



Writing Testlet FAQ for Spring Summative Assessment 2015

Which MAP-A students are assessed in writing?

All students who meet the eligibility criteria for the alternate assessment in grades 3 - 12 are assessed in writing during the Spring Summative Assessment 2015.

How is writing assessed?

Each student is assessed in either emergent or conventional writing. Writing testlets are similar to KITE teacher-administered testlets in reading and mathematics where the Test Administrator engages in a scripted activity with a student outside the KITE system and then enters into KITE observations and ratings of the student's behavior. Emergent writing testlets and conventional writing testlets require the Test Administrator to engage the student in writing about information familiar to the student using the tools that the student normally uses when writing as a part of instruction. Some items focus on the Test Administrator's observation of the student's writing process. Other items require the Test Administrator to evaluate the student's written product.

Writing testlets are expected to take 10-20 minutes to administer.

How is a writing testlet coded?

The testlet form name (available on the TIP) includes a code for the type of writing testlet and the grade. For example, an emergent writing testlet for grade 8 will include the code "EW.8" in the name. A conventional writing testlet for grade 8 will include "CW.8." An example of the Grade 8 form name for the conventional writing testlet in Grade 8 is shown below.

SP ELA CW.8.IM T 6431

Is the student's writing product submitted for scoring?

No, the student's writing product is not submitted to KITE. The Test Administrator evaluates the student's writing product according to the directions in KITE. The Test Administrator then enters his/her observations on a rating scale similar to other teacher-administered KITE testlets in KITE.

Do the writing EEs have linkage levels?

Yes. The Essential Elements in Conceptual Area C2.1, "Use Writing to Communicate" at every grade level are combined into a single writing testlet. The linkage levels are grouped together in the writing testlets. The initial and distal precursor levels are combined in an "Emergent Writing" testlet. The proximal precursor, target, and successor levels are combined in a "Conventional Writing" testlet. The linkage level assigned during the Spring Summative Assessment is based on the First Contact Survey and any testlets administered during the Spring Summative Assessment prior to the student receiving the writing testlet.

What is emergent writing?

Emergent writing describes the marks, scribbles, and random selection of letters seen in beginning writers. The KITE Essential Elements focus on having students work toward an understanding of writing as a form of communication and the ability to write about information. Emergent writing testlets focus on nodes in the learning map that are identified as being important precursor skills on the way toward conventional writing. KITE Professional Development Module 29: Emergent Writing includes examples of strategies teachers can use to start writing with students as a part of instruction.

What is conventional writing?

Conventional writing includes methods of writing that use orthography (letters, words) assembled in ways that are meaningful to others. Key conceptual components of conventional writing include an understanding that words are comprised of letters, that words have meanings, and that written words can be put together in order to communicate to others. Key behaviors associated with conventional writing include writing letters and words through the use of a traditional writing tool or alternate pencil. Examples of conventional writing by students with significant cognitive disabilities can be seen in KITE Professional Development Module 13: Writing Production and Distribution-

What are the general principles of assessing writing in the KITE system?

1. Maximize student independence while he or she writes.
2. Assess writing in a way that is appropriate for all MAP-A students. KITE accomplishes this principle through a set of structured tasks within a testlet. Tasks assess the student's writing process and product, for both emergent and conventional writers.

What counts as "writing" for students taking the KITE assessment?

When the testlet refers to "writing" or "the student wrote" in an answer option, observations can be of any method the student uses for writing, including eye-gaze or dictation of letters. Students may use word prediction, but selection of pictures or words from a word bank is **not** acceptable when the testlet requires writing. Although the student may dictate letters, dictation of whole words or sentences to the Test Administrator is **not** acceptable.

Some students do not physically write using paper and pencil or a traditional keyboard. How are these students assessed in writing?

The student can use whatever writing tool he/she uses during regular instruction, provided that it includes access to all 26 letters of the alphabet. These tools can include: pencil, pen, marker, whiteboard, keyboard, tablet keyboard, alternate keyboard, keyboard with word prediction software, alphabet flipbooks, and eye-gaze displays of letters. Students who use symbol systems or AAC devices should use them to communicate about the topic during the writing testlet, but should use the keyboard in the device or have access to an alternate pencil when the testlet requires writing.

Many students who take the writing assessments will need the support of Test Administrators to assist them in accessing a tool for writing. Some examples of partner-assisted alternate pencils that can be used by students who cannot physically access a traditional pencil include: eye-gaze systems, alphabet flip-charts used with partner-assisted scanning, adapted keyboards and onscreen switch-enabled keyboards.

¹ <http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/content/professional-development>

Information about allowable tools is included in the Test Administration Manual. More information about alternate pencils and emergent writers can be found in these KITE professional development modules:

Module 16: Writing with Alternate Pencils

Module 29: Emergent Writing

How can I prepare to give a student a writing testlet?

Use DLM Professional Development resources. The following modules are recommended for Test Administrators who will deliver KITE writing testlets.

Module 12: Writing: Text Types and Purposes

Module 13: Writing: Production and Distribution

Module 26: Writing Information and Explanation Texts

Module 29: Emergent Writing

Before administering a writing testlet, access the Testlet Information Page (TIP) to learn more about what is needed for the specific testlet.

Writing testlets are available to view in the KITE system and use as a practice activity before the test is administered to the student. You may view the practice version of the writing testlets for all grades by logging into KITE using the following credentials:

Username: demo.lisa.25 Password: bank9

To begin, select “Practice First.” Then select the grade-appropriate testlet.

Viewing the practice testlet before test administration will allow Test Administrators to become familiar with the contents of a writing testlet and the judgments that need to be made while administering the writing testlet to the student. Instructions for accessing the practice version of the specific writing testlet for each student are also available on the TIP.

For more information about Writing Testlets, please see the Test Administration Manual, section: “Teacher-Administered Writing Testlets,” beginning near the bottom of page 44.

The [Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets](#) is available on the [DESE MAP-A](#) webpage at [Spring Summative Assessment 2015](#).