

2023–24 B.E.S.T. Writing Fact Sheet

Florida B.E.S.T. Assessments Overview

Florida’s Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards were adopted by the State Board of Education on February 12, 2020. For resources to better understand the standards to which the assessments are aligned, please visit [CPALMS](#). In Spring 2023, a B.E.S.T. Writing field test was administered to a representative sample of Florida students. The first operational administration of B.E.S.T. Writing will occur in Spring 2024.

Students to Be Tested

All students enrolled in grades 4–10 participate in B.E.S.T. Writing assessments.

Test Administration Schedule

The testing window for B.E.S.T. Writing is **April 1–12, 2024**. For a full schedule of all statewide assessments, see the [2023–2024 Statewide Assessment Schedule](#).

Test Administration Information

- Grades 4–10 B.E.S.T. Writing assessments are delivered and student responses are recorded via a computer-based test (CBT) platform called the Test Delivery System (TDS).
- Paper-based versions (regular print, large print, braille, and one-item-per-page) of CBT assessments are provided for students with disabilities who cannot access assessments on the computer as specified in their IEPs or Section 504 Plans.
- CBT accommodations (e.g., text-to-speech, speech-to-text, passage booklets) are available for students whose IEPs or Section 504 Plans indicate these accommodations.
- B.E.S.T. Writing assessments consist of one text-based constructed-response item (students read a variety of texts and respond to a prompt).
- Grades 4–10 B.E.S.T. Writing assessments are administered in one 120-minute session. Any student not finished by the end of the 120-minute session may continue working for up to half the length of a typical school day.
- All students are provided with a [Writing Planning Sheet](#) to plan their writing.
- The [Test Design Summary and Blueprint: FAST ELA Reading and B.E.S.T. Writing](#) provides a map or blueprint for how the assessment is designed. The summary shows the standards assessed within each reporting category and the representation of each category, in percentages, on the test.
- Students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan, as well as English Language Learners (ELLs), may be eligible for allowable accommodations on statewide assessments. For more information about accommodations, please see the [Accommodations Guide](#).

Sample Test Materials

- Sample test materials allow teachers, parents/guardians, and students to become familiar with the format of the assessments, as well as the system, functionality and tools on computer-based tests.
- Computer-based and paper-based practice tests and answer keys for each assessment are available on the [Students & Families portal](#) page. For resources to better understand the standards to which the assessments are aligned, please visit [CPALMS](#).
- Districts may order braille practice materials for students participating with these accommodations.

Scoring

Scoring of B.E.S.T. Writing involves the use of a large representative sample of Florida student responses scored by highly trained and qualified human scorers to train an automated scoring (AS) engine, which then scores the majority of

student responses. This model, called “hybrid scoring,” has been successfully used in Florida previously, and is widely used across the country in a number of statewide assessment programs. Hybrid scoring allows for a faster scoring process while maintaining Florida’s high validity criteria.

All human scorers are trained by Florida Department of Education (FDOE) English Language Arts (ELA) content specialists and the Department’s scoring sub-contractor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). The AS engine is trained using Florida student responses that were previously scored by at least two humans after a field test administration. Expert Florida educators review and approve training materials used in both the stand-alone field test scoring process and the operational B.E.S.T. Writing assessment given each spring. Once trained, the AS engine produces a response score as well as a “confidence” score indicating the level of certainty that the score is accurate. In addition to quality control checks on a random sample of all responses scored by the AS engine, up to 40% of all student responses are scored by humans. These are responses that are identified as unusual, or that do not fully meet the Department’s confidence criteria for accepting the AS engine score as the score of record.

After scores are reported to districts – along with individual student responses, prompts, source material, and anchor sets with annotations linking anchor responses to rubric scores – districts have the opportunity to submit score inquiries to verify scores for responses that district assessment and instructional staff deem to warrant further review.

In summary, Florida relies on trained expert human scorers who are the foundation of B.E.S.T. Writing scoring, and these experts are involved throughout the entire scoring and oversight process from beginning to end, including the automated scoring process.

Reporting

The B.E.S.T. Writing assessments are scored and reported on a 12-point rubric with the following domains: Purpose/Structure, Development, and Language. Each domain is worth four possible points. When results are reported, students will receive a raw score on the overall scale (12 points) and for each four-point domain.

The **B.E.S.T. Writing Rubrics** are available on the portal and are broken out by grade band (4–6 and 7–10) and prompt mode (Argumentative or Expository):

- [Grades 4–6 Argumentative](#)
- [Grades 4–6 Expository](#)
- [Grades 7–10 Argumentative](#)
- [Grades 7–10 Expository](#)

In addition, the **B.E.S.T. Writing Scoring Samplers** can be used as a resource regarding the scoring of student responses on the Writing assessment. In each sampler, examples of student responses represent various combinations of the score points across the scoring domains. As a basis for developing a common understanding of the scoring criteria, an annotation follows the response to explain the prominent characteristics of the response described in the rubric. The B.E.S.T. Writing Scoring Samplers are available on the portal at <https://fsassessments.org/resources/general/best-writing-scoring-samplers>.

B.E.S.T. Writing assessments will not be combined with FAST ELA Reading assessments to create an overall ELA score, and B.E.S.T. Writing does not factor into student assessment graduation requirements.

Please visit the [FDOE website](#) and the [Florida Statewide Assessments Portal](#) for more information about the statewide assessment program.