Understand Scoring

For Use with End-of-Course Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing

# What is Understand Scoring?

Online application hosted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and Pearson

Originally created to provide additional information about scoring the short paper component of the Grade 5, Grade 8, and End-of-Course (EOC) Writing Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments

A new “Local HS” tab provides information about administering and scoring End-of-Course Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing

# Accessing Understand Scoring

The link on the VDOE [website](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml) takes a user to the sign in page. Choose “Sign Up” in the upper right corner of the web page to create an account. A keyword is required (see the [*Implementation Support*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/2017/implementation-support-2019.docx)).

Note: Only users with accounts will be able to access Verification Sets in Understand Scoring.

# Using Understand Scoring When Verifying Credits Using Local Performance Assessments

## Procedures for Training Scorers

To score local performance assessments that will be used to verify credits in writing, a scorer must first be trained, and then qualify, with Virginia materials provided in Understand Scoring.

Prospective scorers should also be familiar with the 2017 [English *Standards of Learning*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/2017/stds-all-english-2017.docx), the [*Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/guidelines-eoc-writing-final.docx) to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the performance assessment requirements and suggestions.

Scorers should read and understand all information in each section of the Local HS tab.

## Sections within Understand Scoring

Learn About Scoring: Read this section before viewing the anchor papers or attempting the practice sets.

Critical Information: Provides details related to administering and scoring performance assessments

Focused Holistic Scoring: Begins to differentiate scoring and grading

* + Papers for the local performance assessment are scored, not graded.
	+ Focused holistic scoring is the evaluation of writing proficiency based on specific elements or domains of writing.
		- Each domain is scored holistically, independently of the other, and the score reflects the reader’s overall impression according to the rubric’s features.
		- The scorers weigh the student’s relative strengths or weaknesses and then assign a score point for each domain that most accurately described the attributes of the paper.
		- Example: A paper assigned a score of 3 in composing and written expression might have some characteristics of a 2-level paper and some characteristics of a 4-level paper, but overall, its 3-level characteristics predominate.
	+ Questions Answered About Holistic Scoring
		- Should a writing sample lose a point if there is no counterclaim and it does not have 5 paragraphs? No, the score should reflect the reader’s overall impression, based on the rubric. The rubric mentions including counterclaims *when appropriate*. The rubric does not mention formulaic writing.
		- Should a writing sample gain a point if there are quotation marks, one question mark, and one exclamation point, regardless of appropriate use AND there is a thesis statement at the end of the introductory paragraph? No, the score should reflect the reader’s overall impression, based on the rubric. The rubric does not mention tallying the variety of punctuation to award a higher score, nor does it mention formulaic writing.
		- Rubrics vs. Preferences: An educator’s classroom preferences and rules for writing, if not included in the Virginia writing rubrics, are not features to score for the local HS assessment.
	+ Within each score point, there is a range of papers representing lower/middle/upper ends.
		- **Papers receiving the same score point may look very different from each other.**

Scorers must use rubrics in conjunction with anchor papers to score writing samples appropriately.

* + Rubrics are generic and provide the general description of a score point.
	+ Anchor papers provide examples of student writing that illustrate the rubric descriptions.

Anchor Paper Sets (developed using feedback from Virginia educators serving on rangefinding committees in 2012 and 2019)

* + Prospective scorers should become familiar with and continuously revisit the anchor paper sets.
	+ Annotations describe how a paper meets the expectations in the rubric for a specific score point.

Practice Sets (4 sets of papers; available for independent use by prospective scorers after training)

* + Assign one score for Composing/Written Expression and one score for Usage and Mechanics
	+ Results appear in Scoring Summary after all papers in a practice set have been scored.

Scoring Summary (use these results to adjust scoring practice as necessary)

* + Exact: shows the percentage of scores assigned that were an exact match to the actual scores
	+ Adjacent: shows the percentage of scores assigned that were within one score point of actual scores
		- For a practice set paper with an actual score of 3 in Usage and Mechanics, a low adjacent score would be 2 and a high adjacent score would be 4.
		- When scores are mostly adjacent and not exact, review the practice set annotations to gain a better understanding of why each actual score is assigned before attempting the next set.

Verification Set Scoring (only available to users who are logged in; not available to guest users)

* + Prospective scorers must use these Verification Sets in order to qualify to score writing samples that will be used to determine verified credits. Scorers must qualify annually.
	+ Exact agreement of 70% or more with the actual scores on each domain in ONE verification set is required to qualify. (Adjacent scores do NOT count as exact agreement.)
	+ Scorers having 10% or more non-adjacent scores in more than one domain will not qualify.

Locally Scoring Student Writing Samples

* + Best practice: 2 readers score every paper; score for each domain is sum of scores from each reader.
	+ Establish local protocols for resolving non-adjacent scores. Recommendation: A 3rd qualified reader rescores the domain on which the scores are non-adjacent, with the highest 2 of the 3 scores accepted.
	+ Calculating total score: Comp./Written Exp. score counts 3 times, Usage/Mech. score counts 1 time.
	+ There is no numerical score that correlates to a passing or failing score for an individual writing sample; individual writing samples do not pass or fail.
	+ Best practice: incorporate quality control activities throughout scoring window, train/ qualify scorers near this window, include a way to requalify/ recalibrate scorers immediately before scoring student samples or during an extended scoring window.

## More Uses for Understand Scoring

Helpful to anyone producing, teaching, or scoring high school writing, regardless of how credit is verified

Use examples and annotations to help identify strengths and weaknesses in students’ writing and make a plan for how students may improve their writing.

Share exemplars with students during instruction to increase understanding of how rubrics are applied.

## What has NOT changed? Grade 8

No changes to the Grade 8 Writing SOL test blueprint or test items

Continues to be a required Virginia assessment, and training materials remain available

Continues to be aligned to the 2010 *English SOL*

## What is coming next?

Grade 5: VDOE will host rangefinding in April 2020. Grade 5 materials in Understand Scoring will be updated for local performance assessment and aligned to the 2017 *English SOL.*

Additional information will be provided for using Performance Level Descriptors aligned to 2017 English SOL to assist school divisions in evaluating bodies of evidence that used to determine verified credits.