

ILEARN ELA FAQs

What are test blueprints?

The test blueprints for each grade identify the reporting categories and the frequency/priority of standards. Standards with a minimum occurrence of '1' are guaranteed to be on each student's test at least once and may be inferred to be critical (replacing check/plus guidance). Others with a minimum of '0' can be differentiated based on the maximum number of times they may occur. The computer-adaptive model will select items based on student performance and difficulty statistics but will always maintain the distribution parameters of the blueprint.

ILEARN Blueprints:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/ilearn-test-design>

What are item specifications?

Item specifications are documents containing the features of how an individual item will be constructed. They contain the standard, vocabulary, item types, cognitive complexity, and evidence statements. Content limits give specific rules (including formulas and conversions) about how the items must be written. A sample problem can demonstrate one way it may appear in the test. The specifications come in three similar formats (Indiana, Independent College-and-Career Readiness, or Smarter Balanced) based on the items that align to Indiana Academic Standards as items are licensed from third-party banks by the state of Indiana. The items will never exceed the content of the Indiana Academic Standards. These item specifications may be viewed by standards or downloaded as a zip file.

Item Specifications Database:

<http://iasstandardviewer-878159656.us-east-2.elb.amazonaws.com/>

When I open the item specifications, why are they numbered differently from the number I selected to open?

Per the recommendations of the 2016 ISTEP+ Panel, the Indiana Department of Education is leveraging quality content from third-party item banks for use on ILEARN

assessments. These item banks are accompanied by item specifications which will be utilized where alignment was confirmed by Indiana educators. Some of the item specifications come from item banks originally aligned to Common Core standards. The numbering may indicate a Common Core standard. Some third-party item specifications include content beyond the scope of the associated Indiana Academic Standards. For these specifications, only those portions which align to the Indiana Academic Standard are used for ILEARN assessments. Indiana educators approved alignment of items to each Indiana Academic Standard.

How long are the reading passages?

This is a link to our Stimulus Specifications for ILEARN, including information about the length of passages and audio stimuli:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/ilearn-stimulus-specifications-092718-final.pdf>

What are the LST/LH standards?

The LST (Literacy in Science/Technical Subjects) and LH (Literacy in History/Social Studies) standards are Content Area Literacy Standards and they appear outside of the ELA standards. They are intended for instruction in their content area. There is a short video about them located here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67god66LfI8&feature=youtu.be>

The standards can be found at the location below and on the science and social studies standards pages:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards/englishlanguage-arts#Standards>

These standards will be assessed as part of the ILEARN assessment and are included on the English/Language Arts blueprints.

Is there a difference between central idea and theme?

Theme and central idea are related but not interchangeable. The Indiana Academic Standards Glossary addresses theme, central idea, and other terms from the standards. It is located here:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/standards/enla/glossary-grades-k-12-5-27-14-sheet1.pdf>

Based on the standards, students will primarily see the term “central idea” for both literature and nonfiction at grades 6-8 and “main idea” for nonfiction in grades 3-5. Theme appears across grades 3-8.

How long do students have to take the test?

Guidance about timing is located here:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/ilearn-policy-and-guidance>

Are students able to take notes while testing? May students use scratch paper?

Students can take notes with the tool in the online systems. Students may also use scratch paper for notes. The ILEARN 3-8 Test Administrator’s Manual will provide specific guidance for the use of scratch paper.

What parts of the ILEARN ELA assessments may be read aloud?

For students with an IEP, ILP, or 504 plan who have a text-to-speech accommodation, writing items, listening items, and all components of the performance task (PT) can be read aloud with that embedded accommodation. More information about the ELA PT is noted later in this document.

Can students highlight online?

Students can highlight selections in both items and passages. If a student highlights something in a passage, the highlighting remains static as the student progresses through questions associated with that passage.

What is the Released Items Repository (RIR)?

Practice questions representing a variety of item types can be found in the RIR for each grade. The passage-based reading comprehension and discrete items are separate from the performance tasks. Select a grade and a content area, and experiment with various supports as well. The aligned standards and an answer key can be found in the RIR Scoring Guides.

Access the Released Items Repository and Scoring Guides:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/ilearn-sample-items-and-scoring>

How do the listening questions work for students?

Students will listen to a brief stimulus and answer questions based on the stimulus. Students can listen to the stimulus as many times as needed to answer the questions and they can take notes while listening. Samples of listening questions are available in the Released Items Repository.

What periphery equipment will students need to access the listening items?

Students will need earbuds or headphones to listen to the items.

Will there still be constructed-response questions?

There will be constructed-response questions on the ILEARN assessments. You can find samples on our Released Items Repository. The rubrics for the constructed-response questions are item-specific, but you can see some samples in the Released Items Repository Scoring Guide.

What is an ELA Performance Task (PT)?

The ILEARN ELA Performance Task is designed to simulate a more authentic classroom activity in which students collect information about a topic they will then write about. Students will read multiple sources, answer questions about the sources, and use those sources as research to support their writing. The writing prompt item is aligned to the grade-level standards for W.3.1, persuasive writing at grades 3-5 and argumentative at grades 6-8; W.3.2, informative writing; or W.3.3, narrative writing. Samples of performance tasks can be found in the ILEARN Released Items Repository.

How do I access the Performance Task writing prompt in the RIR?

If you select “Start 2018 ILEARN English/Language Arts Performance Task Released Items” (any grade) and you begin the test, you will only see the constructed-response

and table-match items. If you answer those questions and select “Next,” it you will be directed to the writing item of the performance task. A response must be entered for each constructed-response to advance to the writing item.

If you select “Start ELA Writing Constructed-Response Blank Practice Item,” you will have an empty response box without a question. This is intended for practice with the response field.

Will the Performance Task writing prompt be the same genre as the example for that grade level in the RIR?

The writing item students encounter during the operational Performance Task may reflect the same genre as the RIR, but it could also come from one of three genres for any grade: W.3.1, persuasive writing at grades 3-5 and argumentative at grades 6-8; W.3.2, informative writing; or W.3.3, narrative writing.

Will students be able to take notes for the writing prompt?

Students will have access to global notes for the performance tasks. The notes they take will remain throughout both parts of the performance task, and they may reference their notes as they respond to the writing prompt.

What does the response space look like for the 2-point constructed-response questions and the writing prompt?

The response fields for each 2-point constructed-response question and writing prompt can accommodate up to a maximum of 20,000 characters. The dictionary/thesaurus, spell check, and rich-text tools (including an indent button) are only available for the writing prompt item in the ELA Performance Task. Our Released Items Repository includes examples at each grade level.

How do students do pre-writing/planning for the Performance Task?

There is no prewriting/planning space designated in the online system, but there is a place for notes. Students may also use scratch paper for prewriting/planning. Instructions regarding the use of scrap paper are in the ILEARN 3-8 Test Administrator’s Manual.

Where can I locate student-friendly writing rubrics?

Students will see a more student-friendly summary of how their writing is scored within the performance task. This summary is example related to the grade 5 released item:

REMEMBER: A well-written opinion paper

- has a clear opinion.
- is well-organized and stays on the topic.
- has an introduction and conclusion.
- uses transitions.
- uses details or facts from the sources to support your opinion.
- puts the information from the sources in your own words, except when using direct quotations from the sources.
- gives the title or number of the source for the details or facts you included.
- develops ideas clearly.
- uses clear language.
- follows rules of writing (spelling, punctuation, and grammar usage).

While this scoring rubric is specific to one task, there are more general templates for these rubrics in item specs for W.3.1, W.3.2, and W.3.3. The rubrics are also posted separately from the specs with a video here:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/ilearn-sample-items-and-scoring>

Where can we find more sources with which students may practice?

The performance task is designed to simulate a classroom research assignment. Because it is a standardized assessment, texts are preselected for students and shorter than what may be used in the classroom. Instructionally, students could potentially find their own topics and texts and not be limited to the length necessary for a large-scale assessment. Students can practice the skills necessary for the assessment without following the exact format of the assessment. The Learning Outcome for grades 3-5 is, “Write routinely over a variety of time frames and for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences; apply reading standards to write in response to literature and nonfiction texts.” The standards outline the three genres: persuasive, informative, and narrative. The samples provided in the Released Items Repository are only intended to show a sample of how the standard is assessed.