



Wisconsin Forward Exam Updates

Overview

The Forward Exam assesses Wisconsin students' knowledge in English language arts and mathematics from third through eighth grades. The exam was updated beginning with the 2023-24 test administration to reflect feedback from educators and [revisions to the Wisconsin Academic Standards for English Language Arts \(ELA\) and Mathematics](#).

For the first time, the Forward Exam includes a distinct reading assessment, and a corresponding student score. This is a measurable step in support of extensive efforts to improve Wisconsin students' educational outcomes and reading comprehension. For more information on Wisconsin's reading initiative, [visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website](#).

What's different?

The ELA section of the Forward Exam now has three test sessions, with all questions aligned to updated academic standards:

- Session 1 - Reading comprehension
 - Session 2 - Language arts/writing, including one short-write task
 - Session 3 - Language arts/writing, including one short-write task
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- The ELA Listening Session was removed to make room for an expanded reading test, and due to its low perceived assessment value among Wisconsin educators. This change also allows for year-over-year comparability.
 - The ELA Text-Dependent Analysis Session was removed and replaced with two short-write tasks. Having more than one writing sample from a student helps measure their written communication in relation to state standard-aligned grade level expectations.
 - The Forward Exam mathematics section now reflects a [shift of focus](#). Test questions more effectively measure the standards that represent the major focus of each grade level.



For more information about required statewide assessments, [visit the DPI's website](#).