Keystone Exams: English Composition
Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

Pennsylvania Department of Education

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General Introduction to the Keystone Exam Assessment Anchors

Introduction
Since the introduction of the Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has been working to create a set of tools designed to help educators improve instructional practices and better understand the Keystone Exams. The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, are one of the many tools the Department believes will better align curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices throughout the Commonwealth. Without this alignment, it will not be possible to significantly improve student achievement across the Commonwealth.

How were Keystone Exam Assessment Anchors developed?
Prior to the development of the Assessment Anchors, multiple groups of PA educators convened to create a set of standards for each of the Keystone Exams. Enhanced Standards, derived from a review of existing standards, focused on what students need to know and be able to do in order to be college and career ready. (Note: Since that time, PA Core Standards have replaced the Enhanced Standards and reflect the college- and career-ready focus.) Additionally, the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content statements were created by other groups of educators charged with the task of clarifying the standards assessed on the Keystone Exams. The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, have been designed to hold together, or *anchor*, the state assessment system and curriculum/instructional practices in schools.

Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, were created with the following design parameters:
➢ **Clear:** The Assessment Anchors are easy to read and are user friendly; they clearly detail which standards are assessed on the Keystone Exams.
➢ **Focused:** The Assessment Anchors identify a core set of standards that could be reasonably assessed on a large-scale assessment; this will keep educators from having to guess which standards are critical.
➢ **Rigorous:** The Assessment Anchors support the rigor of the state standards by assessing higher-order and reasoning skills.
➢ **Manageable:** The Assessment Anchors define the standards in a way that can be easily incorporated into a course to prepare students for success.

How can teachers, administrators, schools, and districts use these Assessment Anchors?
The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, can help focus teaching and learning because they are clear, manageable, and closely aligned with the Keystone Exams. Teachers and administrators will be better informed about which standards will be assessed. The Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content should be used along with the standards and the Curriculum Framework of the Standards Aligned System (SAS) to build curriculum, design lessons, and support student achievement.

The Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content are designed to enable educators to determine when they feel students are prepared to be successful in the Keystone Exams. An evaluation of current course offerings, through the lens of what is assessed on those particular Keystone Exams, may provide an opportunity for an alignment to ensure student preparedness.

How are the Assessment Anchors organized?

The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, are organized into cohesive blueprints, each structured with a common labeling system that can be read like an outline. This framework is organized first by module, then by Assessment Anchor, followed by Anchor Descriptor, and then finally, at the greatest level of detail, by an Eligible Content statement. The common format of this outline is followed across the Keystone Exams.

Here is a description of each level in the labeling system for the Keystone Exams:

➢ **Module:** The Assessment Anchors are organized into two thematic modules for each of the Keystone Exams. The module title appears at the top of each page. The module level is important because the Keystone Exams are built using a module format, with each of the Keystone Exams divided into two equal-sized test modules. Each module is made up of two or more Assessment Anchors.

➢ **Assessment Anchor:** The Assessment Anchor appears in the shaded bar across the top of each Assessment Anchor table. The Assessment Anchors represent categories of subject matter that anchor the content of the Keystone Exams. Each Assessment Anchor is part of a module and has one or more Anchor Descriptors unified under it.

➢ **Anchor Descriptor:** Below each Assessment Anchor is a specific Anchor Descriptor. The Anchor Descriptor level provides further details that delineate the scope of content covered by the Assessment Anchor. Each Anchor Descriptor is part of an Assessment Anchor and has one or more Eligible Content statement unified under it.

➢ **Eligible Content:** The column to the right of the Anchor Descriptor contains the Eligible Content statements. The Eligible Content is the most specific description of the content that is assessed on the Keystone Exams. This level is considered the assessment limit and helps educators identify the range of the content covered on the Keystone Exams.

➢ **PA Core Standards:** In the column to the right of each Eligible Content statement is a code representing one or more Pennsylvania Core Standard that correlate to the Eligible Content statement. Some Eligible Content statements include annotations that indicate certain clarifications about the scope of an Eligible Content.

  o "e.g." ("for example")—sample approach, but not a limit to the Eligible Content

How do the K–12 Pennsylvania Core Standards affect this document?

Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content statements are aligned to the PA Core Standards; thus, the former enhanced standards are no longer necessary. Within this document, all standard references reflect the PA Core Standards.

Standards Aligned System — http://www.pdesas.org/   **Pennsylvania Department of Education** — www.education.state.pa.us

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR

C.IE.1   Text Types and Purposes—Informative/Explanatory

Anchor Descriptor	Eligible Content	PA Core Standards
C.IE.1.1 Write informative and explanatory pieces that describe, explain, or summarize information or ideas.	**C.IE.1.1.1** Write with a sharp controlling point and an awareness of the audience and task.	**CC.1.4.9–10.B** Write with a sharp distinct focus identifying topic, task, and audience.
	C.IE.1.1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose with relevant information, content, and details.	**CC.1.4.9–10.C** Develop and analyze the topic with relevant, well-chosen, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic; include graphics and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
	C.IE.1.1.3 Use appropriate organizational strategies for informational and explanatory writing (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution, process analysis).	
		CC.1.4.9–10.D Organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text; include formatting when useful to aiding comprehension; provide a concluding statement or section.
	C.IE.1.1.4 Use precise language, stylistic techniques, and a variety of sentence structures to develop and maintain an appropriate, objective tone.	**CC.1.4.9–10.E** Write with an awareness of the stylistic aspects of composition.
	C.IE.1.1.5 Write with control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage, and sentence formation.	• Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. • Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms of the discipline in which they are writing. **CC.1.4.9–10.F** Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.IE.2 Revision—Informative/Explanatory		
Anchor Descriptor	**Eligible Content**	**PA Core Standards**
C.IE.2.1 Revise writing to improve style, meaning, word choice, and sentence variety.	**C.IE.2.1.1** Use a variety of sentence structures.	**CC.1.4.9–10.E** Write with an awareness of the stylistic aspects of composition.
	C.IE.2.1.2 Use precise language to create clarity, voice, and tone.	• Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
	C.IE.2.1.3 Revise to eliminate wordiness and redundancy.	• Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms of the discipline in which they are writing.
	C.IE.2.1.4 Revise to delete irrelevant details.	
	C.IE.2.1.5 Use the correct form of commonly confused words; use logical transitions.	
	C.IE.2.1.6 Combine sentences for cohesiveness and unity.	
	C.IE.2.1.7 Revise sentences for clarity.	

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.IE.3 Editing for Conventions—Informative/Explanatory		
Anchor Descriptor	**Eligible Content**	**PA Core Standards**
C.IE.3.1 Use conventions of standard written language.	**C.IE.3.1.1** Spell all words correctly.	**CC.1.4.9–10.F** Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
	C.IE.3.1.2 Use capital letters correctly.	
	C.IE.3.1.3 Punctuate correctly (e.g., correctly use commas, semicolons, quotation marks, apostrophes).	
	C.IE.3.1.4 Demonstrate correct grammar and usage (e.g., verb and pronoun form and agreement, modifiers and transitions, word order and syntax).	
	C.IE.3.1.5 Demonstrate correct sentence formation.	

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR				
C.A.1 Text Types and Purposes—Argumentative				

Anchor Descriptor		**Eligible Content**		**PA Core Standards**
C.A.1.1	Write argumentative pieces that include a clearly stated position made convincing through the use of appropriate methods.	**C.A.1.1.1**	Write with a sharp, distinct controlling point that clearly states a position and demonstrates awareness of task, purpose, and audience.	**CC.1.4.9–10.H** Write with a sharp distinct focus identifying topic, task, and audience; introduce the precise claim. **CC.1.4.9–10.I** Distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims; develop claim(s) fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of each in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. **CC.1.4.9–10.J** Create organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence; use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims; provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. **CC.1.4.9–10.K** Write with an awareness of the stylistic aspects of composition. • Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. • Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms of the discipline in which they are writing. **CC.1.4.9–10.L** Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
		C.A.1.1.2	Construct a thorough argument with consistent, relevant support through the use of argumentative/persuasive strategies; address opposing viewpoints.	
		C.A.1.1.3	Organize the argument using effective strategies to develop a strong, well-supported position.	
		C.A.1.1.4	Maintain an effective and consistent tone through precise control of language and a variety of sentence structures.	
		C.A.1.1.5	Write with control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage, and sentence formation.	

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR
C.A.2   Revision—Argumentative

Anchor Descriptor	**Eligible Content**		**PA Core Standards**
C.A.2.1 Revise writing to improve style, meaning, word choice, and sentence variety.	**C.A.2.1.1**	Use a variety of sentence structures.	**CC.1.4.9–10.K** Write with an awareness of the stylistic aspects of composition. • Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. • Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms of the discipline in which they are writing.
	C.A.2.1.2	Use precise language to create clarity, voice, and tone.	
	C.A.2.1.3	Revise to eliminate wordiness and redundancy.	
	C.A.2.1.4	Revise to delete irrelevant details.	
	C.A.2.1.5	Use the correct form of commonly confused words; use logical transitions.	
	C.A.2.1.6	Combine sentences for cohesiveness and unity.	
	C.A.2.1.7	Revise sentences for clarity.	

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.A.3 Editing for Conventions—Argumentative		
Anchor Descriptor	**Eligible Content**	**PA Core Standards**
C.A.3.1 Use conventions of standard written language.	**C.A.3.1.1** Spell all words correctly.	**CC.1.4.9–10.L** Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
	C.A.3.1.2 Use capital letters correctly.	
	C.A.3.1.3 Punctuate correctly (e.g., correctly use commas, semicolons, quotation marks, apostrophes).	
	C.A.3.1.4 Demonstrate correct grammar and usage (e.g., verb and pronoun form and agreement, modifiers and transitions, word order and syntax).	
	C.A.3.1.5 Demonstrate correct sentence formation.	