

Using Item Specifications Documents

**To enhance your district assessments and
curriculum**

Goals for this session

- DESE updates and additional helpful documents
- What are the item specifications and how can districts use them to design assessments and enhance curriculum.
- Where to find them and how to read them.
- How to use the item specifications to write your own assessments.
- How to use the item specifications to determine if assessments from programs/platforms are aligned to MLS.

DESE Updates

Sharing Activity

- See one page handout

What makes quality curriculum?

- Specific learning goals linked to standards
- Quality assessments (formative and summative) that match the learning goals.
- Teaching activities
- Pacing guides/time lines
- Vertically aligned across all grade levels

How can PLDs help shape curriculum?

- EOC Performance Level Descriptors
- Grade Level Performance Level Descriptors

Why do we need Item Specification Documents?

- HB 1490 required workgroups to develop the Missouri Learning Standards.
- The item specification documents were developed to support the implementation of the new standards. The documents include all Missouri grade level/course expectations arranged by domains/strands.
- The documents define what could be measured on a variety of assessments.
- The documents serve as the foundation of the assessment development process for both state level assessments and district assessments.

Item Specification Home page

Components of the item specifications include:

- Expectation Unwrapped breaks down a list of clearly delineated content and skills the students are expected to know and be able to do upon mastery of the Expectation.
- Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Ceiling indicates the highest level of cognitive complexity that would typically be assessed on a large scale assessment. The DOK ceiling is not intended to limit the complexity one might reach in classroom instruction.
- Item Format indicates the types of items used in large scale assessment. For each expectation, the item format specifies the type best suited for that particular expectation.
- Content Limits/Assessment Boundaries are parameters that item writers should consider when developing a large scale assessment. For example, some expectations should not be assessed on a large scale assessment but are better suited for local assessment.

Components of the item specifications may include:

- Sample stems are examples that address the specific elements of each expectation and address varying DOK levels. The sample stems provided in this document are in no way intended to limit the depth and breadth of possible item stems. The expectation should be assessed in a variety of ways.
- Text Types suggests a broad list of text types for both literary and informational expectations. This list is not intended to be all inclusive: other text types may be used in the classroom setting. The expectations were written in grade level bands; for this reason, the progression of the expectations relies upon increasing levels of quantitative and qualitative text complexities. (English Language Arts Only)
- Calculator Designation indicates whether a calculator will be available for test questions written to a particular expectations on the large-scale assessment. (Mathematics Only)
- Stimulus Materials defines types of stimulus materials that can be used in the item stems. (Science and Social Studies Only)
- Possible Evidence indicates observable methods in which a student can show understanding of the expectations. (Science Only)

Cautions about Item Specification Documents

- Although teachers may use these documents to provide clarity to the expectations, these specifications are intended for summative, benchmark, and large-scale assessment purposes.
- They are NOT curriculum but simply guidelines for the development of assessments.

Grade 5 English Language Arts

Reading		5.R.3.C.c
3	Develop and apply skills and strategies to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate nonfiction (e.g., narrative, information/explanatory, opinion, persuasive, argumentative) from a variety of cultures and times.	
C	Text Structures	
MLS	Read, infer, and draw conclusions to:	
c	analyze how the pattern of organization of a text influences the relationships	
<u>Expectation Unwrapped</u>		<u>DOK Ceiling</u> 3
The student will, by inferring and drawing conclusions, analyze how the pattern of organization of a text influences the relationships in nonfiction text from a variety of cultures and times.		<u>Item Format</u> Selected Response Constructed Response Technology Enhanced
<p style="text-align: center;">↑</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What does the Standard include for students to know and be able to do?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">State Assessment limits ↓</p>		<u>Text Types</u> Informational: e.g., narrative nonfiction, informative/ explanatory, opinion, persuasive, argumentative
<u>Content Limits/Assessment Boundaries</u>		<u>Sample Stems</u>
Instructional Implication: The pattern of organization is the text structure. Pattern of organization: e.g., cause and effect, problem and solution, question and answer		

Mathematics		4.NF.B.5
NF	Number Sense and Operations in Fractions	
B	Extend understanding of operations on whole numbers to fraction operations.	
5	Decompose a fraction into a sum of fractions with the same denominator and record each decomposition with an equation and justification.	
<u>Expectation Unwrapped</u>		<u>DOK Ceiling</u> 3
The student will create an equation that shows a given fraction decomposed into fractional parts with the same denominator.		<u>Item Format</u> Selected Response Constructed Response Technology Enhanced
The student will create an equation that shows a given fraction decomposed in more than one way.		
The students will justify a sum of an equation by using a number line.		<u>Sample Stems</u>
The students will justify a sum of an equation by using a visual fraction model.		
<u>Content Limits/Boundaries for State Assessment; However Should be Included in Classroom Instruction</u>		<u>Calculator Designation</u>
All decompositions <u>should be shown</u> with the same denominator.		NO – a calculator will not be available for items
Visual fraction models may include a manipulative or drawing where students have to label or shade.		

Expanded Expectations

3.RA.A.5	Determine the unknown number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers.	The expectation of the student is to determine the unknown number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers. <i>For example, find the unknown number in each of these equations:</i> $8 \times ? = 48$; $? \div 3 = 5$; $6 \times 6 = ?$; $? = 5 \times 7$; $? = 24 \div 4$
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G.CO.C.9	Prove theorems about triangles.	The expectation of the student is to prove theorems about triangles. (Theorems should include the following: measures of interior angles of a triangle sum to 180° ; base angles of isosceles triangles are congruent; the segment joining midpoints of two sides of a triangle is parallel to the third side and half the length; the medians of a triangle meet at a point.)
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Testing Blueprints

- EOC Blueprint
- Grade Level blueprints

Assessment Item Types

- Multiple Select (MC, select all that apply)
- Technology Enhanced
- Constructed Response
- Performance Tasks

Practice Forms can be very helpful

- [Practice form paper copy](#)
- [practice form scoring guide](#)

Item Specification Handout Activity

Social Studies, ELA, Math and Science

How can you use these to develop assessments and refine your district curriculum?

- Start with teachers using the blank templates and sketching out what they think the standards mean and what evidence would show mastery
- Compare the teacher-developed templates with the DESE templates
- Remember that the limits are only for state assessments and do not limit individual school districts.
- Then use them to refine or write assessments.
- You can also use them to examine and develop assessments from programs that you may already use in your district.

Additional uses

- Very useful for vertically aligning subjects. Use with vertical alignment teams to help follow progressions
- New expectations at some grade-levels have caused confusion and the documents can help clarify the expectations.
- Increase the rigor of the assessments.
- Calculator expectations.

Programs/Resources and Item Specs

- How do we use Item Specs with district purchased resources or with resources we are examining?
- Do we have to write all assessments from scratch?
- What platforms are out there for developing assessments?
- USA Testprep, Edulastic, Edcite

Reflection Activity

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Questions????

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