



Parent Overview of the MSAA Assessment System: Grade 11

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This overview of the MSAA Alternate Assessment explains:

- alternate assessment,
- importance of academic instruction,
- possible instructional supports, and
- ways to work with your child’s teachers.

Alternate Assessment

When you receive your child’s test results, the report will show your child’s score and performance level on the MSAA test. The scores are based on high expectations and these expectations are appropriate for students taking an alternate assessment in this grade. The test was designed using the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and has built-in supports:

- reduced passage length in reading,
- pictures and graphics included to help students understand,
- models in reading, writing, and mathematics,
- common geometric shapes and smaller numbers on the mathematics test, and
- option to have the entire test read aloud.

The alternate assessment is designed to work with the way your child communicates. The teachers will provide all the accommodations included in your child’s IEP as long as they are consistent with the MSAA assessment policies.

The MSAA test results, reported in the Individual Student Report, may be used to identify areas for needed improvement as well as areas of strength so that everyone can work together to help your child. Teachers may use this information to guide their teaching so that students learn the knowledge and skills of the grade level academic content with appropriate supports.

Your child’s teacher can select and use appropriate NCSC Curriculum (What to Teach; Curriculum Resources are reference materials created to reinforce educators' understanding of curriculum content) and Instructional Resources (How to Teach; Instructional Resources are reference materials created to support classroom teaching) located at <https://wiki.ncscpartners.org>. The resources provide the skills taught at each grade, explanation of curriculum, and examples of lesson plans and systematic instruction. The MSAA Assessment System provides training for teachers on each of these resources. Descriptions of these resources are provided on page 1 of the Main Page of NCSC Wiki.

College, Career, and Community Skills

- **Reading and writing** is important to understand books, gather and learn new information, make notes, share thoughts and stories, compare information, read schedules, etc.
- **Mathematics** is important to understand numbers, solve problems, schedule, arrange transportation, manage money, etc.
- **Communication skills** are important to advocate for self, participate in social and educational conversations, express wants and needs, access information, make requests, shop, prepare a meal, etc.
- **Age appropriate social skills** are important to build knowledge and shared experiences with peers in school, the community, and work.
- **Independent and teamwork** are important to build problem-solving skills, understand and follow directions, complete a new task, work with others, and use provided supports.
- **Skills to access support systems** are important to academic instruction, collaborative work with peers, developing independence, requesting assistance, and using appropriate tools (e.g., calculator) to complete a task.

Academic Instruction

Changes in our culture, our technology, and our work are happening at a fast pace. There are recognized college, career, and community skills that prepare our children for the world they will live in as adults. This preparation requires instruction that is individualized to meet your child's unique needs, focused on skills to communicate, read, write, use mathematics, and develop work skills.

Instructional Supports

Teachers have many tools and techniques to teach academic content. Teachers will provide the supports identified in your child's IEP. This should help your child learn the content and improve his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as demonstrate them on the test.

The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provide flexible approaches for curriculum and are used throughout the MSAA Assessment System to provide support and accommodations as needed for all children, including your child. Teachers can use these same strategies to support your child in learning. For example, in reading, your child may listen to the story read by someone else and answer questions using a communication system. In mathematics, your child might use counters to help solve problems and follow steps that are provided for calculations instead of having to memorize the steps. Supports will be important as your child is introduced to new content.

Additional examples of supports include providing:

- information presented in different ways (e.g., with pictures, manipulatives, and simplified text),
- access to learning materials in different ways (e.g., listening to a story while using a screen reader or a version enhanced with textures, providing word or picture choices),
- different ways to show what your child has learned (e.g., answering using a switch activated recording, presenting using technology, eye-gaze to select words or pictures to write a story), and

- multiple options to engage your child (e.g., providing choices, using topics of personal interest).

You can find more about Universal Design for Learning at <http://www.udlcenter.org>

English Language Arts – Grade 11

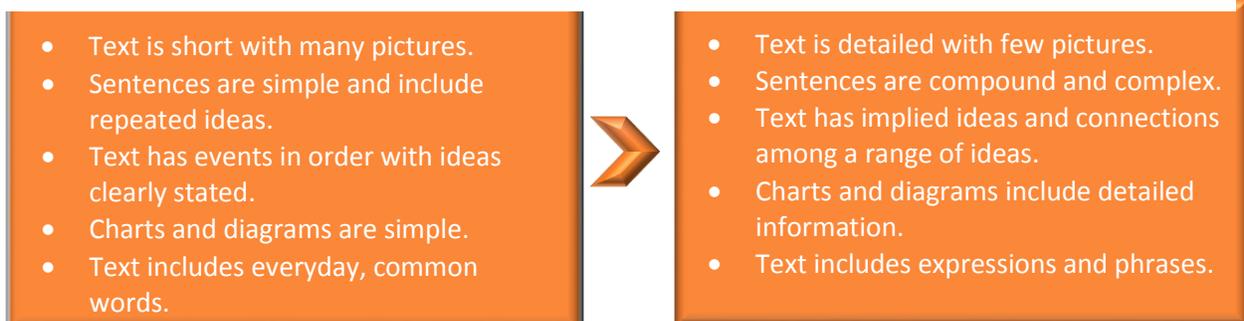
In high school, your child’s instruction has a strong focus on informational texts, but still includes enjoying reading or listening to and learning more about literary (non-fiction) texts read aloud.

Your child will:

- read/listen to stories (e.g., *Jane Eyre*), plays, poems and informational texts (e.g., biographies, political and economic documents, historical documents, etc.) that may be adapted,
- produce different types of writing: stories, informational, and persuasive, and
- learn communication skills (e.g., class discussions and presentations).

The complexity of the stories and informational text your child will read or listen to will increase throughout the year and as he/she moves to the next grade. The following are a few ways that stories and text become more complex.

Range of Text Complexity



Instructional activities should be individualized for your child as needed. For example, to teach students to evaluate multiple sources of information, the teacher has students examine techniques advertisers use. First the teacher shows students a slide show reviewing common persuasive techniques and sample advertisements. The teacher directs students to write the purpose of each advertisement, the target audience, and the persuasive techniques used by the advertiser. Some students may use screen readers to view the slides and text to speech to write the purpose, target audience, and persuasive techniques. Some students may use pointing, eye-gaze or an adapted switch to scan and select possible purposes, audience, and techniques.

Teachers often pair reading and writing together. After several instructional activities about evaluating multiple sources, the teacher directs students to choose a career they are interested in pursuing, research the education and skills required for that career using multiple sources, and create a brochure enticing others to consider the career. For some students, the teacher will bookmark relevant websites or adapt resources for the students. Some students may use representative pictures or objects to create their brochure.

ELA Sample Instructional Activities (text complexity increases in each grade)

11th Grade

- Learning the meaning of new academic and content words and why an author uses certain words in high school level texts
- Finding what the two or more big ideas or central ideas of stories are and how they are developed
- Deciding how the author's choice in developing story elements (e.g., characters, details, ideas, events, etc.) affects a text
- Evaluating multiple sources of information to answer a question or solve a problem
- Understanding how the author's use of details and how the author structured parts of the text help the reader gain the meaning
- Identifying the author's point of view or claim and deciding whether the reasoning is correct and the evidence is sufficient
- Sharing ideas and information by producing persuasive pieces that include an appropriate organization of the information, relevant facts, details, and examples; and use appropriate vocabulary and phrases for the type of writing (e.g., imagery for narrative writing)
- Communicating decisions, goals, and action plans

12th Grade

- Prepare to take the ASVAB/ACT/SAT by taking practice tests
- Complete vocational exploration activities, such as (view videos online, report on top 3 careers of interest, research demand and requirements of top 3 job interests)
- Develop a contact list of agencies that will provide supports for the student
- Write a paragraph about a researched occupation
- Schedule a visit with the local Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and report findings
- Learn resume writing skills and develop a resume
- Attend "College Bound" (sponsored by Arkansas Transition Services and UCA)
- Visit college/vocational campuses to meet with Disability Support Services
- Learn/Practice Self-Advocacy/Self-Awareness to obtain services through Disability Support Services

Mathematics – Grade 11

In grade 11, the focus in mathematics is on solving problems using rational and irrational numbers, studying geometry by making accurate geometric drawings and shapes, solving problems using the Pythagorean Theorem, transformations, and linear equations; determining how one angle in a geometric figure affects other angles; calculating volume of cones, cylinders, and spheres; using data from dot plots, histograms, box plots, or scatter plots; and making observations and decision about real-world probabilities. All of these learning activities that you can expect your child to be involved in might be individualized for your child. This allows the skills to be taught, practiced, and learned so that your child can make progress more easily. Here is a mathematics example that shows how individualization might work.

A teacher is teaching how to make conclusions about data. The teacher gives students graphs and plots of several real-world scenarios, such as the hourly wages of employees at a home improvement center. Students sort the graphs and plots into which kind of data analysis they feel gives the best way to make a conclusion about the data and give reasons why. Some students may be given graphs and plots of three kinds of data analysis and some students may work with two kinds of data analysis. Some students may write or keyboard their reasons and some students may choose their reasons from pre-written sticky notes.

Mathematics Sample Instructional Activities

11th Grade

- Learning about exponents and scientific notation
- Solving problems with rational and irrational numbers
- Using tools to make geometric constructions
- Solving real world geometric problems by using transformations and finding dimensions of figures
- Graphing and using linear equations to solve geometric problems
- Writing and solving variable expressions that represent word problems
- Identifying, completing, predicting, comparing, and making conclusions from data displayed in graphs and box plots
- Calculate the mean and median of a set of data
- Describing, predicting, and making conclusions about real-world probabilities

12th Grade

- Learning when to use exponents and scientific notation
- Solving problems with real numbers
- Using tools to make geometric constructions
- Solving real world geometric problems by using transformations and finding dimensions of everyday figures
- Graphing and using linear equations to solve geometric problems
- Writing and solving variable expressions that represent word problems
- Making conclusions from data displayed in graphs and box plots
- Calculate the mean and median of a set of data
- Describing, predicting, and making conclusions about real-world probabilities

Families Working with Teachers

Children learn well when teachers and families work together. You can help your child learn when you and his or her teachers share information with each other. You can share how your child learns best and what his or her interests are. It is also important to provide your child with learning activities suggested by the teachers. To do this, you should find out what your child's instruction looks like and what your child is expected to learn and do. For example, the activity might be to read and answer questions about a story. The teacher might say that the most important part is for your child to answer the questions, which he or she can do after listening to the story instead of reading it alone. Likewise, writing might include the way your child communicates his or her thoughts and ideas. This might be using the computer, assistive technology, or dictation instead of using a pencil and paper.

To see examples of what these supports look like and how teachers may use these supports, go to the NCSC Resources- <https://wiki.ncscpartners.org>. Parents can use the resources on this site to help increase their child's knowledge and skills. The site includes a "Parent Tips and Tools" section that can help parents use the resource materials. These resources help teachers and parents know what content to teach in each grade, suggestions and models for how to teach specific content, and how the content relates to the real world. Working closely with your child's teacher and these resources helps your child to develop college, career and community skills.

Summary

As everyone works together to support your child's learning of the college, career, and community skills, the MSAA Assessment System provides guidance on the appropriate content and supports. Teachers and families working together will make individualize instruction meaningful and will help your child develop those skills. As you read through this overview and look at your child's test report, please contact your child's teacher if you need more information.

MSAA Curriculum and Instructional Resources for Teachers and Parents

- Content Modules (explanation of grade level content)
- Instructional Families (skills for each grade)
- Curriculum Resource Guide (examples for teaching grade level content)
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Units (model universally designed lesson plans)
- Instructional Resource Guide (instructional strategies)
- Systematic Activities for Scripted Systematic Instruction (samples of intensive instruction: LASSIs for language arts and MASSIs for mathematics)