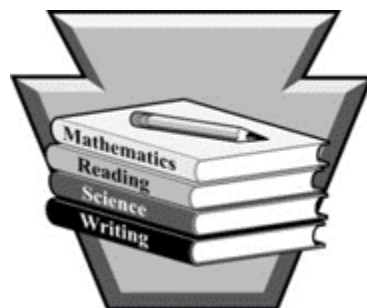




PSSA Science Test Design

Designs for Grades 5 & 8



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2025

PSSA Science Test Design

The PSSA Science test plan shown in the following table is organized by grade and broken down between autoscored and open-ended (OE) items. Core items are also distinguished from items that serve the role of field test (FT). The following tables summarize the Science test design.

Operational Science High-Level Test Plan per Form (no. of items).

Grade	Autoscored		Open Ended (OE)		Total Core Items	Total Core Points
	Core	Embedded FT	Core	Embedded FT		
5	39	7	3	1	39 autoscored 3 open-ended	48
8	39	9	3	1	39 autoscored 3 open-ended	48

Science PSSA Test Content Blueprints

The content blueprints for the Pennsylvania STEELS-based PSSA science assessment are shown in the following tables. The blueprint includes four Reporting Categories:

- Life Sciences and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability
- Physical Sciences
- Earth & Space Sciences
- Technology and Engineering

PSSA Science Blueprint Number of Performance Expectations by Reporting Category for Each Test Administration

Reporting Category	Grade	
	5	8
Life Sciences and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability	19	30
Physical Sciences	18	19
Earth & Space Sciences	14	15
Technology and Engineering	34	38
Total Standards	85	102

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PSSA Science Blueprint: Target Percent of the Core by Reporting Category

Reporting Category	Grade	
	5	8
Life Sciences and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability	20%–30%	20%–30%
Physical Sciences	20%–30%	20%–30%
Earth & Space Sciences	20%–30%	20%–30%
Technology and Engineering	20%–30%	20%–30%
All Areas Total	100%	100%

PSSA Science Blueprint: Target Points by Reporting Category by Grade

Reporting Category	Grade	
	5	8
Life Sciences and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability	10–14	10–14
Physical Sciences	10–14	10–14
Earth & Space Sciences	10–14	10–14
Technology and Engineering	10–14	10–14
All Areas Total	48 pts	48 pts

PSSA Science Blueprint: Target Core Item Counts by Reporting Category

Reporting Category	Grade	
	5	8
Life Sciences and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability	6–14	6–14
Physical Sciences	6–14	6–14
Earth & Space Sciences	6–14	6–14
Technology and Engineering	6–14	6–14
All Areas Total	42 items	42 items

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Science Test Development Design

As shown in the operational layout tables below, the PSSA Science tests will consist of two (2) sections. Autoscored items such as Multiple-Choice (MC) and Technology-Enhanced (TE) items can be used in grades 5 and 8. Scenario sets can also be used in grades 5 and 8. At both grade 5 and grade 8, the PSSA Science core can be described as:

39 core autoscored items	39 total points
3 core 3-pt OE items	9 total points
Total	48 points

Science Operational Section Layout Plan for Grade 5

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of Autoscored 1-pt Items	Number of 3-pt Items	Estimated Section Testing Time
1	Science	23	2	41 minutes
2	Science	23	2	41 minutes

Science Operational Section Layout Plan for Grade 8

Section	Content Emphasis	Number of Autoscored 1-pt Items	Number of 3-pt Items	Estimated Section Testing Time
1	Science	24	2	44 minutes
2	Science	24	2	44 minutes