SCIENCE

The TAKS science test assesses how well students understand science, including physics, chemistry, and biology concepts, and how well they can apply and analyze scientific information. The knowledge and skills tested are grouped into five objectives.

Objective 1
The Nature of Science

Students must be able to show an understanding of experimental designs, safety issues, and methods for collecting and organizing data. Students must also be able to analyze scientific information from various sources.

Objective 2
The Organization of Living Systems

Students must be able to show an understanding of how living systems are organized, from the molecular level to cell structures to organisms to ecosystems.

Objective 3
The Interdependence of Organisms and the Environment

Students must be able to show an understanding of how all living things depend on their environment and other organisms for survival.

Objective 4
The Structures and Properties of Matter

Students must be able to show an understanding of basic chemistry (what matter is composed of and what happens as matter changes).

Objective 5
Motion, Forces, and Energy

Students must be able to show an understanding of basic physics (how motion, forces, and energy are related and how these relationships help explain many of the everyday phenomena people experience).

SOCIAL STUDIES

The TAKS social studies test assesses how well students understand important topics in U.S. and world studies, which includes both world history and world geography. The knowledge and skills tested are grouped into five objectives.

Objective 1
Issues and Events in U.S. History

Students must be able to show an understanding of major issues and events in U.S. history, such as the fight for independence during the American Revolution and the role of the United States in World War I and World War II.

Objective 2
Geographic Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of how geographic factors have influenced historical issues and events, such as the construction of the Panama Canal. Students must also be able to read maps, charts, and graphs.

Objective 3
Economic and Social Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of economic and social influences on historical issues and events, such as the causes of the Great Depression and the impact of various reform movements on American society.

Objective 4
Political Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of political influences on historical issues and events, such as the development of representative government in colonial America and the fundamental principles of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Objective 5
Critical-Thinking Skills

Students must be able to show the ability to use critical-thinking skills to analyze social studies information. Students must also know how to interpret written and visual sources of historical information.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The TAKS English language arts test is a combination reading and writing test. Students are required to answer multiple-choice and short answer questions based on two published reading selections and a visual representation, write a composition on a specific topic, and answer multiple-choice revising and editing questions based on passages that resemble student writing. Students are permitted to use both a dictionary and a thesaurus on the reading and composition sections of the test but not on the revising and editing section.

READING
Objective 1
Basic Understanding

Students must be able to show that they have a basic understanding of the reading selections included on the test. Figuring out the meaning of unknown words, finding important details and main ideas, and recognizing accurate summaries are all part of developing a basic understanding.

Objective 2
Literary Elements and Techniques

Students must be able to show that they understand the literary elements that are found in all stories. These elements include plot, conflict, character development, setting, and theme. Students must also understand how an author combines these elements to create an effective story. In addition, students must be able to recognize the literary devices or tools an author uses to guide the reader's understanding of a story's characters, events, theme, and overall meaning. At the eleventh grade level, students should know literary devices, such as flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, and allusion.

Objective 3
Analysis and Critical Evaluation

Students must be able to show that they can develop a deep understanding of the reading selections and visual representation included on the test. They must be able to draw reasonable conclusions, use the text to support their conclusions, make meaningful connections between important ideas and themes, and understand the techniques an author has used to develop a text.

WRITING
Objectives 4 and 5
Written Composition

Objective 4 assesses the student's ability to write an effective composition on a specific topic. He or she must be able to stay focused on the topic, organize sentences and ideas so that they are clear and easy to follow, make the ideas interesting, and develop the ideas in detail.

Objective 5 assesses the student's ability to write as correctly and clearly as possible. This objective focuses on how well he or she communicates on paper. This means that when a student writes a composition, he or she is able to follow the rules of correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure.

A student's composition score represents his or her performance on Objectives 4 and 5. Scores range from 1 to 4. The meaning of each score is listed below.

- A score of 1 = an ineffective response
- A score of 2 = a somewhat effective response
- A score of 3 = a generally effective response
- A score of 4 = a highly effective response

If for some reason a student's composition could not be scored, he or she received a 0.

To pass the English language arts test, a student must score at least a 2 on the composition.

Objective 6
Revising and Editing

Objective 6 assesses the student's ability to both improve and correct passages created to resemble student writing. He or she must be able to improve the organization and development of ideas; improve the clarity and effectiveness of word choice; correct and improve sentences; and correct grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

TAKS Understanding the *Confidential Student Report*

A Guide for Parents

Exit Level Primary Test

What is TAKS?

TAKS is the name of the testing program for students in Texas public schools. The letters stand for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

Each public school in Texas must teach the same curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (also called the TEKS). The **TAKS** tests are based on this curriculum—in other words, on what students are being taught in school. Therefore, the **TAKS** tests are a good way to measure what students are learning.

Public school students in grade 11 take TAKS tests in four subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

If your child receives special education services, he or she may have taken TAKS (Accommodated). While the questions on TAKS (Accommodated) and TAKS are identical, the format of TAKS (Accommodated) is different in these ways: the questions are printed in a larger type size, and there are fewer questions on each page. Also, your child may have been allowed to take this assessment with more accommodations. These supports are intended to help your child show his or her best performance on the test.

How did my child do on TAKS?

Every child who takes a **TAKS** test gets a report of his or her score. This report is called the Confidential Student Report, or CSR. By carefully examining your child's CSR, you will find out where your child is doing well and where your child may need to improve. For example, if your child has done well on a **TAKS** test, it is a good indicator that your child is learning what he or she needs to learn in that subject. Remember, the **TAKS** test cannot test everything that your child is learning. However, your child's score will give you a good idea about the progress he or she is making. If your child did not receive a score on a **TAKS** test and you do not understand why, please contact his or her school.

Your child received an overall score on each test, but you can get more information about your child's strengths and weaknesses by looking at his or her performance on each test objective.

How is my child's high school graduation related to the exit level TAKS tests?

Texas law requires that students must pass all parts of the exit level TAKS to receive a high school diploma from a Texas public school. The exit level TAKS includes four subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These four exit level TAKS tests are given to students for the first time in spring of their eleventh grade year.

If your child passed all these tests on the first try, he or she has fulfilled the state's testing requirement for graduation. However, if your child failed one or more subject-area tests, he or she will have multiple opportunities to retake those tests. For each test your child failed, your child's school is required to help your child improve his or her knowledge and skills in that subject area.

Why am I receiving this brochure?

This brochure has three purposes:

- to give you some basic information about the **TAKS** program.
- to explain a sample test report so that you can understand your child's actual test report. The actual test report, which has your child's name on it and shows his or her test results, has been sent to your child's school and should accompany this brochure.
- to provide you with a short summary of each objective on the subject-area tests so that you will know what knowledge and skills that objective tested.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY 1701 N. Congress Avenue • Austin, Texas 78701-1494
Phone: 512-463-9536 • Fax: 512-463-9302 • Email: Student.Assessment@tea.state.tx.us

We're on the Web! Visit us at http://www.tea.state.tx.us

TX00058959

Explanation of Results

A These are the objectives tested in each subject area.

B The first column shows the number of questions your child answered correctly for each objective. The second column shows the total number of questions tested for each objective.

C The shaded squares show the number of questions your child answered correctly for each objective. The unshaded squares show the number of questions your child did not answer correctly. Together these squares equal the total number of test questions for each objective.

D The first number in the lightly shaded box shows the total number of questions your child answered correctly for all objectives tested in that subject. The second number shows the total number of questions on the test for that subject.

E Your child's score on the written composition is shown here. This score will be either a 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4. If your child's composition score is either a 0 or a 1, his or her Confidential Student Report includes analytic information that will help explain why the composition was not successful.

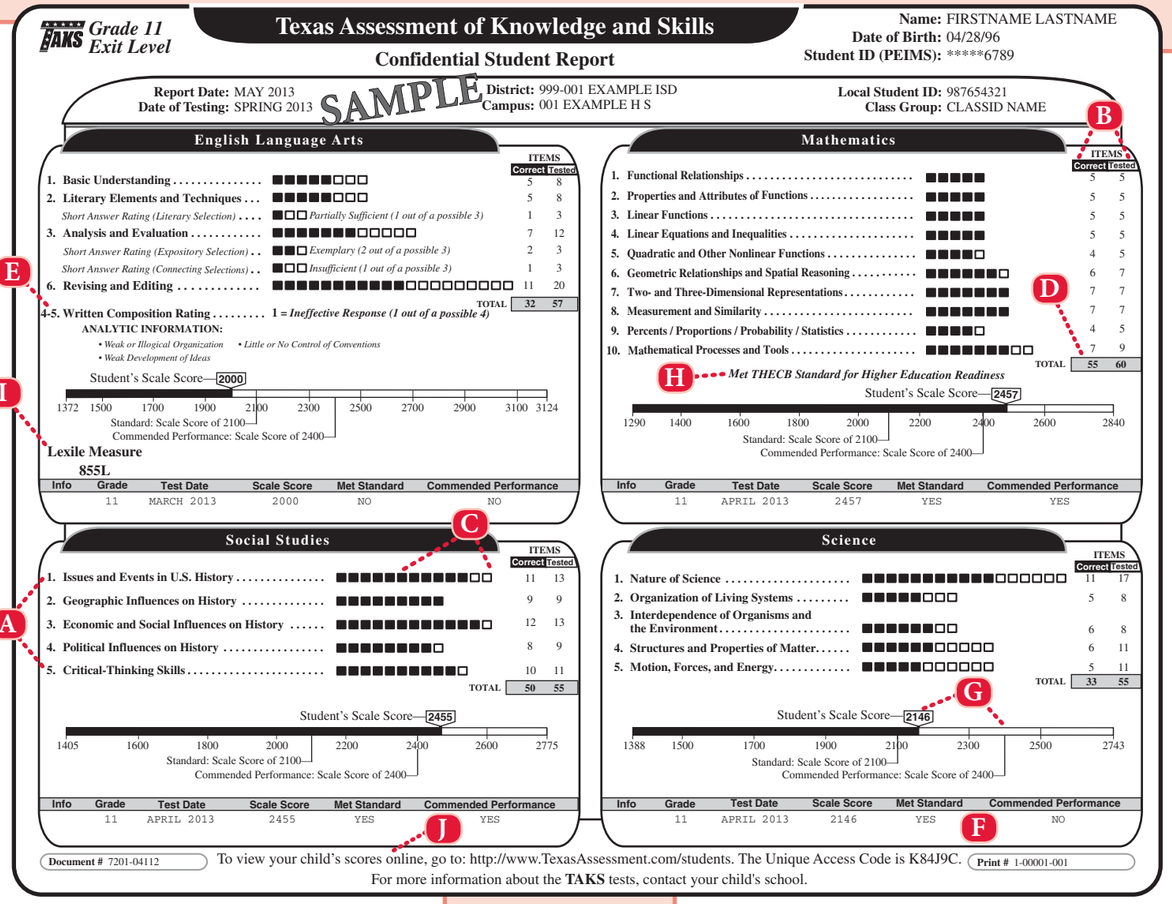
F In this section of each subject-area box, you will find your child's test score. The third column of this section shows when your child took the test. The fourth column shows your child's scale score. A scale score is a statistic used to show your child's performance on a test. The TAKS scale score lets you compare your child's score with the performance standards Met Standard and Commended Performance. The scale score indicates how far above or below these standards your child's achievement is. TAKS scale scores cannot be compared across subject areas or grade levels. The fifth column shows whether your child met the state's passing standard. The last column shows whether your child achieved commended performance.

G This scale shows the range of performance possible on each test. The arrow shows where your child's score (the number written in the arrow) is on the scale. The score needed to meet the passing standard and the score needed to achieve commended performance are also marked. The scale scores shown on the sample CSR are approximations and may differ slightly from the scale scores shown on your child's CSR.

H This statement will appear if your child's score in English language arts or mathematics shows readiness to enroll in college.

I The number under the words "Lexile Measure" is based on your child's scale score and provides you with additional information about how well he or she reads. To learn more about Lexiles, ask your child's school for a copy of *Information on Lexiles for Parents* or you may access it at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/lexile.

J Through the student data portal, parents and students can access assessment information across administrations and years. You may access the portal by using the web address and student access code that are listed at the bottom of your child's actual test report.



Additional Information

Important for Parents to Know

On the TAKS tests there are three categories for student performance: Commended Performance, Met Standard, and Did Not Meet Standard. These categories are explained below.

Commended Performance

If your child's report shows a "Yes" under Commended Performance, he or she performed at a level that was considerably above the state passing standard. Your child showed a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills tested at the eleventh grade.

Met Standard

If your child's report shows a "Yes" under Met Standard, he or she performed at a level that was at or somewhat above the state passing standard. Your child showed a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills tested at the eleventh grade.

Did Not Meet Standard

If your child's report shows a "No" under Met Standard, he or she performed at a level that was below the state passing standard. Your child did not show a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills tested at the eleventh grade.

STUDY GUIDES

If your child did not meet the standard on one or more of the TAKS exit level tests, you may access a study guide at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/study-guides. The study guide is designed to help students strengthen their skills by offering instruction as well as sample questions and explanations. Each study guide also contains a set of practice questions and a key to the correct answers.

The Test Objectives *What They Mean . . .*

MATHEMATICS

The TAKS mathematics test assesses how well students understand mathematics, including algebra and geometry, and how well they can apply this understanding to the real world. The knowledge and skills tested are grouped into ten objectives.

Objective 1
Foundations for Functional Relationships

Students must be able to show their understanding of functions represented by pairs of numbers, where the value of one number depends on the value of the other number. Students must also be able to draw conclusions from functional relationships.

Objective 2
Properties and Attributes of Functions

Students must be able to show their understanding of the similarities and differences between linear and quadratic functions. Students must also be able to solve algebraic equations.

Objective 3
Linear Functions

Students must be able to show their understanding that a linear function is an equation that can be represented by a line on a graph. Students must also know how the slope (rate of change) affects that line.

Objective 4
Linear Equations and Inequalities

Students must be able to show their understanding of the way to organize problems into equations and inequalities in order to find solutions to problems. Students must also know when using two related equations is the best way to find a solution.

Objective 5
Quadratic and Other Nonlinear Functions

Students must be able to show their understanding of a quadratic function as it looks on a graph. They must also understand how the shape of the parabola on the graph changes as the equation changes. Students must know how to solve real-life problems involving quadratic equations and be able to simplify algebraic expressions by correctly using exponents.

Objective 6
Geometric Relationships and Spatial Reasoning

Students must be able to show their understanding of how geometric concepts and properties can be used to solve everyday problems. Students must also be able to solve problems using a variety of representations, including geometric patterns, properties of transformations (such as reflections, rotations, translations, and dilations), and right-triangle patterns.

Objective 7
Two- and Three-Dimensional Representations of Geometric Relationships and Shapes

Students must be able to show their understanding of how solid, three-dimensional figures look from different perspectives. They must understand how to use slope to determine geometric relationships, such as parallel or perpendicular lines. Students must also be able to use rational numbers to determine the location of points on a coordinate grid.

Objective 8
Concepts and Uses of Measurement and Similarity

Students must be able to show their understanding of how to find the area of polygons, circles, and parts of circles as well as the surface area and volume of solid figures. They must also be able to use transformations and ratios to identify similar geometric shapes. Students must be able to determine the effect on perimeter, area, and volume when any measurement is changed. (For example, if the sides of a square are doubled, the area is four times the original area.)

Objective 9
Percents, Proportional Relationships, Probability, and Statistics

Students must be able to show their understanding of percents, probability, measures of central tendency, graphs, and misuses of graphical information.

Objective 10
Mathematical Processes and Tools

Students must be able to show their understanding of problem-solving strategies and tools, such as calculators, formulas, rulers, pictures, graphs, and tables.

Test objectives continued on back . . .