

2011 – 2012 Language Arts Benchmark Assessments for Grade 3

The Language Arts Benchmark provides teachers with valuable information on the reading and writing development of each student that helps them make informed instructional decisions to facilitate literacy growth. A variety of assessments are used to assess students' progress at different times of the year on the acquisition of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) learning standards for Grade 3.

Literacy Assessment	Beginning-of-Year (9/12 - 9/23)	Mid-Year (12/1 - 12/9 Writing) (Reading CBA - 1/18)	End-of-Year (5/1 – 5/11)
Reading	District Standard	District Standard	District Standard
Independent Reading Level	M	Not Assessed	P
Comprehension	18 of 25	26 of 40 (CBA)	TBD * of 40
High Frequency Words	90 of 100		90 of 100
Meets Reading Standards	2 of 3	1 of 1	2 of 3
Language	District Standard	District Standard	District Standard
Written Composition	2 of 4	2 of 4	2 of 4
Written Conventions	2 of 3	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Revising and Editing	Not Assessed	11 of 15	14 of 20
Meets Language Standards	2 of 2	2 of 2	2 of 2

CBA = *The Curriculum-Based Assessment is comprised of released TAKS Reading items for Grade 3 as well as other resources that include the genres found on the new state assessment. The CBA helps teachers determine the TEKS objectives that a student has mastered and which ones need to be taught and/or reinforced prior to the April 25, 2012 administration of Grade 3 STAAR Reading.*

TBD * = *Beginning in spring 2012, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) replaces the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Passing standards for the new test will be determined by the Texas Education Agency in October 2012.*

- **Independent Reading Level (IRL):** The IRL is assessed using the Guided Reading Levels (alphabetic levels A-Z) from the Teachers College Reading Assessment or the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. Students read a leveled text while the teacher records the way the story is read to determine a child's accuracy (number of words pronounced correctly), fluency (expression, pacing, intonation, and attention to punctuation), and comprehension.
- **Comprehension:** Students read fiction and nonfiction passages silently and independently. Students answer a variety of multiple-choice comprehension questions to reflect their understanding of the ideas found in the texts.
- **High Frequency Words:** Students must read high frequency word flash cards within 2 seconds to demonstrate mastery. Quick recognition of these words is critical in the development of more advanced reading processes. The high frequency words are based on Dr. Edward Fry's research of the most commonly used words in English.
- **Written Composition:** At BOY, students write a composition on a self-selected topic based upon the current grade-level unit of study. Students write a composition in response to an open-ended prompt at MOY (expository writing) and EOY (personal narrative). The writing is scored using the 4-point, holistic Grades 3-5 Writing Rubric that evaluates the paper's organization/progression, development of ideas, and use of language/conventions.

- **Written Conventions:** At BOY, students' use of correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling is assessed in their writing sample. A 3-point, holistic rubric evaluates the skill development in these areas based upon the grade-level TEKS.
- **Revising and Editing:** At MOY and EOY, students read student drafts and determine whether the composition can be improved by revising sentences, ideas, and organization. They also edit errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar usage.