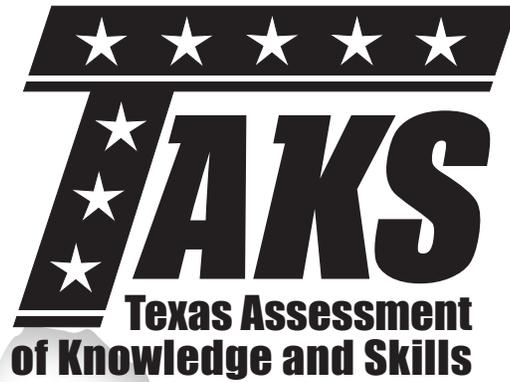


August 2004



Information Booklet

READING Grade 5 Revised

Texas Education Agency • Student Assessment Division

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a completely reconceived testing program. It assesses more of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) than the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) did and asks questions in more authentic ways. TAKS has been developed to better reflect good instructional practice and more accurately measure student learning. We hope that every teacher will see the connection between what we test on this new state assessment and what our students should know and be able to do to be academically successful. To provide you with a better understanding of TAKS and its connection to the TEKS and to classroom teaching, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed this newly revised edition of the TAKS information booklet. The information booklets were originally published in January 2002, before the first TAKS field test. Now, after several years of field tests and live administrations, we are able to provide an even more comprehensive picture of the testing program. We have clarified some of the existing material and, in some cases, provided new sample items and/or more explanations of certain item types. However, it is important to remember that these clarifications do not signify any change in the TAKS testing program. The objectives and TEKS student expectations assessed on TAKS remain unchanged. We hope this revised version of the TAKS information booklet will serve as a user-friendly resource to help you understand that the best preparation for TAKS is a coherent, TEKS-based instructional program that provides the level of support necessary for all students to reach their academic potential.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The development of the TAKS program included extensive public scrutiny and input from Texas teachers, administrators, parents, members of the business community, professional education organizations, faculty and staff at Texas colleges and universities, and national content-area experts. The agency involved as many stakeholders as possible because we believed that the development of TAKS was a responsibility that had to be shared if this new assessment was to be an equitable and accurate measure of learning for all Texas public school students.

The three-year test-development process, which began in summer 1999, included a series of carefully conceived activities. First, committees of Texas educators identified those TEKS student expectations for each grade and subject area assessed that should be tested on a statewide assessment. Then a committee of TEA Student Assessment and Curriculum staff incorporated these selected TEKS student expectations, along with draft objectives for each subject area, into eleventh grade exit level surveys. These surveys were sent to Texas educators at the middle school and secondary levels for their review. Based on input we received from more than 27,000 survey responses, we developed a second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations. In addition, we used this input during the development of draft objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 to ensure that the TAKS program, like the TEKS curriculum, would be vertically aligned. This vertical alignment was a critical step in ensuring that the TAKS tests would become more rigorous as students moved from grade to grade. For example, the fifth grade tests would be more rigorous than the fourth grade tests, which would be more rigorous than the third grade tests. Texas educators felt that this increase in rigor from grade to grade was both appropriate and logical since each subject-area test was closely aligned to the TEKS curriculum at that grade level.

In fall 2000 TEA distributed the second draft of the objectives and TEKS student expectations for eleventh grade exit level and the first draft of the objectives and student expectations for grades 3 through 10 for review at the campus level. These documents were also posted on the Student Assessment Division’s website to encourage input from the public. Each draft document focused on two central issues: first, whether the objectives included in the draft were essential to measure on a statewide assessment; and, second, whether students would have received enough instruction on the TEKS student expectations included under each objective to be adequately prepared to demonstrate mastery of that objective in the spring of the school year. We received more than 57,000 campus-consensus survey responses. We used these responses, along with feedback from national experts, to finalize the TAKS objectives and student expectations. Because the state assessment was necessarily limited to a “snapshot” of student performance, broad-based input was important to ensure that TAKS assessed the parts of the TEKS curriculum most critical to students’ academic learning and progress.

In the thorough test-development process that we use for the TAKS program, we rely on educator input to develop items that are appropriate and valid measures of the objectives and TEKS student expectations the items are designed to assess. This input includes an annual educator review and revision of all proposed test items before field testing and a second annual educator review of data and items after field testing. In addition, each year panels of recognized experts in the fields of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies meet in Austin to critically review the content of each of the high school level TAKS assessments to be administered that year. This critical review is referred to as a content validation review and is one of the final activities in a series of quality-control steps to ensure that each high school test is of the highest quality possible. A content validation review is considered necessary at the high school grades (9, 10, and 11) because of the advanced level of content being assessed.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TAKS TESTS

TAKS is divided into test objectives. It is important to remember that the objective statements are not found in the TEKS curriculum. Rather, the objectives are “umbrella statements” that serve as headings under which student expectations from the TEKS can be meaningfully grouped. Objectives are broad statements that “break up” knowledge and skills to be tested into meaningful subsets around which a test can be organized into reporting units. These reporting units help campuses, districts, parents, and the general public understand the performance of our students and schools. Test objectives are not intended to be “translations” or “rewordings” of the TEKS. Instead, the objectives are designed to be identical across grade levels rather than grade specific. Generally, the objectives are the same for third grade through eighth grade (an elementary/middle school system) and for ninth grade through eleventh grade (a high school system). In addition, certain TEKS student expectations may logically be grouped under more than one test objective; however, it is important for you to understand that this is not meaningless repetition—sometimes the organization of the objectives requires such groupings. For example, on the TAKS writing tests for fourth and seventh grades, some of the same student expectations addressing the conventions of standard English usage are listed under both Objective 2 and Objective 6. In this case, the expectations listed under Objective 2 are assessed through the overall strength of a student’s use of language conventions on the written composition portion of the test; these same expectations under Objective 6 are assessed through multiple-choice items attached to a series of revising and editing passages.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION BOOKLETS

The purpose of the information booklets is to help Texas educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders understand more about the TAKS tests. These booklets are not intended to replace the teaching of the TEKS curriculum, provide the basis for the isolated teaching of skills in the form of narrow test preparation, or serve as the single information source about every aspect of the TAKS program. However, we believe that the booklets provide helpful explanations as well as show enough sample items, reading and writing selections, and prompts to give educators a good sense of the assessment.

Each grade within a subject area is presented as a separate booklet. However, it is still important that teachers review the information booklets for the grades both above and below the grade they teach. For example, eighth grade reading teachers who review the seventh grade information booklet as well as the ninth grade information booklet are able to develop a broader perspective of the reading assessment than if they study only the eighth grade information booklet.

The information booklets for each subject area contain some information unique to that subject. However, all booklets include the following information, which we consider critical for every subject-area TAKS test:

- an overview of the subject within the context of TAKS
- a blueprint of the test—the number of items under each objective and the number of items on the test as a whole
- information that clarifies how to read the TEKS
- the reasons each objective and its TEKS student expectations are critical to student learning and success
- the objectives and TEKS student expectations that will be included on TAKS
- additional information about each objective that helps educators understand how it is assessed on TAKS
- sample items that show some of the ways objectives are assessed

TAKS READING

INFORMATION BOOKLET

The purposes for reading are as varied and diverse as the people who read, but the ability to read effectively is essential for all students in the increasingly complex world in which we live. Reading is one of the most important foundations for learning, not only in English language arts but also in other content areas, such as science, social studies, and mathematics. Students who can understand what they read and who can make connections between what they read and what they already know will more likely be successful—in the classroom, on the test, and in the real world. Strong reading skills are necessary for academic achievement, for the fundamental tasks of daily living, and for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

The TAKS reading assessments evaluate a subset of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum. This curriculum is specifically designed to help students make progress in reading by emphasizing the knowledge and skills most critical for student learning. Because the TAKS reading tests are closely aligned with the TEKS, students who effectively learn the TEKS will become proficient readers who are able to perform successfully on the test without unnecessary emphasis on test preparation. A system of support has been designed to ensure that all students master the TEKS. The Student Success Initiative (SSI) requires that students meet the standard on TAKS to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level as specified below:

- the reading test at grade 3, beginning in the 2002–2003 school year;
- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 5, beginning in the 2004–2005 school year; and
- the reading and mathematics tests at grade 8, beginning in the 2007–2008 school year.

To prepare students for the SSI requirements and to promote vertical alignment, it is essential that teachers collaborate and coordinate across grade levels.

The TEKS student expectations eligible for testing on the third through eighth grade TAKS reading assessments are grouped under four TAKS objectives:

- Objective 1: The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.
- Objective 2: The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.
- Objective 3: The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.
- Objective 4: The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

These objectives are consistent from third grade through eighth grade, and the TEKS student expectations assessed under each TAKS objective are vertically aligned, meaning that they build logically from one grade level to the next. An example of this logical movement follows.

Example from Objective 2

Grade 3 TEKS 3.11 (H) states that *students are expected to analyze characters, including their traits, feelings, relationships, and changes.*

Grade 4 TEKS 4.12 (H) states that *the student is expected to analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo.*

Many of the TEKS student expectations from grade to grade are expressed in similar language, but the level of student performance required at each grade increases. Reading selections will be longer and more challenging, and the critical thinking required of students will be more complex and sophisticated. Although elementary and middle school teachers are not directly responsible for student success on TAKS at the high school level, it is important for them to familiarize themselves with the reading (ninth grade) and English language arts (tenth and eleventh grades) assessments. Without strong elementary and middle school reading programs, students will not have had the opportunity to acquire the literacy skills they need to be successful at the high school level.

TAKS READING SELECTIONS—GRADES 3–8

TAKS reading selections are designed to be interesting, meaningful, and reflective of the Texas population and our culturally diverse world. Cultural diversity includes regional, economic, social, and ethnic differences and may be represented through subject matter and/or characters. In addition, reading selections will be similar to those that students encounter in their classrooms and in their everyday lives.

Four kinds of selections are developed for TAKS:

- Narrative selections, which are fictional stories presented with a clear progression of events. Letters or diary entries as well as stories may represent narrative writing.
- Expository (informative) selections, which provide information about noteworthy people and/or events or explain topics related to content areas, such as science, social studies, art, or music.
- Mixed selections, which combine two types of writing into a single passage. For example, a mixed selection may be a story about Martin Luther King, Jr., that includes both factual information (expository) and invented dialogue (narrative). Or a selection may mix narrative and functional writing. For example, an advertisement, a recipe, instructions, or directions for a game (functional) may be presented within the context of a story (narrative).
- Paired selections, which are two selections designed to be read together. Paired selections provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate an understanding of the connections across texts. Selections may be paired for many different reasons; for example, a paired selection may be based on the same story told from two different points of view or a science article and a science fiction story that address a common theme or idea. It is important to remember that paired selections are linked by more than a superficial connection, such as common subject matter or characters. Paired selections contain a deep link, so that students can recognize the strong connection across the two pieces.

Word counts for each selection will vary according to age and grade-level appropriateness. Some selections may require students to turn pages in order to complete the reading selection and/or to answer test items.

- Selections for third and fourth grades will be approximately 500 to 700 words.
- Selections for fifth grade will be approximately 600 to 900 words.
- Selections for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will be approximately 700 to 1,000 words.

Two notes regarding word counts:

- (1) Selections written as a pair will be comparable in length to singly developed selections.
- (2) Due to the differences in language, the Spanish reading selections may be somewhat longer than the English passages.

Other important information about TAKS reading selections:

- Paragraphs will be numbered when doing so does not interfere with the layout of the text. For example, a selection that includes an advertisement with bulleted information most likely would not have numbered paragraphs.
- When appropriate, each selection will be preceded by a title.
- Additional information will be provided in an introduction or a postscript when this information will help the reader better understand the selection.
- In sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, narrative selections will be formatted so that students have the option of taking notes, keeping track of important information, or asking themselves questions as they read. This margin is labeled *My notes about what I am reading* and is located on the right-hand side of each page in the selection.

**TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS)
BLUEPRINT FOR GRADE 5 READING**

| TAKS Objectives | Number of Items |
|--|------------------------|
| Objective 1: Basic understanding | 13 |
| Objective 2: Literary elements | 8 |
| Objective 3: Analysis using reading strategies | 8 |
| Objective 4: Analysis using critical-thinking skills | 13 |
| Total number of items | 42 |

A Key to Understanding the TEKS Included on TAKS Grade 5 Reading

Example from Objective 4

- A** ← (5.11) **Reading/literary response.** The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student is expected to
- B** → (C) support responses by referring to relevant aspects of text [and his/her own experiences] (4–8).
- C** →
- D** ↗

KEY

A. Knowledge and Skills Statement

This broad statement describes what students should know and be able to do for fifth grade reading. The number preceding the statement identifies the grade level and number of the knowledge and skills statement.

B. Student Expectation

This specific statement describes what students should be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in what is described in the knowledge and skills statement. Students will be tested on skills outlined in the student expectation statement.

C. [bracketed text]

Although the entire student expectation has been provided for reference, text in brackets indicates that this portion of the student expectation will not be tested on TAKS.

D. (4–8)

The student expectation is taught from fourth grade through eighth grade.

NOTE: The full TEKS curriculum can be found at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/>.

TEKS STUDENT EXPECTATIONS—IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

For every subject area and grade level, two terms—*such as* and *including*—are used to help make the TEKS student expectations more concrete for teachers. However, these terms function in different ways. To help you understand the effect each of the terms has on specific student expectations, we are providing the following:

- a short definition of each term
- an example from a specific student expectation for this subject area
- a short explanation of how this term affects this student expectation

Such as

The term *such as* is used when the specific examples that follow it function only as representative illustrations that help define the expectation for teachers. These examples are just that—examples. Teachers may choose to use them when teaching the student expectation, but there is no requirement to use them. Other examples can be used in conjunction with those listed or as replacements for those listed.

Example from Objective 1

(5.9) (B) *draw on experiences to bring meanings to words in context such as interpreting figurative language and multiple-meaning words*

In this student expectation, students must use context to figure out the meaning of words they don't know. Two examples—figurative language and multiple-meaning words—follow *such as*. These examples simply function as types of words or phrases that teachers may use in teaching students how to use context clues. Teachers may use these examples and others when they teach this skill.

Including

The term *including* is used when the specific examples that follow it must be taught. However, other examples may also be used in conjunction with those listed.

Example from Objective 2

(5.12) (H) *analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo*

In this student expectation, students must analyze the ways in which an author creates and develops the characters in a story. In teaching this expectation, teachers must focus on the characters' traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo. However, teachers are not limited to teaching only these aspects.

Remember

- Any example preceded by the term *such as* in a particular student expectation may or may not provide the basis for an item assessing that expectation. Because these examples do not necessarily have to be used to teach the student expectation, it is equally likely that other examples will be used in assessment items. The rule here is that an example will be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.
- It is more likely that some of the examples preceded by the term *including* in a particular student expectation will provide the basis for items assessing that expectation, since these examples must be taught. However, it is important to remember that the examples that follow the term *including* do not represent all the examples possible, so other examples may also provide the basis for an assessment item. Again, the rule here is that an example will be used only if it is central to the knowledge, concept, or skill the item assesses.

Grade 5 TAKS Reading—Objective 1

The TEKS and corresponding student expectations listed under Objective 1 will help students as they learn to read for the basic meaning of a text. To develop an initial understanding of what they read, students must be able to do three things: (1) use context and other word identification strategies to help them understand the meaning of the words they read, (2) recognize important supporting details, and (3) understand the main idea of a selection. These skills are the building blocks that students need to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 1

The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

- (5.9) **Reading/vocabulary development.** The student acquires an extensive vocabulary through reading and systematic word study. The student is expected to
- (B) draw on experiences to bring meanings to words in context such as interpreting figurative language and multiple-meaning words (4–5); and
 - (D) determine meanings of derivatives by applying knowledge of the meanings of root words such as *like*, *pay*, or *happy* and affixes such as *dis-*, *pre-*, and *un-* (4–8).
- (5.10) **Reading/comprehension.** The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to
- (F) determine a text’s main (or major) ideas and how those ideas are supported with details (4–8); and
 - (G) paraphrase and summarize text to recall, inform, or organize ideas (4–8).

Objective 1—For Your Information

Tested vocabulary words will be above grade level. Because a student may use context only or combine strategies (for example, knowing a word’s synonym or antonym or the meaning of a prefix, root, or suffix) to determine a word’s meaning or to interpret figurative language, items will not be constructed to test skills in isolation (e.g., “The prefix in the word disapprove means —”).

Items testing multiple-meaning words might require students to identify the correct answer from a sample dictionary entry. The entry will include the tested word, its pronunciation key, its part of speech, and four definitions of the word. Students will use the information given and context clues to choose the correct meaning of the word as it is used in the reading selection.

Students may be asked to identify the context clues in a selection that help them to understand the meaning of a tested word. Answer choices for these items will contain context clues taken verbatim from the text rather than definitions of the tested word. These answer choices will be italicized.

Students will always be provided with enough context clues to allow them to identify the correct meaning of the word or phrase as it is used in the reading selection.

NOTE: The sample vocabulary item provided at each grade level will help teachers understand some of the different ways in which vocabulary may be assessed on the TAKS reading tests.

Items that measure students' basic comprehension of a reading selection are of three types: items that focus on supporting details, items that focus on identifying the main idea, and items that summarize a selection. Detail items will focus on important information that is directly stated or paraphrased from a text. Main idea/gist items will be written so that students clearly understand that they are focusing on broad or central ideas. In narrative selections main idea items will focus on either a single paragraph or a series of paragraphs. However, expository and mixed selections may also include items that focus on the main idea of the entire selection. Summary items will focus on a reading selection as a whole. A summary is a short paragraph that includes the main idea and the most important details of a text. For this type of item, all answer choices will be constructed authentically as short paragraphs. However, the answer choices will be appropriate for fifth graders in that they will include enough information without being too long or dense.

Grade 5 TAKS Reading—Objective 2

Developing an understanding of literary elements makes stories both more accessible and more meaningful to young readers. Learning to make connections between events, characters, and other elements of a story helps students relate what they have read to their own lives and experiences. At the same time, knowing about a story’s characters, setting, and problem gives students an opportunity to relate to the story in concrete terms while learning about emotions and events that are beyond their own personal experiences.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 2

The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.

(5.12) **Reading/text structures/literary concepts.** The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts (genres). The student is expected to

- (H) analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo (4–8); and
- (I) recognize and analyze story plot, setting, and problem resolution (4–8).

Objective 2—For Your Information

Items that test characterization focus on the degree to which students understand the characters in a story: who they are, why they feel and act as they do, how they perceive or relate to the people around them, how they view the events or circumstances they find themselves in, and how they are changed by the things they experience. Students will not be asked characterization questions that are overly sophisticated or too far beyond their developing understanding of other people and themselves.

Items in this objective that assess point of view will focus on characters and their points of view. Items in Objective 3 will focus on author’s perspective (the writer’s attitude toward his/her subject) or point of view.

Items that focus on setting are of two types. The first type simply measures whether a student can identify the time and place of a story. However, most setting items will focus on whether a student understands how time and place contribute to the meaning of a story.

Items that focus on plot will require students to recognize the events in a story that significantly affect the story line. The depth of analysis required will be appropriate for fifth graders.

For the most part, Objective 2 items will appear with narrative selections or with mixed or expository selections that include literary elements, such as characters and plot.

Grade 5 TAKS Reading—Objective 3

All texts are not equally challenging. For young readers, reading a story may be much easier than reading a text that is based on science or social studies. However, to make academic progress, students must develop the ability to comprehend and process material from a wide range of texts. That is why it is important for students to develop the ability to know the purpose of the written text they are reading, how the author has organized information, how this organization affects the way the reader reads the text, and what distinctive features characterize a particular type of text. These are the skills students must learn if they are to become independent readers who can move beyond the literal meaning of a text and who have the ability to develop the deeper understandings needed to think critically about what they read, to connect what they know to new information, and to become independent learners.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 3

The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

- (5.10) **Reading/comprehension.** The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to
- (E) use the text’s structure or progression of ideas such as cause and effect or chronology to locate and recall information (4–8);
 - (I) find similarities and differences across texts such as in treatment, scope, or organization (4–8); and
 - (L) represent text information in different ways such as in outline, timeline, or graphic organizer (4–8).
- (5.12) **Reading/text structures/literary concepts.** The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts (genres). The student is expected to
- (A) judge the internal consistency or logic of stories and texts such as “Would this character do this?”; “Does this make sense here?” (4–5);
 - (C) identify the purposes of different types of texts such as to inform, influence, express, or entertain (4–8);
 - (E) compare communication in different forms such as [contrasting a dramatic performance with a print version of the same story or] comparing story variants (2–8); and
 - (J) describe how the author’s perspective or point of view affects the text (4–8).

Objective 3—For Your Information

To answer items about a text’s structure or progression of ideas, students will need to understand how events relate to one another and how these relationships affect a reader’s approach to reading and understanding a particular text. To use a text’s structure or progression of ideas to locate and recall information, students must first recognize how the author has organized the text. Then they must use their familiarity with this pattern to help them understand the relationships between ideas. Knowing how one idea relates to another allows students to arrange ideas in an order that makes sense to them so that they are able to locate and synthesize important information.

Items that require a student to recognize similarities and differences across texts will test the student’s ability to identify how two different selections compare in their approach, their organization, and their development of a common topic or theme. These items will be written only for paired selections.

Items that focus on representing text information in different ways may require students to select the answer choice that best completes a missing portion of a timeline, outline, or graphic organizer. Other items might require a student to interpret information from a graphic source and use that information to make an inference or draw a conclusion.

Items assessing the ability to judge the internal consistency or logic of a story or text will require students to determine whether a character’s response, perspective, or belief is logical and consistent with what they know about that character or about the way people typically act or respond in a situation similar to the character’s.

Items assessing author’s purpose will require students to analyze how an author presents his or her ideas. To determine the purpose of a text—whether that purpose is informative, persuasive, expressive, or entertaining—students must recognize that the way authors organize their writing depends on which organizational pattern will best convey what they want the reader to understand.

Items assessing story variants require students to read two stories presented as paired selections. Story variants are created when the same story is told from two different characters’ perspectives or when, despite obvious similarities, the stories are different in some way. This difference can be evident in the plot, setting, characters, or conflict. Like other paired selections, story variants are based on deep thematic links. Students must first be able to recognize how the stories are connected. Once students understand this connection, they must then identify how the two stories are similar and different and determine what impact these similarities and differences have on their understanding of the stories. (The sample reading selections for Grade 5 are an example of story variants.)

To answer questions about how an author’s perspective or point of view affects the text, students will need to examine the author’s attitude toward his/her subject or topic. The perspective or point of view the author brings to the selection not only affects the tone of the piece but also the way the author shapes and develops his/her ideas. These items will be developed for selections only when the writer’s attitude is obvious and clearly has an effect on the text.

Grade 5 TAKS Reading—Objective 4

To be successful in school, students must have the ability to bring different levels of understanding to the texts they read. Good readers can do more than “read the lines.” They ask themselves questions, create meanings, and make initial predictions as they move through a text. Good readers also know that as they read, they will likely change their minds about some of their early ideas and assumptions. Why? Because as they read and acquire a more complete “picture” of the text, their understanding deepens and grows. They are able to answer their own questions, think critically about what they’ve read, develop their own interpretations, and use relevant parts of the text to support these interpretations. In essence, reading is a complex process that requires students not only to read “between the lines” but also to read “beyond the lines,” relating what they’ve read to what they already know. In this way reading becomes an important tool for thinking and learning, both in school and in real life.

TAKS Objectives and TEKS Student Expectations

Objective 4

The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

- (5.10) **Reading/comprehension.** The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to
- (H) draw inferences such as conclusions or generalizations and support them with text evidence [and experience] (4–8); and
 - (J) distinguish fact and opinion in various texts (4–8).
- (5.11) **Reading/literary response.** The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student is expected to
- (C) support responses by referring to relevant aspects of text [and his/her own experiences] (4–8); and
 - (D) connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across text (4–8).
- (5.12) **Reading/text structures/literary concepts.** The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts (genres). The student is expected to
- (B) recognize that authors organize information in specific ways (4–5).

Objective 4—For Your Information

Items that assess the ability to read and think inferentially will require students to move beyond their basic understanding of a text to demonstrate a deeper, more complete understanding of what they've read. These types of items can take many forms; for example, items may require students to draw a conclusion, make a reasonable prediction, understand the relationship between two parts of a text, understand how a text relates to their own lives, or understand the deeper meanings implied by a text.

Items that assess the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion will require students to recognize when an author uses opinions or persuasive techniques to influence the thinking or actions of readers or when an author is merely presenting facts. Fact/opinion items will be assessed only in expository or mixed selections in which it is clear that the author's intent is to persuade.

Items that require students to support interpretations or conclusions with evidence from the text will include paraphrased ideas or sentences taken verbatim from the text. However, an individual item will never mix these answer-choice options; that is, paraphrased ideas and verbatim quotes will not be combined in the same item. Answer choices using words, phrases, or sentences taken verbatim from the text will be italicized.

Items that test a student's ability to connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, or issues will most commonly be developed for paired selections. However, this item type may also be developed for a single selection if it includes multiple ideas, themes, or issues that can be clearly linked.

Items that assess a student's ability to recognize that authors organize information in specific ways will focus on the organizational patterns authors choose to arrange and link ideas. It is important for students to know that authors organize ideas in various ways, depending upon how they want the reader to understand those ideas. Familiarity with common organizational patterns—for example, sequencing, description, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, and problem/solution—helps students learn how these patterns can affect the meaning of a text. If students are able to recognize this connection, they will develop their ability to comprehend, evaluate, and appreciate a wide variety of texts. For items of this type, students will be expected to identify general patterns rather than use specific terminology. For example, for an item assessing an understanding of an author's use of sequencing, the student might be required to know that the author has presented ideas in the order in which they occur. However, the student would not be required to know the term *chronological*.

TAKS
GRADE 5 READING
Sample Selections and Items

Read the next two selections. Then answer the questions that follow them.

The Sultan's Pearls

- 1 The sultan's empire overlooked the sea, where oysters were abundant and pearls were plentiful. It was no secret that the sultan owned the most beautiful pearls anyone had ever seen. The grandest of his pearls came from a nearby island. There the water was both sweet and salty. The oysters that lived in these waters produced pearls that gleamed like the early morning sun. No other pearl could match the beauty of the pearls the sultan called the special island pearls.
- 2 One day the sultan noticed that his island pearls were gone. He quickly gathered together the wisest of wise men.
- 3 "Search the grounds," ordered the sultan. "My island pearls have disappeared. I want the thief brought to justice!" Without a single word, the wise men left the great hall in search of the guilty person.
- 4 Just before noon one of the wise men walked into a rice field. He watched the workers for a long time. Finally he wandered over to two women who were uprooting rice seedlings.
- 5 "May I ask what you are doing?" the wise man questioned the first woman.
- 6 "We are taking the seedlings to the fields for planting," the woman quietly answered. She looked down at the ground and continued her work.
- 7 "I see," said the wise man. He watched the women but said nothing else.
- 8 "Is something the matter?" the second woman stammered. "I'm sure I can be of assistance."
- 9 "Yes, perhaps you can," replied the wise man. "Some of the sultan's pearls are missing."
- 10 The two women looked at the wise man in dismay. The first woman gathered up her seedlings and quickly walked away. The second woman whispered, "I think I can help you."
- 11 "What do you know?" asked the wise man.

- 12 “The other woman left when you mentioned the missing pearls. And did you notice how quiet she was?” she asked. “I fear she is the guilty one.”
- 13 “Perhaps she is simply loading up seedlings before the wagon leaves for the rice fields,” the wise man responded.
- 14 “Ah, but she acts as if she might be hiding something,” replied the woman. “Don’t you think it’s possible that she stole the sultan’s special island pearls?”
- 15 “Come with me,” said the wise man. “The sultan will find your wisdom remarkable, especially since you knew which pearls were stolen when I hadn’t even told you.”
- 16 And off he went with the guilty one.

The King's Gold

- 1 The king's castle was only a day's walk from the edge of the forested mountains. Everyone who lived in the area had heard stories of the king's great wealth. One morning the king woke to find that many of his gold coins were missing. He immediately summoned every guard and soldier in his castle.
- 2 "Search the countryside!" demanded the king. "Some of my gold has disappeared. I want the thief brought to justice. I will greatly reward the one who brings me the wrongdoer." The room quickly cleared as every guard and soldier left to find the guilty person.
- 3 One of the castle guards went to search the king's cocoa plantation. He angrily questioned dozens of workers as they snipped ripe cocoa pods from the trees. Then he marched over to two men who were breaking open cocoa pods and placing the beans in baskets.
- 4 "What are you doing?" the guard asked the first man, who sat quietly next to his basket.
- 5 "I am opening cocoa pods," he answered. "I am weak, so it takes me a long time to fill one basket. I cannot move about as quickly as my partner."
- 6 "I see," snapped the guard. He watched the second man moving busily from one basket to the next and slipping cocoa beans into his pockets. "These two baskets are completely filled with beans. And your pockets are quite heavy."
- 7 "It takes several hundred beans to make a pound of chocolate, so I must work quickly," the second man said, nervously moving away from the guard.
- 8 "Not so fast," the guard ordered. "Empty your pockets!" The man followed the guard's instructions, and hundreds of cocoa beans spilled to the ground.
- 9 "You thief!" the guard shouted. "How dare you steal the king's cocoa beans!"
- 10 "No, please listen. There are not enough baskets," the man stammered. "I don't want to stop working. I often fill my pockets

with beans until the wagon comes. Then I empty everything and begin again.”

11 “I find your methods extremely questionable,” said the guard. “And you’re as jumpy as a cat.”

12 “I am just a simple peasant. I am not used to being questioned by guards,” the man replied.

13 Just then the guard spotted a gold coin lying on the ground between the two men. “Aha! This proves it!” shouted the guard as he picked up the coin. “Come with me, thief,” he demanded. “The king will want to know where you’ve stashed the rest of the gold.” The guard left hastily with the second man. The guard was eager to receive the great reward the king had promised.

14 The first man watched until the two men had vanished into the distance. Then he stood up and slowly walked away, careful not to spill the heavy gold coins he had hidden in his pockets.

Use “The Sultan’s Pearls” (pp. 19–20) to answer questions 1–4.

1 In paragraph 1, the author writes that the island pearls “gleamed like the early morning sun” to show that the pearls are —

- A large
- B* shiny
- C colorful
- D round

Objective 1

2 In paragraph 1, the word plentiful means —

- A hard to find
- B beautiful
- C valuable
- D* great in number

Objective 1

3 In paragraph 10, why does the second woman offer to help the wise man?

- A She wants the sultan to notice her.
- B* She hopes he won’t suspect her.
- C She thinks he will reward her.
- D She plans to catch the thief.

Objective 2

4 Which sentence in “The Sultan’s Pearls” best shows that the sultan is upset that his island pearls have been stolen?

- A *No other pearl could match the beauty of the pearls the sultan called the special island pearls.*
- B *One day the sultan noticed that his island pearls were gone.*
- C *“My island pearls have disappeared.”*
- D* *“I want the thief brought to justice!”*

Objective 4

Use “The King’s Gold” (pp. 21–22) to answer questions 5–9.

5 Why does the guard accuse the second man of stealing the gold?

- A** The first man tells him that the second man is guilty.
- B*** The guard thinks the second man’s behavior is strange.
- C** The first man drops a coin to trick the guard.
- D** The guard discovers stolen cocoa beans in the second man’s pockets.

Objective 2

6 The first man says that he is weak so that the guard will —

- A** feel sorry for him as he works
- B** help him pick enough cocoa pods to fill his basket
- C*** think he cannot carry heavy gold coins
- D** find an easier job for him in the king’s castle

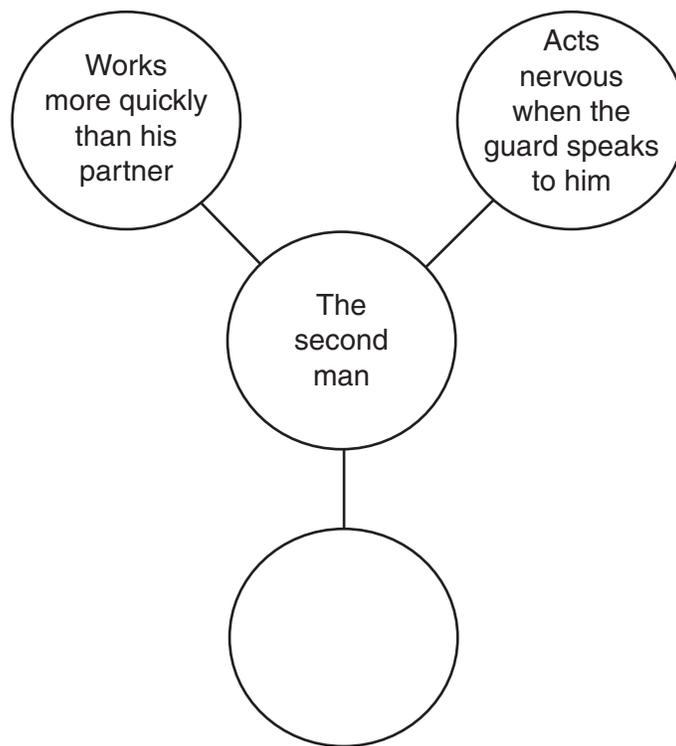
Objective 2

7 Why is it important that the cocoa plantation is located near the castle?

- A*** The field workers are close enough to the castle to have stolen the gold.
- B** The king is able to watch his workers to make sure they are doing their jobs.
- C** The guards and soldiers can bring chocolate to the king whenever he requests it.
- D** The king gets all his gold from the cocoa plantation.

Objective 2

8 Look at this web about the second man.



Which of these belongs in the empty circle?

- A Refuses the guard's request to empty his pockets
- B Admits to stealing the gold coins that are missing
- C* Is accused of stealing the king's cocoa beans
- D Asks the guard to find an empty basket for him

Objective 3

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- 9 Why does it make sense that the guard accuses the second man?
- A He wanted to show the workers that he was smart.
 - B He was angry about the crime that had occurred.
 - C He wanted respect from the other guards.
 - D* He was excited by the promise of money.

Objective 3

**Use “The Sultan’s Pearls” and “The King’s Gold”
to answer questions 10–14.**

10 What is one difference between the sultan and the king?

- A** The king does not have any wise men in his kingdom.
- B** The sultan believes that pearls are more valuable than gold.
- C** The king knows who stole his treasure.
- D*** The sultan does not offer a reward.

Objective 3

11 When the wise man and the guard are looking for the thief, how do they act differently?

- A** The wise man listens to one woman accuse another, but the guard listens only to the man he thinks is guilty.
- B*** The wise man patiently watches the workers before asking questions, but the guard immediately questions the workers.
- C** The wise man searches everyone he meets, but the guard searches only one person.
- D** The wise man uses many clues to figure out who the thief is, but the guard uses just one clue.

Objective 3

12 Look at the chart comparing the two stories.

Story Differences

| The Sultan's Pearls | The King's Gold |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pearls go missing.• The wise man questions workers.• The thief is found. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gold is missing.• The guard questions workers.• _____ |

Which of these belongs on the blank line in the chart?

- A* An innocent worker is accused.
- B The king learns the guard is the thief.
- C The guard realizes that the king only misplaced the gold.
- D The thief is caught and taken to the king.

Objective 3

13 How are “The Sultan’s Pearls” and “The King’s Gold” different?

- A In “The Sultan’s Pearls,” a search produces suspects.
- B* In “The King’s Gold,” an innocent person is punished.
- C In “The Sultan’s Pearls,” a crime leads to action.
- D In “The King’s Gold,” a guilty person is questioned.

Objective 4

14 The reader can conclude that both “The Sultan’s Pearls” and “The King’s Gold” —

- A* take place long ago
- B include a lesson to be learned
- C explain why having riches is important
- D describe the duties of rulers

Objective 4