



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Informational Guide for the English Language Arts/Literacy Portfolio Appeals Process

To fulfill the English Language Arts assessment component of New Jersey high school graduation requirements, a student must demonstrate proficiency in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L). A student may do this by demonstrating competency in Constructed Response Tasks (CRTs) aligned to the content categories as described in the following:

- Two grade-level reading passages (one literature and one informational) as well as associated items that demonstrate a student's comprehension (i.e., multiple-choice items and short constructed responses to open-ended questions); and
- Writing that includes *at least two* of the three types required by [New Jersey Student Learning Standards in ELA/L](#) (i.e., informational/explanatory, argument, narrative)

Writing should be scored using the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers ([PARCC rubrics](#)). Districts should use PARCC practice items and released items as examples of the kinds of questions that must be included, but **may not** use the actual items for their appeals.

The following FAQs will help guide districts in creating the evidence needed for the student appeal process.

Q: What type of evidence will the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) look for in the CRTs?

Although it depends on the type of passage and writing type, the following provides some general guidelines on what reviewers will be looking for in terms of a CRT:

- **Close reading of texts:** Close reading focuses on using evidence from texts with an emphasis on analyzing and evaluating texts. Students must use close reading to not only determine the main idea, but also to select the textual evidence that will justify the chosen main idea.
- **Text dependent questions:** Questions should require students to demonstrate their understanding by identifying evidence from the texts. An effective set of text dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there.
- **Writing to sources:** It is essential that the writing tasks elicit evidence that students have understood a text they have read and can communicate that understanding well both in terms of written expression and knowledge of language and conventions.

Q: What is Evidence-Centered Design?

Evidence Centered Design (ECD) is a deliberate and systematic approach to assessment development that will help to establish the validity of the assessments, increase the comparability of year-to-year results, and

increase efficiencies. The design begins with the inferences or claims made about students. From there, claims are supported with evidence. Task models are designed to elicit specific evidence from students in support of claims (See Figure 1).

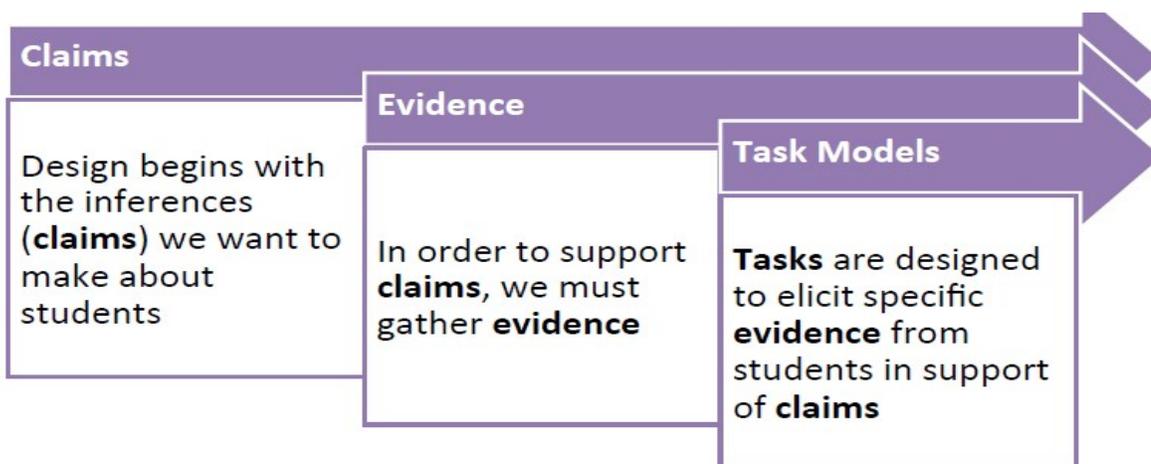


Figure 1 Evidence Centered Design

Q: What are ELA/L Evidence Statement Tables?

The ELA/L Evidence Statement Tables contain Reading, Writing and Vocabulary major claims, and the evidences to be measured on the PARCC Summative Assessment. Evidences are attached to the Reading, Writing and Vocabulary claims presented by PARCC, and describe what students might say or do to demonstrate mastery of the standards. It is important to note that an item on the PARCC assessment may measure multiple standards and multiple evidences.

Q: Where can I find the ELA/L Evidence Statement Tables?

PARCC online provides [evidence statement tables](#) for ELA/L.

Q: How do I read the Evidence Statement Tables?

The first line in the evidence statement table indicates the grade. This is followed by the second line which lists the claim (e.g., Reading Literature, Reading Information). The first column on the left includes a list of the standards (e.g., Reading Literature will be identified as “RL”). In the evidence statement tables for grades 6 through 11, the first column on the table also lists the standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, identified as “RST” (Reading in Science and Technical subjects). The standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies will be identified as “RH” (Reading History). In the next column are the evidences, which directly align with New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The [released PARCC items](#) should serve as a model to highlight item alignment to the evidence statements.

Q: Do I need to attach an evidence statement to each item?

Yes. Reviewers should be able to locate the evidence statement(s) for each item or set of items on the cover sheet.

Q: Do the items need to be aligned to a particular grade level?

School officials can select evidences from the [Reading and Writing Evidence Tables for Grades 9 to 11](#).

Q: What types of questions should we develop for each passage set?

The NJDOE expects to see associated items (e.g., multiple-choice, short-response) that measure a breadth of the standards/evidences. The [released PARCC items](#), sample assessments, evidence statements, and rubrics should be used to help with designing and scoring items.

Q: How many items should we develop for each passage set?

The number of items, as well as the total points possible, is determined by the school/district. However, the number of items will typically vary depending on the passage selected and the types of questions used to elicit evidence.

Q: Do we need to follow a two-part question format when developing our reading comprehension items?

No.

Q: Do the passages need to be on grade level?

The passages selected for the portfolio appeals process need to be on a high school reading level. Teachers are encouraged to employ their professional judgment, experience and knowledge of their students and the subject when selecting passages.

Q: Is there a specific length required for the reading passages?

It is suggested that districts stay within the PARCC 9 to 11 grade band passage length of 500 to 1,500 words (Literary and Informational Text/Literary Nonfiction).

Q: How many texts do students need to read in total?

Students need to read at least two texts (one literature and one informational). Districts may use paired passages for the ELA/L appeals process, but it is not a requirement.

Q: Do the reading passages and writing tasks need to be connected?

Yes. The standards emphasize the integration of reading and writing so we encourage districts to connect the reading and writing tasks (e.g., students respond to a series of questions about the text and then respond to a writing prompt).

Q: Do I need to score student writing using the PARCC rubrics?

Yes. PARCC has developed holistic rubrics for the scoring of writing tasks. The rubrics align to the standards and the writing evidences.

- [Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task Rubric \(Grades 6-11\)](#) – Scored for reading comprehension/written expression and knowledge of language and conventions. This rubric should be used for scoring informational/explanatory and argument writing.

- [Narrative Writing Task Rubric \(Grades 6-11\)](#) – Requires that students write to a text stimulus, but is only scored for written expression and knowledge of language and conventions. This rubric should be used for scoring narrative writing.

Scored PARCC rubrics must be submitted with each appeal. Please note that students receive a score for **each** construct. The reported scores should match the rubric – no half points should be awarded.

Q: What are the passing score requirements?

- In **reading**, students must receive a passing score of at least **50 percent** on **each** reading task. The number of items as well as the total points possible is determined by the school/district.
- In **writing**, students must score a minimum of “**2**” or higher on **each** rubric construct to meet the passing requirement.

Please do not submit ELA/L appeals that have not met the passing score requirements for reading and writing.

Q: Can I use the same response tasks for different students?

Yes.

Q: Can I submit graded class work instead of CRTs?

No.

Q: Can I assess the students in their native language?

Yes. However, districts will need to do the following:

1. Write the CRT in English.
2. Have someone in the district translate the CRT into the student’s native language.
3. After the student has responded in his/her native language, the student response **must** be translated into English.
4. **Both** the English version **and** translated version of the CRT **and** the English version and translated version of student response must be submitted to the NJDOE.

Q: Can we use old Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA) materials or PARCC practice materials?

No.

Q: We created tasks and submitted them to the NJDOE for feedback last year. We applied the recommendations provided by the ELA/L content specialist. Can we use the same CRTs?

Yes.

Q: Are we required to submit ELA/L appeals to the NJDOE for review prior to administering the tasks?

No.

Q: What do we need to submit to the state for each ELA/L appeal?

Districts should submit the following for each student:

- Completed *general* Portfolio Appeals [Cover Sheet](#);
- An [Education Proficiency Plan](#) that includes student transcripts and the intervention plan implemented to ensure the student met the graduation requirement;
- Performance on PARCC and/or substitute competency assessments;
- CRTs in ELA/L in which the student did not meet grade level expectations; and
- Specified quantity and quality of **student's graded responses to CRTs for each content area** including a *content-specific cover sheet for ELA/L*. (The following pages provide ELA/L Reading and ELA/L Writing cover sheets.)

Q: Where do I send the student appeals after they have been completed?

The appeals and CRTs should be sent to the following address:

Dr. Faye Ball
NJDOE Portfolio Appeals Coordinator
New Jersey Department of Education
PO Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-500

Q: What do I do if I have further questions?

For questions regarding the appeal process, please contact Dr. Ball at faye.ball@doe.nj.gov or by phone at (609) 376-3458.

**PARCC Portfolio Appeal
English Language Arts/Literacy Cover Sheet**

Student Name:

Reading

Literature Reading Passage Title:

Author(s):

Evidence Statement(s):

Total Points Possible:

Total Points Earned:

% of Points Earned:

Informational Reading Passage Title:

Author(s):

Evidence Statement(s):

Total Points Possible:

Total Points Earned:

% of Points Earned:

**PARCC Portfolio Appeal
English Language Arts/Literacy Cover Sheet**

Student Name:

Writing

Writing Response Type:

Evidence Statements(s):

Construct Measured (select constructs from [rubric](#))

Score:

Score:

Writing Response Type:

Evidence Statements(s):

Construct Measured (select constructs from [rubric](#))

Score:

Score:

Writing tasks should be scored using the appropriate PARCC rubrics. Rubrics used for scoring must be submitted.