

California Alternate Assessment

California Assessment of Student
Performance and Progress



Practice Test Scoring Guide



Life Sciences Grade Eight



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Practice Test Scoring Guide

Assessed Standards

The California Alternate Assessment (CAA) for Science measures the Science Core Content Connectors (Science Connectors) and is administered to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades five and eight and once in high school (that is, grade ten, eleven, or twelve). The Science Connectors are derived from the California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS) performance expectations (PEs). They provide alternate standards to guide science instruction and assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The PEs that the assessed Science Connectors are derived from can be found in the CAA for Science blueprint document at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/caascienceblueprint.docx>.

These Science Connectors are further broken down into assessment targets. The assessment targets are comprised of the focal knowledge, skills, and abilities (FKSAs), which describe what students should know and be able to do in science; at the simplest level, the essential understandings (EUs) are the basic scientific concepts that students should understand. This is presented as a continuum in the figure that follows.



Practice Test Scoring Guide (cont.)

This practice test is intended to assess Science Connectors MS-LS3-2, MS-LS1-7, and MS-LS1-2.

MS-LS3-2 Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits

Use a model, through observation, to identify that a variety of inherited traits passed from parents to offspring lead to differences in offspring (e.g., eye color, fur pattern, plant height).

Table 1. MS-LS3-2, FKSA and EU

Assessment Target	Definition	Students Will Be Able To...
FKSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ability to identify that a variety of inherited traits passed from parents to offspring lead to differences in offspring (e.g., eye color, fur pattern, plant height). (FKSA 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">When shown the two parents of a plant or animal, identify the parent that contributed a specific trait to an offspring plant or animalWhen shown the two parents of a plant or animal, identify which parents contributed specific traits to two or more plant or animal offspring
EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify similarities and differences between animal or plant parents and their offspring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify a trait that is similar when comparing a parent and offspring plant or animalIdentify a trait that is different when comparing a parent and offspring plant or animal

Practice Test Scoring Guide (cont.)

MS-LS1-7 From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

Identify the outcome of the process of breaking down food molecules (e.g., sugar) as the release of energy, which can be used to support other processes within the organism.

Table 2. MS-LS1-7, FKSA and EU

Assessment Target	Definition	Students Will Be Able To...
FKSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ability to identify the outcome of the process of breaking down food molecules (e.g., sugar) as the release of energy. (FKSA1)Identify ways in which energy from food can be used to support other processes within the organism. (FKSA2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify examples of life processes that require energy from foodRecognize that energy from food is used for life processes such as circulation and respirationIdentify a simple example of the process by which food is broken down and then energy is distributed throughout the bodyIdentify two life processes that require energy from food
EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize that food taken in by an organism is broken down and used by an organism for growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize an example that shows that humans and animals need food to growRecognize that humans and animals need food for energy

Practice Test Scoring Guide (cont.)

MS-LS1-2 From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

Identify the function of a cell as a whole and the function of a cell wall or cell membrane by using a model of a cell.

Table 3. MS-LS1-2, FKSA and EU

Assessment Target	Definition	Students Will Be Able To...
FKSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ability to identify the function of a cell as a whole by using a model of a cell. (FKSA 1)Ability to identify the function of a cell wall by using a model of a cell. (FKSA 2)Ability to identify the function of a cell membrane by using a model of a cell. (FKSA 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize that cells are the building blocks for all parts of multicellular organismsIdentify the functions of the cell wallIdentify the functions of the cell membraneRecognize that an individual cell in multicellular organisms cannot carry out its functions aloneIdentify that plants and animals are made of cells
EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify a model of a cell.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify a model of a cell

Practice Test Scoring Guide (cont.)

Introduction to Practice Test Scoring Guide

The CAA for Science Practice Test Scoring Guide provides details about the items, assessment targets, correct responses, and related scoring considerations for the CAA for Science practice test items. The items selected for the practice test are designed to reflect the student experience while being administered the CAA for Science. This includes

- a range of student response types, and
- a breadth of difficulty levels across the items, ranging from easier to more difficult items.

It is important to note that not all student response types are fully represented on every practice test, but a distribution can be observed across all the practice tests. The items presented are reflective of refinements and adjustments to language based on pilot test results and expert recommendations from both content and accessibility perspectives.

Scoring guides should be used alongside the online practice tests, which can be accessed at the [Practice and Training Tests web page](#).

The following information is presented in a metadata table for each item in the practice test.

Item: This is the number that corresponds to the test question as it appears in the practice test.

Key: This represents the correct answer(s) to the item and includes the score point value for the item and its parts. Items are worth either one or two points.

Science Connector: This references the alternate achievement standard linked to a CA NGSS performance expectation.

Assessment Target: This references the FKSA or EU that an item is assessing.

All items in a practice test are designed to be administered in conjunction with their corresponding *Directions for Administration (DFA)*. In addition, each practice test contains a nongraded Orienting Activity before each set of items. Please be sure to present the Orienting Activity for each Science Connector to the student before moving on to the items. For more information regarding Orienting Activities, please refer to the [CAA for Science: Practice Test DFA—Life Sciences, Grade Eight](#).



Grade Eight Life Sciences Practice Test Items

Item	Key	Science Connector	Assessment Target
1	A (1 point)	MS-LS3-2	EU: Identify similarities and differences between animal or plant parents and their offspring.
2	B (1 point)	MS-LS3-2	EU: Identify similarities and differences between animal or plant parents and their offspring.
3	C (1 point)	MS-LS3-2	FKSA 1: Ability to identify that a variety of inherited traits passed from parents to offspring lead to differences in offspring (e.g., eye color, fur pattern, plant height).
4	B (1 point)	MS-LS3-2	FKSA 1: Ability to identify that a variety of inherited traits passed from parents to offspring lead to differences in offspring (e.g., eye color, fur pattern, plant height).
5	Part A: C (1 point) Part B: B (1 point)	MS-LS3-2	FKSA 1: Ability to identify that a variety of inherited traits passed from parents to offspring lead to differences in offspring (e.g., eye color, fur pattern, plant height).
6	A (1 point)	MS-LS1-7	EU: Recognize that food taken in by an organism is broken down and used by an organism for growth.
7	B (1 point)	MS-LS1-7	EU: Recognize that food taken in by an organism is broken down and used by an organism for growth.
8	C (1 point)	MS-LS1-7	FKSA 2: Identify ways in which energy from food can be used to support other processes within the organism.
9	A (1 point)	MS-LS1-7	FKSA 1: Ability to identify the outcome of the process of breaking down food molecules (e.g., sugar) as the release of energy.
10	First box: mouth Second box: throat Third box: stomach (2 points) The student matches all three correct responses. (1 point) The student matches one or two of the correct responses, but not all three.	MS-LS1-7	FKSA 1: Ability to identify the outcome of the process of breaking down food molecules (e.g., sugar) as the release of energy.



Item	Key	Science Connector	Assessment Target
11	A (1 point)	MS-LS1-2	EU: Identify a model of a cell.
12	B (1 point)	MS-LS1-2	EU: Identify a model of a cell.
13	C (1 point)	MS-LS1-2	FKSA 3: Ability to identify the function of a cell membrane by using a model of a cell.
14	C (1 point)	MS-LS1-2	FKSA 1: Ability to identify the function of a cell as a whole by using a model of a cell.
15	supports the cell protects the cell (2 points) Both correct responses (1 point) One correct response	MS-LS1-2	FKSA 2: Ability to identify the function of a cell wall by using a model of a cell.