

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)
Comparison of Assessment Characteristics: STAAR vs. TSI



STAAR Algebra II vs. TSI Mathematics

Assessment Characteristic	STAAR Algebra II	TSI Mathematics
Purpose	The purpose of the STAAR Algebra II assessment is to determine mastery of the Algebra II Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum.	Since August 26, 2013, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has required all Texas public colleges and universities to administer the new Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment to assess the academic skill level of their incoming students.
Assessment Type		

Content Comparisons

Although the new TSI assessment measures some of the same skills assessed on the STAAR Algebra II test, a true comparison is difficult. The TSI assessment covers broad math strands such as elementary algebra and functions and intermediate algebra and functions. Given the terms “elementary” and “intermediate”, might lead one to correlate these math strands with Algebra I and Algebra II, respectively. However, most of the CCRS covered in these two algebra strands are listed in both the elementary and the intermediate strand. Additionally, the CCRS measured by the TSI assessment are written as general statements. For example, a CCRS covered on the TSI assessment is “apply known function models”. Determining whether the question addressing this skill maps to Algebra I or Algebra II is dependent on which type of algebraic function the specific question addresses (i.e., linear, cubic, absolute value, etc.).

Based on a limited review of specific sets of test questions, the mathematics portion of the TSI appears to appropriately measure the CCRS as intended. The TSI mathematics assessment reviewed covered the range of topics indicated in the TSI test blueprint. The level of rigor of the set of questions viewed is difficult to capture since the TSI assessment is a computer adaptive test. However, the test questions ranged from basic to challenging and seemed to be generally appropriate for the TSI assessment. In the two different sets of TSI test questions reviewed, it is estimated that 20% (4/20) of the questions aligned to the Algebra II TEKS.

The following information is intended to provide some additional comparisons of the new TSI mathematics assessment to STAAR Algebra II.

The TSI mathematics assessment aligns to the CCRS. Specifically, 56% (39/70) of the standards in the mathematics CCRS are eligible for the TSI assessment.

The STAAR Algebra II assessment aligns to the Algebra II TEKS. Specifically, 100% (44/44) of the student expectations in the AI

STAAR English III vs. TSI Reading and Writing

Assessment Characteristic	STAAR English III	TSI Reading and Writing
Purpose	The purpose of the STAAR English III assessments is to determine mastery of the English II Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curriculum.	Since August 26, 2013, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has required all Texas public colleges and universities to administer the new Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment to assess the academic skill level of their incoming students. Institutions have the flexibility to determine the appropriate path for individual students to take so as to be considered college ready and thus ready for college-level courses.
Assessment Type	A criterion-referenced assessment	A multiple choice computer-adaptive test, consisting of a large pool of items from which a test-generation algorithm selects items for a student.
Content	<p>Reading Measures understanding and analysis of literary, informational, and cross-genre texts. Includes fiction, poetry, drama, literary nonfiction, expository, persuasive, media literacy, and procedural texts. Essential skills include using vocabulary in context, making complex inferences and conclusions, analyzing author's craft, and understanding purpose.</p> <p>Writing Measures skill level in analytical writing, revision, and editing. Includes literary nonfiction, expository, and persuasive texts to test revision and editing skills. Composition assesses students' understanding of purpose, organization/progression, development of ideas, and language/conventions.</p>	<p>There is some (approximately 44%) content overlap between STAAR English III and the TSI Reading and Writing tests.</p> <p>Reading Measures extended reasoning, main idea/detail, inference/conclusion, analyzing author's craft, understanding tone/audience, and vocabulary in context. Texts are taken from different fields including natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, and literary fiction (includes cross-text analysis).</p> <p>Writing Measures skill in essay revision, agreement, sentence structure, and sentence logic. Composition assesses students' ability to write persuasively and to develop point of view, maintain focus/coherence, progress/organize ideas, and use language.</p>
Item Format	<p>Reading: 28 multiple-choice items total (30% of score), 2 short-answer items (20% of score)</p> <p>Writing: 22 multiple-choice items total (24% of score), 1 composition (analytical – 26% of score)</p>	<p>Reading Test: 24 multiple-choice items</p> <p>Writing Test: 20 multiple choice items, 1 composition (persuasive)</p>

