This guide includes:

- Purpose
- Assessment Design
- Test Administration
- Resources
- Appendix A: Achievement Levels
- Appendix B: Sample Test Items
- Appendix C: Rubrics

**PURPOSE**

The Assessment Guide for LEAP Connect is designed to assist Louisiana educators in understanding the LEAP Connect assessments in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science (information to be added throughout fall and winter 2019-2020) for high school.

**Introduction**

Louisiana is building an educational system that ensures all students are ready for the next level of study by building knowledge of the world, accessing meaningful texts, expressing ideas, and solving complex problems. Through this, Louisiana is creating an equitable system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Over the past few years, much progress has been made to deliver on this belief including:

- the Louisiana Connectors (LCs) for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science that establish high expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities, with instructional resources for educators;
- alternate assessments (LEAP Connect) in ELA, mathematics, and science aligned to the LCs to measure student progress; and
- an established graduation pathway to a high school diploma for students assessed on the alternate assessments.

Federal law requires states to administer annual assessments to all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, to measure progress towards challenging academic content standards. The LEAP 2025 assessments measure student proficiency in the content and skills detailed by the Louisiana Student Standards (LSS) and the LEAP Connect assessments measure student proficiency in the content and skills detailed by the Louisiana Connectors (LCs) for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. The LCs represent the “big ideas” of the content and skills found in the LSS. The LEAP Connect format allows students to participate in academic assessments that are sensitive to measuring progress in their learning (see R.S.17:24.4(F)(3) and R.S.17:183.1-17:183.3).

**Participation Requirement**

To be eligible to participate in the LEAP Connect assessments, an IEP team must verify that the student has a disability which significantly impacts cognitive functioning and meets the criteria outlined in Bulletin 1530 §505 (refer to Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria for additional information). Eligible students will take the LEAP Connect assessments for ELA, mathematics, and science in grade 11, as required by Sections 1111(b)(1)(E) and 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
ASSESSMENT DESIGN
Standards, Connectors, and Complexity Levels
The LCs for ELA, mathematics, and science for kindergarten through high school focus on the “big ideas” found in the LSS for ELA, mathematics, and science. The LCs provide developmentally appropriate and challenging content to guide curriculum and assessment development for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The LEAP Connect assessments align to the ELA, mathematics, and science LCs, which identify the:

- most salient grade-level academic content found in the LSS for ELA, mathematics, and science; and
- core content knowledge and skills needed at each grade to provide success at the next.

Instructional resources developed for the LCs include Essential Elements Cards, Science Component Cards, Additional Resources, and Trainings and Overview, each briefly described in the Resources section of this document.

The assessments include items with multiple levels of complexity and varying degrees of scaffolds and supports to provide opportunities for students to show what they know and can do. The LEAP Connect assessment items each represent one of four levels of complexity (Tiers 1-4), designed to follow instructional practices. Tier 1 and Tier 2 questions reflect the higher level of support needed when students begin to learn a new skill or acquire new knowledge. Tier 3 and Tier 4 questions reflect the lower level of support needed as students learn and develop mastery of that skill or knowledge (see Table 1). LEAP Connect Science Levels of Complexity will be added to the assessment guides in the winter of 2019-2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
<th>Tier 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **English Language Arts** | • short text with repeated ideas  
• simple vocabulary words  
• provides a specific “listen for” statement related to the item | • text with straightforward ideas  
• provides a brief description of the item topic and simple definitions of terms  
• provides a “listen for” statement related to the assessed skill | • text with clear ideas  
• provides some detail about the item topic and definitions of terms  
• provides statement reminding students what the item is about | • text with detailed and implied ideas  
• provides statement reminding students what the item is about |
| **Mathematics**  | • supports use of hands-on concrete materials  
• successive model that guides one step at a time  
• simplified language and/or visual representations  
• few data points  
• increase magnitude of numbers | • model that shows solution to a similar problem  
• simplified language  
• additional number of data points  
• further increase in magnitude of numbers | • statement reminding student what the item is about | |
| **Science**      | *TBD*                                                               | *TBD*                                                               | *TBD*                                                               | *TBD*                                                               |
Assessment Guide for LEAP Connect High School

The ELA, mathematics, and science assessments contain field-test items. The number of field-test items varies by grade, content area, and item type. Only a student’s performance on the operational items will count toward a student’s final score.

Description of Item Types
The LEAP Connect assessments include several types of items.

- **Selected-response (SR)** items are multiple-choice questions in which a student selects one correct answer from two or three options.
- **Multiple-part, selected-response (MPSR)** items (ELA only) are multiple-choice questions clustered together in two or three parts and connected to a single LC. For each item, the student selects one correct answer from two or three option. Each item in the cluster is worth 1 point; the overall cluster is worth more than one point.
- **Constructed response (CR)** items differ in design and purpose according to the content or skill being assessed.
  - In ELA, students will produce a CR response to a writing prompt. The ELA writing CR is scored by professionally-trained scorers using a 3-dimensional rubric. Examples of the ELA Writing CR rubrics are found in Appendix C.
  - In mathematics, students produce a response to a mathematics problem.
  - In science, students produce a response to a science question.

Reporting
Student performance on the LEAP Connect ELA and mathematics assessments is reported by achievement level and overall score. Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) are also included in the student-level reports. The ALDs describe the knowledge and skills students generally demonstrate at each level. The LEAP Connect Interpretive Guide and the Parent Guide to the LEAP Connect Student Reports describe the ELA and mathematics tests so that school systems, school administrators, teachers, parents, and the general public will be able to use the results effectively. Science reporting information will be included in this guide after standard setting in the summer of 2021.

LEAP Connect ELA Assessment Design
The LEAP Connect ELA assessments measure reading comprehension of age- and grade-appropriate literary and informational texts, vocabulary, and writing. The ELA assessment includes selected-response (SR) and constructed-response (CR) items. Refer to Description of Item Types in this document for more information.

The LEAP Connect ELA assessments each contain four sessions. The first two sessions assess reading and include literary and informational passages and vocabulary. The third session begins with four items that assess a variety of writing skills, one at each tier, and includes a set of SR items related to informational writing (i.e., argument and explanatory). The fourth session includes a CR item intended to produce informational writing (i.e., argument). Table 2 summarizes the sessions by the types of passages the students will read and the types, points, and numbers of items the students will answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. LEAP Connect ELA Assessment Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1: Reading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary and informational reading passages and associated reading questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type (Number) of Passages; Type (Number) of Questions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational (3) and Literary (1); SR (19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reading** items measure students’ reading comprehension, decoding skills, and vocabulary understanding, with both literary and informational texts in grade-appropriate contexts.

- Literary questions focus on beginning comprehension skills (such as describing characters in a story) as well as more advanced comprehension skills (such as analyzing the development of a theme).
- Informational questions focus on, for example, identifying the main idea as well as using information in charts and diagrams.
- One of the LCs requires evaluation of comprehension across two passages. These skills are measured using “paired passage sets.” All paired passages are informational texts.

**Writing** items assess students’ writing skills development and focus on different types of writing—narrative, explanatory, and argument—at different grade levels. High school focuses on argument writing measured by SR items (Tier 1), explanatory writing measured by SR items (Tier 2), and argument writing measured by a CR item (Tier 2).

Table 3 provides information on the percent of representation of each ELA category on the test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Reading Literature</th>
<th>Reading Informational</th>
<th>Reading Vocabulary</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEAP Connect Mathematics Assessment Design**

The LEAP Connect mathematics assessment in high school focuses on problem solving and reasoning. The tests are divided into two sessions which both include SR and CR items (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mathematics questions and completion items; each worth 1 point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4. LEAP Connect Mathematics Design**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (Number) of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (19), CR (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SR (19), CR (1)

Table 5 provides information on the percent of representation of each mathematics category on the test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number and Quantity</th>
<th>Algebra</th>
<th>Geometry</th>
<th>Statistics and Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEAP Connect Science Assessment Design (Coming Winter 2019-2020)

The tests are divided into two sessions which both include SR and CR items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type (Number) of Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 provides information on the percent of representation of each science category on the test (winter 2019-2020).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Molecules to Organisms</th>
<th>Ecosystems</th>
<th>Heredity</th>
<th>Biological Evolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEST ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

The LEAP Connect ELA, mathematics, and science assessments are administered as computer-based tests (CBT) in a one-to-one setting. The test administrator will use the online test platform, the Test Administrator Manual, Directions for Test Administration, and reference materials for grade-specific item presentation and response collection to prepare for and administer the test. All passages, items, and response options are designed to be read to the students by the testing platform or the test administrator.

Tests are untimed and allow for breaks between questions or sessions. The test administrator may pause the test as needed to best accommodate the student.

Administration Schedule

The LEAP Connect testing window is February 3-March 13, 2020.

LEAP Connect Test Administration

The student or the test administrator will record the student’s answers to all questions into the online testing system. Answering the ELA writing CR requires entering text into the response boxes; all other items require the selection of an option with the pointer tool.

The LEAP Connect assessments include accessibility features for all students who take the test.

- Students should respond to SR, MPSR, and CR items based on their preferred mode of communication (e.g., eye gaze, assistive technology, point to a picture, etc.).
- Nearly all the mathematics items on the LEAP Connect assessments contain visual stimuli to assist students with determining an answer.
- The assessment items indicate when students may use calculators. Any student with an IEP accommodation for calculator use may a calculator for every assessment item. While an online calculator is provided, students may use the handheld calculator they typically use during instruction on the mathematics test.
Online tools provide additional accessibility for all students. The tools allow a student to select answer choices, “mark” items, eliminate answer options, take notes, enlarge the item, guide the reading of a text or an item line by line, and use a calculator. A help tool is also featured to assist students as they use the online system.

- Pointer tool
- Highlighter tool
- Cross-Off tool
- Sticky Note tool
- Magnifying tool
- Line Guide
- Calculator
- Help Tool

All students should work through the Online Tools Training (available in INSIGHT or here using the Chrome browser) to practice using the online tools so they are well prepared to navigate the online testing system. Practice DTA (Directions for Test Administration) and Reference Materials are available for both content areas on eDirect and in the LDOE library.

**Student Response Check**

A Student Response Check (SRC), three content-neutral items administered prior to testing, allows the observation of the student’s mode of response. The student need not respond correctly to any of the items; rather, the purpose is to determine whether the student can indicate a response using his or her preferred mode of communication and the test administrator can clearly identify the student’s response to each item. If the student’s response is not observable by the test administrator, the test administrator cannot enter the student’s response in DRC INSIGHT. Teachers and test administrators may access the SRC through INSIGHT or through the LEAP Connect Online Tools Training under the link ‘Student Response Check.’

**Permitted Testing Materials**

Students must be permitted to use scratch paper and pencils.

Each test comes with reference materials that contain visual stimuli, formulas, a list of manipulatives, and the answer options for each test question. Some of the reference materials will need to be copied and cut out for student use. Some of the materials will be used as stimuli for CR items or to assist with answering SR items. The Directions for Test Administration (DTA) contains scripted instructions for the test administrator to provide specific materials to the student. The answer options may be copied and used with eye gaze boards as needed. All reference materials must be securely destroyed after testing has completed, including used scratch paper.
RESOURCES

**Assessment Guidance Library**
- Webinars and Presentations: webinars about administering the LEAP Connect and using LEAP Connect ELA Sample CR items
- Sample ELA Constructed Response: samples of Constructed Response Directions for Administration and Constructed Response Stimuli
- Sample mathematics Constructed Response:

**Assessment Library**
- Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria: provides the participation requirements for alternate assessment
- LEAP Connect iGuide: provides school systems with information to better understand and use the results of the assessments
- Achievement Level Descriptors: descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and processes that students demonstrate with relative consistency and accuracy at each level of achievement

**eDIRECT:** includes access to tutorials, manuals, and user guides

**INSIGHT™**
- Online Tools Training: allows students to become familiar with the tools available in the online testing platform

**Contact Us**
- AskLDOE: electronic ticket system
- assessment@la.gov for assessment questions
- classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov for curriculum and instruction questions

**Newsroom:** Offers archive copies of newsletters including the LDOE Weekly School System Newsletter and the Teacher Leader Newsletter

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**Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Library**
- Adapting Lesson Plans (in Additional Resources): serve as templates for adapting whole class lesson plans to more individualized instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- ELA Guidebooks 2.0: provides a whole-class curriculum focusing on real learning grounded in a collection of texts and includes modifications for students with disabilities
- ELA Guidebooks 2.0 Diverse Learner Guide: contains information about using the ELA Guidebooks with diverse learners
- Essential Elements Cards: serve as a primer for differentiating instruction in ELA and mathematics for students with significant cognitive disabilities by breaking down connectors into knowledge and skills; and suggesting instructional strategies, possible supports, and scaffolds for student learning
- Parent Guide to LEAP Connect: helps parents understand the LEAP Connect assessment, also available in Arabic, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Parent Guide to LEAP Connect Score Reports: helps parents understand the LEAP Connect student reports, also available in Arabic, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Science Component Cards: contain additional guidance for teaching the Louisiana Connectors for Science for all grades, including performance expectations, science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts
- Louisiana Connectors for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities are aligned with Louisiana Student Standards and represent the most salient grade-level, core academic content in English language arts, mathematics, and science
- Student Response Modes (in Additional Resources): support teachers in identifying the best way for all students to demonstrate their understanding in each lesson
- Case Studies: provide models for how teachers and specialists may best modify objectives, assessments, activities, and materials for students with significant cognitive disabilities
APPENDIX A: ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS
LEAP Connect scale scores are used to assign a student’s achievement in ELA, mathematics, and science (fall 2021) to one of four levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Level</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>1255-1290</td>
<td>1240-1254</td>
<td>1236-1239</td>
<td>1200-1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>1249-1290</td>
<td>1240-1248</td>
<td>1234-1239</td>
<td>1200-1233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: SAMPLE TEST ITEMS
Reading Sample Test Items
LEAP Connect Reading—Informational Text Grade 11 Selected Response

Content Assessed: Reading—Informational Texts
Standard: LC.RI.11-12.6a
Complexity Level: Tier 2
Answer Key: C
You are going to write a persuasive essay about why schools should have an arts club. In a persuasive essay, you try to convince someone else to agree with you. First, I will read an example of a persuasive essay.

This is an example of a persuasive essay. The topic is planting trees. The author makes the claim that the city should plant more trees.

**Plant More Trees**

In this essay, I will convince you that the city should plant more trees. One reason is that trees are helpful.

It is important to have trees because they provide shade for people to stay cool. Also, trees provide oxygen that helps us breathe.

In conclusion, I hope you are convinced that the city should plant more trees. This is important because trees are helpful.

**Why Schools Should Have an Arts Club**

In this essay, I will convince you that ________

________

One reason ________

________

It is important to ________

________

Also, ________

________

In conclusion, ________

________
Content Assessed: Number & Quantity  
Standard: LC.A1: N-Q.A.1b  
Complexity Level: Tier 1  
Answer Key: B

This item is about using measurements shown in a data table.

A store sells paint in one-gallon cans. The number of gallons of paint and the equivalent number of quarts are shown in this data table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gallons of Paint</th>
<th>Number of Quarts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1gal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1gal 1gal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1gal 1gal 1gal</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 4 quarts in one gallon of paint.  
How many quarts are in 3 gallons of paint?  

A. 8 quarts  
B. 12 quarts
Content Assessed: Statistics and Probability
Standard: LC.A1-5:5-ID.A.2a
Complexity Level: Tier 1
Answer Key: B

This item is about a number line.

The least value is farthest to the left on the number line.
The greatest value is farthest to the right on the number line.

Jan does algebra problems. The dots on the number line show how many algebra problems Jan did in each of her math classes last week.

What is the greatest number of algebra problems Jan did in math class last week?

☐ 2
☐ 8
Content Assessed: Algebra I  
Standard: LC.A1: A-CED.A.1  
Complexity Level: Tier 3  
Answer Key: A

This item is about a data table of values and an equation.

A pet shop owner sells fish tanks containing white minnows and goldfish. This data table shows how many white minnows and goldfish are in the different tanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of White Minnows (w)</th>
<th>Number of Goldfish (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data table shows that the pet shop owner always places 2 more goldfish than white minnows into each tank. The information in the data table can be used to write an equation.

\[ w + 2 = g \]

The letter \( w \) stands for the number of white minnows.

The number 2 is how many more goldfish than white minnows are in the tank.

The letter \( g \) stands for the number of goldfish.

This equation can be used to find the number of white minnows in a tank when the pet shop owner places 10 goldfish in the tank.

\[ w + 2 = 10 \]

This is another problem about a data table of values and an equation.

A different pet shop owner sells fish tanks containing fish. She always places 4 more tetras than guppies into each tank. This data table shows how many guppies and tetras are in the different tanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Guppies (g)</th>
<th>Number of Tetras (t)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which equation can be used to find the number of guppies put in each tank, \( g \), when 15 tetras are placed in a tank?

A. \( g + 4 = 15 \)  
B. \( 15 + 4 = g \)  
C. \( g + 15 = 4 \)
### Table 9. Writing Argument Rubric High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric Elements</th>
<th>Full Evidence</th>
<th>Partial Evidence</th>
<th>Limited Evidence</th>
<th>No/Unrelated Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum some evidence related to the specified claim/topic (i.e., introduction, claim/topic, or conclusion)</td>
<td>There is no evidence of organization or the evidence is off topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● an introduction that states the claim and a rational reason</td>
<td>● an introduction that states the claim or a reason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● a conclusion that states the claim and the rational reason</td>
<td>● a conclusion that states the claim or the reason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idea Development</strong></td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum a word related to the reason</td>
<td>There is no evidence of idea development or the evidence is off topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● the body includes two relevant facts or examples</td>
<td>● the body includes only one relevant fact or example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● words or phrases to connect the reason with one relevant fact or example</td>
<td>● word or phrases to connect the reason with one fact or example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>The essay includes more than one sentence and at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum:</td>
<td>The essay includes at a minimum one use of Standard English conventions</td>
<td>There is no evidence of Standard English conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● end punctuation for more than one thought unit</td>
<td>● end punctuation for one thought unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● one complete sentence with subject-verb agreement using student-generated text</td>
<td>● one complete sentence with or without subject-verb agreement using student-generated text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 10. Mathematics Constructed Response Rubric Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student correctly completes task described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Student does not complete task or completes it incorrectly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>