

Office of Assessment and Standards
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Item

Q1: Why do we have a stand-alone field test this year?

The stand-alone field test will consist solely of the new TDW item because we must field test all items before we can use them operationally on a test. (Operational items count toward the students' scores; field test items do not.) Since the TDW is an extended-response item, we did not want to place the TDW and the TDA on one test form. We did not think this would be in the best interest of the students.

Q2: When is the stand-alone TDW field test?

As noted in the [2023-24 Assessment Schedule](#), each district has an additional 10 days at the beginning of the regular SC READY and EOCEP testing windows to administer the TDW field test. Each district will set its field test date. Contact your School Testing Coordinator (STC) for more details.

Q3: When will the new TDW rubrics be released?

The rubrics are available on our [Assessment Quick Links](#) and are located with the TDA resources in the “SC READY ELA Writing Component” and “EOCEP English 2 Writing Component” sections.

Q4: What other resources will be available?

The recording of the February 15, 2024, TDW Webinar will be placed in the same sections as the TDW rubrics.

Q5: When will we have sample items and scored student responses?

The first session of rangefinding committees will meet in July 2024 to score half of the field-tested TDW items for each grade level. Once our South Carolina teachers create the anchor sets for these TDW items, we will select which items and responses to release. After those are selected, the items and responses must be formatted, edited, and reviewed. We will release the samples once they have gone through this process. The second session of rangefinding committees will meet in the summer of 2025 to score the second half of the TDW items for each grade level.

Q6: What is a rangefinding committee?

The grade-level rangefinding committees will consist of teachers and content experts from across the state. These committees will work together to determine what student writing looks like at each score point of the rubric at each grade level. Anyone interested in serving on this committee should visit our [Assessment Quick Links](#) page to apply.

Q7: I notice that the rubrics include qualitative language such as, “skillfully.” How do we know what skillful writing looks like?

We are unable to answer this question at this time. The teachers and content experts who serve on the rangefinding committees will determine what skillful writing looks like at each grade level.

Q8: Why are we moving from Text-Dependent Analysis to TDW?

The main reason is that the *2023 SC CCR ELA Standards* support an extended text-dependent writing item. Moving to the TDW item is also responsive to the concerns expressed by South Carolina teachers.

Q9: How many points will the TDW item be worth?

For SC READY ELA grades 3-8, the TDW item will be worth a total of 4 points. For EOCEP for English 2, the TDW item will be worth a total of 6 points. The 2024-25 test blueprints will be released in early fall 2024.

Q10: There is only one TDA rubric for SC READY grades 3-8 and one rubric for English 2. How many TDW rubrics will we have?

In response to requests from teachers, there will be more than one TDW rubric for SC READY and English 2:

- Grades 3-4: To Convey an Experience (Real or Imagined)
- Grades 5-6: To Persuade (through Argument)
- Grades 7-8: To Inform
- Grades 7-8: To Persuade (through Argument)
- English 2: To Inform
- English 2: To Persuade (through Argument)

More specific information about each rubric is available in the TDW Webinar.

Q11: What is a holistic rubric? Will students receive feedback for improvement on their TDW responses?

The TDW rubrics, like the TDA rubrics, are holistic. A holistic rubric allows a reader (also known as a scorer) to judge the overall impression of a student's response. The advantages of using a holistic rubric for large-scale summative assessments are:

- The readers focus on what the student does well
- The responses are quicker to score
- The scoring is more consistent, resulting in a more reliable measurement

Holistic rubrics are not designed to provide detailed feedback for improvement. The purpose of a holistic rubric aligns with the purpose of our state summative assessments, which is to provide an overview of academic achievement at the school and district levels. Formative assessments, classroom-based assessments, and interim/benchmark assessments are designed to provide more detailed feedback for improvement.

Q12: Will the TDW item be included with the Online Tools Training (OTT)?

There are two separate ELA OTTs available on our [Assessment Quick Links](#) page. When selecting the SC READY or EOCEP OTT option, a menu containing each content option for the OTT will appear. Included in this list are "ELA" and "ELA TDW." The ELA TDW contains one or two practice items and rubrics, depending on the grade level. (Refer to Q10.) Like the sample items on the operational ELA OTT, these have not been field-tested and are not necessarily aligned to the grade-level indicators. The OTT provides students with practice with item types

and the testing platform.