

Visas

Entries

Departures

Visas

Entries

Departures

**Preparing
For PSSA**

***Parents
*Assuring
P.A.S.S.
*Student
*Success**

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Preparing for the PSSA

- Background Info
 - Making Sense of Reading
 - Making Sense of Math
 - Making Sense of Science
- How Families Can Help
- Questions?



PSSA

In The Age Of Common Core



The PSSA: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment



Historical Context:

In 1999, Pennsylvania adopted academic standards for...

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening & Mathematics

...to identify what students should know & be able to do at varying grade levels.

School districts possess the flexibility to design curriculum & instruction to ensure that students meet or exceed the standards' expectations.





The PSSA: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment



- The annual PSSA = standards based criterion-referenced test
 - ☐ measures a student's attainment of the academic standards
 - ☐ determines the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards
- Individual student scores can be used to assist teachers:
 - ☐ identify students who may be in need of additional educational opportunities
- School scores provide information to schools & districts for curriculum & instruction improvement planning





The PSSA: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment



≈ PA adopted Core Standards July 2010

≈ PSSA Core Standards alignment in 14-15 school year.





The 2018 PSSA Testing Window

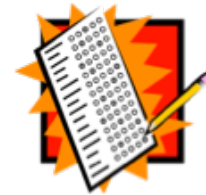
April 9-13 ELA (English Language Arts) Gr. 3-8

April 16-20 Math Gr. 3-8

April 23-27 Science Gr. 4 + 8

April Make-ups





CES PSSA Testing Window

Week of April 9th (3rd and 4th grade)

4/10 Tuesday ELA (English Language Arts)

4/11 Wednesday ELA (English Language Arts)

4/12 Thursday ELA (English Language Arts)

4/13+16 ELA Makeups if needed

Week of April 16th (3rd and 4th grade)

4/17 Tuesday Math

4/18 Wednesday Math

4/19-23 ELA/Math Makeups

Week of April 23rd (4th grade only)

4/24 Tuesday Science

4/25 Wednesday Science

4/26-27 ELA/Math/Sci Makeups



3rd grade tests from 9:15-11:00am (approx.)
4th grade tests from 11:10-12:50pm (approx.)





Testing Accommodations

≈ Testing Accommodations

≈ Students with IEPs, 504 plans, or who receive ELL services, may get testing accommodations for PSSA.

≈ Setting Accommodations

≈ Small group testing

≈ Extended-time

≈ [PSSA Testing Accommodations](#)





ELA

English/Language Arts



ELA - 3rd Grade Testing Section Layout

Section	Selected-Response Questions	Constructed-Response Questions	Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)		
			Administrative Tasks	Actual Testing	Total Administration
1	18	1	15-20	50-60	65-80
2	16	1	15-20	45-55	60-75
3	18	1	15-20	50-60	65-80

ELA - 4th Grade Testing Section Layout

Section	Selected-Response Questions	Constructed-Response Questions	Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)		
			Administrative Tasks	Actual Testing	Total Administration
1	29	0	15-20	70-80	85-100
2	16	1	15-20	85-95	100-115
3	12	1	15-20	70-80	85-100



Reporting Categories in ELA



- 5 Reporting Categories
 - Literature Text
 - Informational Text
 - Writing
 - Language
 - Text Dependent Analysis

For more information and examples go to:

[PA Core ELA Standards](#)

[PSSA Item Samplers](#)



Grammar Grade 3 & 4

Read the sentences.

It began to rain just as we got to my friend's house. When we ringed the doorbell, my friend came to the door right away to make sure we did not get wet.

Which underlined word should be changed to correct a mistake?

- A. began
- B. got
- C. ringed
- D. came

Types of Reading Questions

- Multiple Choice
- Evidence-Based Selected-Response
- Text-Dependent Analysis

Multiple Choice Questions

The meaning of the root “photo” helps the reader know that the word “photograph” means

- A. a picture taken with color.
- B. a picture taken in the heat.
- C. a picture taken in the cold.
- D. a picture taken with light.

Read the following passage about animals playing. Then answer questions 19 through 29.



Evidence-Based Selected Response Gr. 3 Sample



Animals at Play

by Aline Alexander Newman

Splash! Limbs flailing, a rhesus monkey takes a flying leap from a mangrove tree into a tropical pond. Then gurgles, glub—under it goes, as another monkey dive-bombs onto his head. Like human kids fooling around in a backyard pool, monkeys play for hours. So do bears, dolphins, tigers, and foxes!

These animals aren't feeding, hunting, defending their territory, or traveling. They're playing—meaning they're doing something simply for fun. But animal play is not a waste of time or energy. Scientists think play may be as important as food and sleep. Why? It promotes brain development and health. It lets animals (and kids) explore their surroundings and invent new behaviors. And it helps them adapt to a changing world.

Clueless Bear

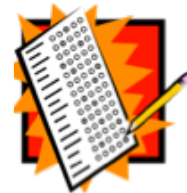
Bear cubs born to more playful mothers stand the best chance of survival. This discovery was made by research biologist Robert Fagen, of Fairbanks, Alaska, who spent ten summers studying brown bears on Alaska's Admiralty Island. "We know





SELECTED-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

E03.B-V.4.1.1



27. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Read the sentence from the passage.

And it helps them adapt to a changing world.

What does the word adapt mean?

- ☐ Ⓐ to break apart
- ☐ Ⓑ to listen closely
- ☐ Ⓒ to run from
- * ☐ Ⓓ to fit in

Part Two

Which phrase from the passage **best** supports the answer in Part One?
Choose **one** answer.

- ☐ Ⓐ “it helps”
- ☐ Ⓑ “simply for fun”
- ☐ Ⓒ “waste of time”
- * ☐ Ⓓ “changing world”

The student is asked to determine the meaning of “adapt” and to choose the phrase from the passage that supports this meaning.

Part One: Option D is the correct answer since it makes sense in the given context. Options A, B, and C do not make sense in context.

Part Two: Option D is the correct answer since “changing world” helps the reader understand that “adapt” means to be able to adjust. Option A does not allow the reader to determine the precise meaning of “adapt.” Options B and C do not relate to the meaning of “adapt.”





TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS QUESTION

E04.E.1.1

- 21.** Write an essay analyzing how the author's organization of the passage helps the reader to understand the tasks. Use information from the passage to support your response.



Writer's Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Question

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the question carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the question relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

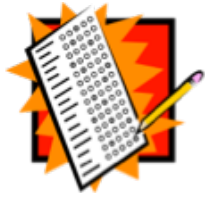
FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- ☐ I stayed focused on answering the question.
- ☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.





Math



Math Testing Section Layout

Section	Content	Multiple Choice Questions	Open-Ended Questions	Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)		
				Administrative Tasks	Actual Testing	Total Administration
1	Mathematics	24	2	15-20	70-80	85-100
2	Mathematics	24	2	15-20	70-80	85-100



Reporting Categories in Math

- Criterion Referenced
- 5 Reporting Categories:
 - Numbers and Operations in Base Ten
 - Numbers and Operations - Fractions
 - Operations and Algebraic Thinking
 - Geometry
 - Measurement and Data

For more information and examples, go to:

[PA Core Math Standards](#)

[PSSA Item Samplers](#)





Numbers and Operations - Fractions

Grace drew the figure shown below and shaded part of it.



Which fraction is equal to the amount Grace shaded?

- A. $\frac{2}{10}$
- B. $\frac{2}{8}$
- C. $\frac{2}{6}$
- D. $\frac{3}{1}$



Math: Multiple Step, Application, Lots of Text

Three students were comparing how many times they each jumped on a trampoline.

- Jorge jumped 345 times.
- Keisha jumped 356 times.
- LeVar jumped more times than Jorge and fewer times than Keisha.

When each student's total was rounded to the nearest hundred, Jorge's total and LeVar's total were the same.

Which value could be the number of times LeVar jumped on the trampoline?
(Grade 3- Number and Operations Base Ten)



Measurement & Data



Kelly went to lunch 30 minutes after the time shown on the clock. At what time did Kelly go to lunch?

<input type="radio"/>	A. 11:05
<input type="radio"/>	B. 11:30
<input type="radio"/>	C. 11:35
<input type="radio"/>	D. 12:05





Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Ed picked baskets of berries.

Jasmine picked 2 more baskets of berries than Ed picked.

Ed and Jasmine picked a total of 8 baskets of berries.

Which equation can be used to find the number of baskets () Ed picked?

A. + 2 = 8

B. x 2 = 8

C. + + 2 = 8

D. + x 2 = 8





Geometry



Marquis and Shawn built a tree house.

The shape of the floor of the tree house is a quadrilateral.

The shape of the floor is **not** a rectangle or a rhombus.

Which quadrilateral could be the shape of the floor of the tree house?

A.



B.



C.



D.



Science- Testing Section Layout

Section	Content	Multiple Choice Questions	Open-Ended Questions	Estimated Time Needed (in minutes)		
				Administrative Tasks	Actual Testing	Total Administration
1	Science	23	3	15–20	30–40	45–60
2	Science	23	3	15–20	30–40	45–60



Science PSSA – Gr. 4

- Approximate Length
 - 95-100 Minutes
 - 2 Sections
- The Nature of Science
- Biological Science
- Physical Science
- Earth & Space Sciences





PSSA Science Sample Item

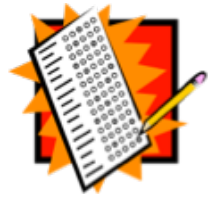
Example: In the spring, some golden eagles fly north over Pennsylvania. In the fall, they fly back south for the winter. Which statement best describes why these golden eagles live in southern areas in winter?

- A. In northern areas, there is less food for eagles in winter.
- B. In northern areas, there are more competing birds in winter.
- C. In southern areas, there are fewer eagle predators in winter.
- D. In southern areas, there is more space for eagle nesting in winter.

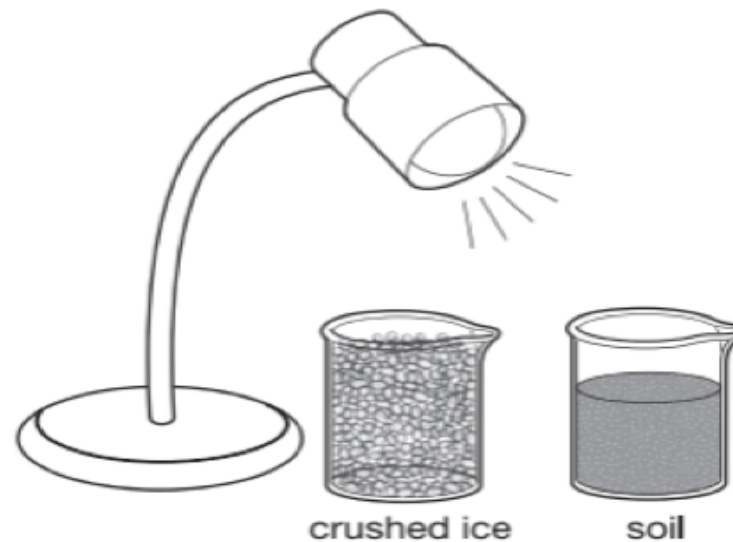




PSSA Science Sample Item



Use the drawings below to answer question 17.



17. A student placed these two objects **directly** beneath a **lamp** for 10 minutes. Describe how each object was **most likely** affected by the **lamp**.

Crushed ice: _____

Soil: _____





PSSA Performance Level Descriptors



Advanced

- Reflects superior academic performance
- Indicates an in-depth understanding & exemplary display of the skills in the PA Academic Content Standards

Proficient

- Reflects satisfactory academic performance
- Indicates a solid understanding & adequate display of the skills in the PA Academic Content Standards

Basic

- Reflects marginal academic performance
- Indicates a partial understanding & limited display of the skills in the PA Academic Content Standards
- Is approaching satisfactory performance, but has not been reached
- Needs additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve Proficient Level

Below Basic

- Reflects inadequate academic performance
- Indicates little understanding & minimal display of the skills in the PA Academic Content tandards
- A major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve Proficient Level





Reporting



- ≈ Student reports with scores are created and mailed to the schools in late summer.
- ≈ You will receive reports early in the 2018-19 school year.
- ≈ [How to Read Student PSSA Report](#)



Ways Families Can Help Students:

- Anticipate what will be on the test.
- Be aware of testing lingo and vocabulary.
- Review reading, math, and test-taking strategies.
- ☐ Monitor for adequate rest.
- ☐ Providing nutritious meals
- ☐ Giving complimentary & reassuring words





Is Your Student Ready?



Be Physically Ready!

- Get a good night's sleep before the test. The AAP recommends 10 - 13 hours of sleep each night for elementary aged children.
- Stay hydrated - our brains need water to work well.
- Eat a healthy breakfast and remember ALL meals are important!

Research shows eating high protein foods the night before a test helps our brains to perform better. Some specific “brain-healthy” foods include: wild caught salmon, avocado, tomatoes, leafy greens, eggs, berries, beans, whole grains, broccoli, walnuts, and pomegranate.

- BE ON TIME!
- Stretch during testing breaks.





Be Mentally Prepared!

- Stay calm and do your best! A little bit of nerves (butterflies in your stomach) is normal. Being overly nervous, or not caring at all, can ruin your chance of doing well on the test.
- Remember, the stories were chosen to challenge, not entertain, you. Stay focused and remember to underline key details as you read the passages.





Test-taking Tips - Cont'd



- Breathe deeply and slowly.
- Read the directions & questions twice.
- Read the entire passage.
- Read all the answer choices.
- Find details in the passage to support your answer.
- Eliminate answers that are NOT correct (use caution if crossing out answers in the 3rd grade test booklet)
- Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to your answer.
- Don't try to finish first. Take your time!
- Proofread answers before turning in test.

For Math & Science PSSA - If not sure of a word on the test, ask to have it READ!





Best of Luck!



≈ Questions?

