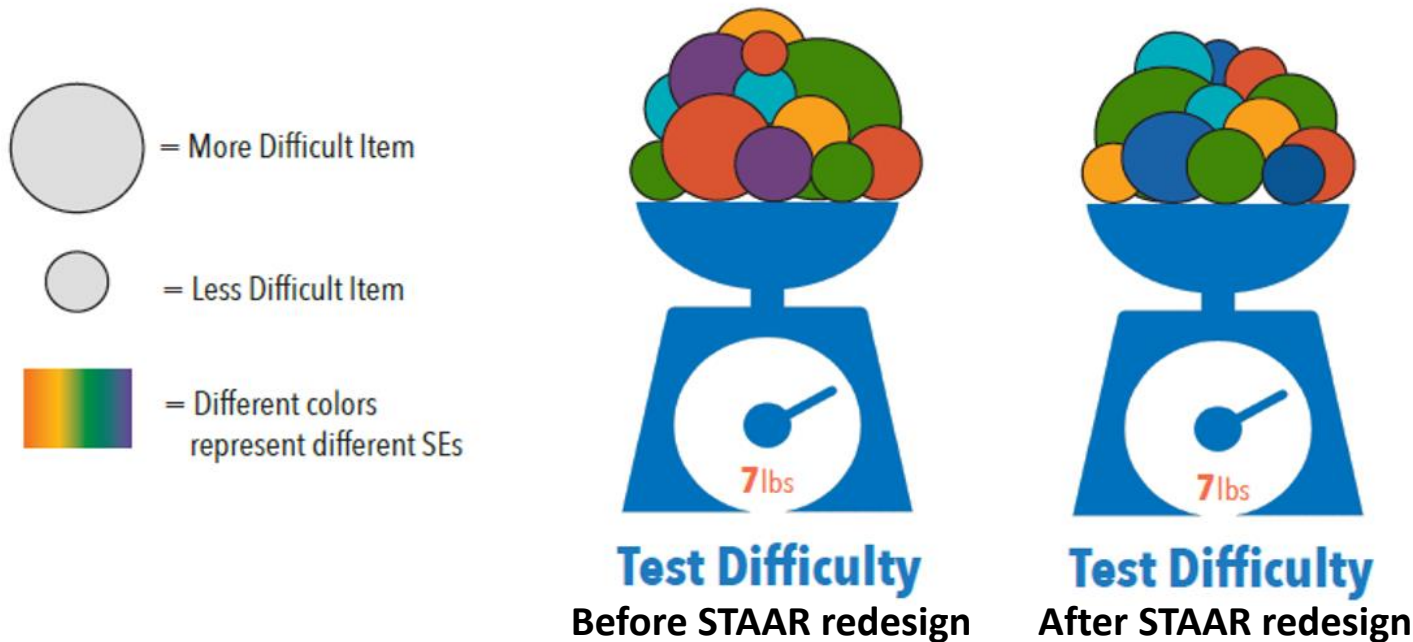
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After questions have been field tested, they can be used to build STAAR tests



The redesign does not mean the test will be harder

While individual items can be easier or harder in a given year, the mix of item difficulty is balanced across years by using field test results



Texas educators are key to designing and building high quality assessments

Classroom teachers, instructional coaches, campus and district content specialists, and campus administrators can serve in a variety of ways:

- **Educator passage review** – each potential passage for the RLA test is reviewed and approved by a committee of Texas educators
- **Educator item review** – each potential question for a state test is reviewed and approved by a committee of Texas educators
- **Constructed response rangefinding** – educators are convened to set the scoring boundaries for student essays based on the rubric
- **Subject-area advisory groups** – groups of educators are convened to provide feedback on subject-area-specific topics
- **STAAR redesign focus groups** – groups of educators are convened to provide input on components of the STAAR redesign that are under consideration

Visit the [Texas Assessment Learning Management System](#) to apply

New question type resources will be available soon to support educators – be on the lookout for a TAA!

Fall 2021

- **Preliminary blueprints** and **RLA assessed curriculum** available on TEA website.

Jan/Feb 2022

- **New question type samplers by grade & subject** on same platform as STAAR and accompanying resources.

Spring 2022

- Blueprints and new question types will be finalized based on stand alone field test data.

Summer 2022

- **Final blueprints** will be published.

Fall 2022

- **Practice tests by grade & subject** on same platform as STAAR.