Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program

TCAP

Grade 6 Science
Alternate Assessment
TCAP-ALT
Item Sampler

Contents

Purpose

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program Alternate Assessment (TCAP-Alt) Item Sampler provides educators, parents, and other stakeholders information about the structure of the grade 6 Science TCAP-Alt items. It highlights the features of the items designed specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The item sampler illustrates how the items assess Alternate Assessment Targets (AATs) which are key ideas of and aligned to the grade-level Tennessee Academic Standards. The AATs 1) are based on grade-level topics and academic content; 2) allow students of varying degrees of understanding to demonstrate what they know and can do at each grade level; and 3) are accessible to a full range of students with varying characteristics. A few items assess Underlying Concepts (UCs), entry-level knowledge and skills that build toward a more complex understanding of the AATs.
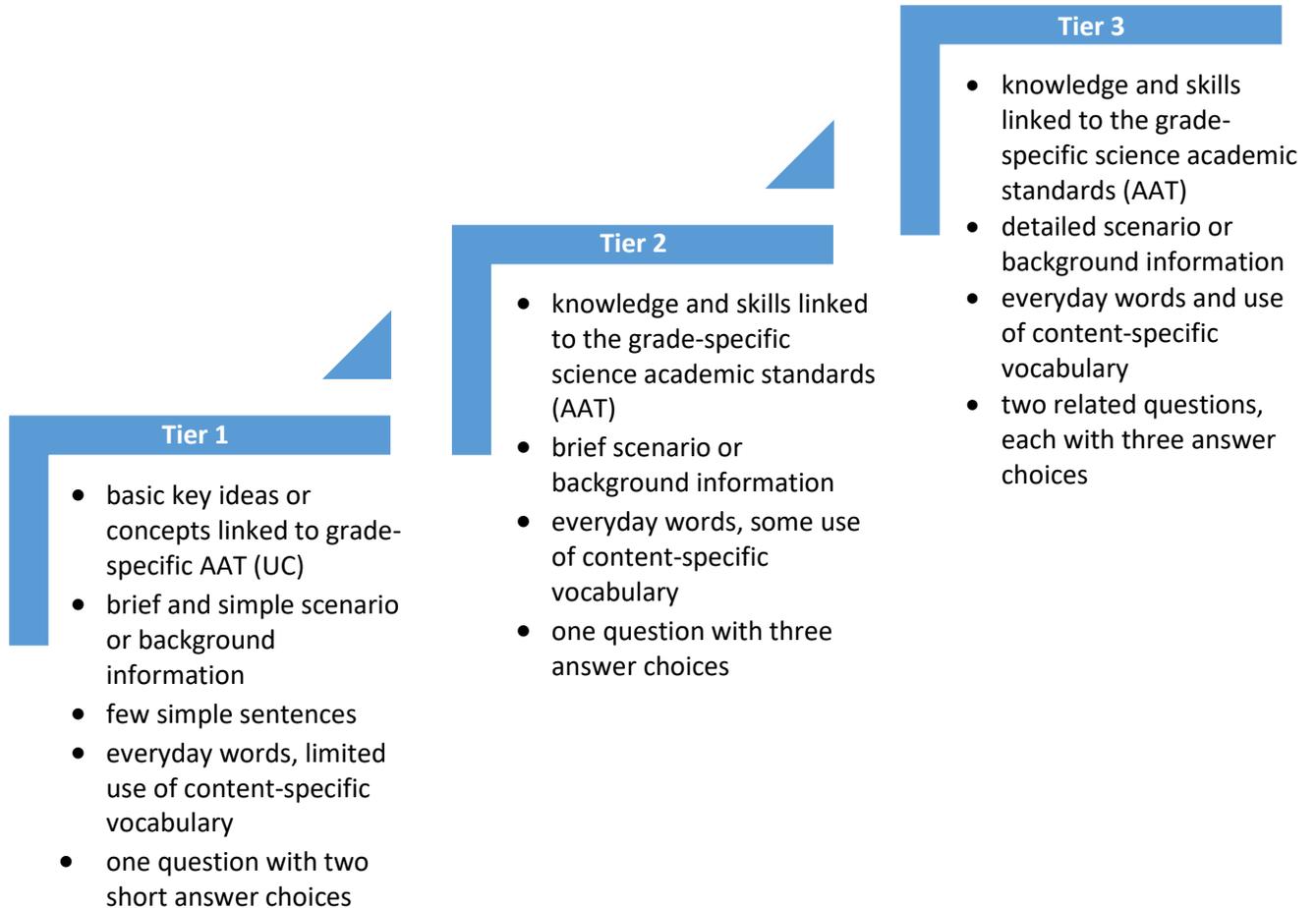
Assessment Design

The TCAP-Alt includes built-in accommodations that allow for students to respond to the assessment as independently as possible. For example, a variety of accommodations are built into the test design in order to accommodate each student's personal mode of communication (e.g., sign language, eye gaze, augmentative communication devices, etc.). The test administrator reads each test item to the student and records the student's answer choice. The student is provided with Answer Choice Cards and can respond in a variety of ways.

Development of the TCAP-Alt Assessment is intended to capture a range of student performance through two primary item design features: 1) levels of content complexity, and 2) degrees and types of scaffolds and supports. Through these aspects, the assessment design provides opportunities for students to show what they know at varying levels of understanding. An item family is developed to address each AAT that give students an opportunity to show what they know and can do, whether they are just beginning instruction on the content or have already made a lot of progress. An item family includes a range of items across three tiers as described in the **Item Family Chart** on page 4.

Students typically exhibit a range of conceptual understandings within and across the key ideas of science. This "pathway" of understanding, achieved during instruction, describes development from a foundational level of knowledge to a more complex conceptual understanding and finally, an ability to transfer academic learning into new situations and new contexts.

Item Family Chart

Tier 1
- basic key ideas or concepts linked to grade-specific AAT (UC)
- brief and simple scenario or background information
- few simple sentences
- everyday words, limited use of content-specific vocabulary
- one question with two short answer choices

Tier 2
- knowledge and skills linked to the grade-specific science academic standards (AAT)
- brief scenario or background information
- everyday words, some use of content-specific vocabulary
- one question with three answer choices

Tier 3
- knowledge and skills linked to the grade-specific science academic standards (AAT)
- detailed scenario or background information
- everyday words and use of content-specific vocabulary
- two related questions, each with three answer choices

Each item provides access for all students by including a:
- statement reminding student what the item is about
- description of graphics such as charts, graphs, models, diagrams, and maps

Sample Grade 6 Science Assessment Items

Category:	Weather and Climate
Standard Text:	Analyze and interpret data from weather conditions, weather maps, satellites, and radar to predict probable local weather patterns and conditions.
AAT/UC:	Use basic weather information to identify current weather conditions.
Correct Answer:	B
Tier:	1

Student Copy*	**Directions for Test Administrator Copy***

Student Copy:

This is about weather.

Data can be used to determine what the weather will be like.

Weather Data

Temperature	Humidity	Sky Observation
85º	30%	Clear

Based on the weather data shown, which word describes the weather?

A.   Cold

B.   warm

Directions for Test Administrator Copy:

This is about weather.

Data can be used to determine what the weather will be like.

Point to and read the data table to the student.

[For all students, read "The data table shows the weather data for a day. The first column (point to the first column) shows the temperature is eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. The second column (point to the second column) shows the humidity is thirty percent. The third column (point to the third column) shows the sky is clear."]

Weather Data

Temperature	Humidity	Sky Observation
85º	30%	Clear

Point to and read each option to the student.

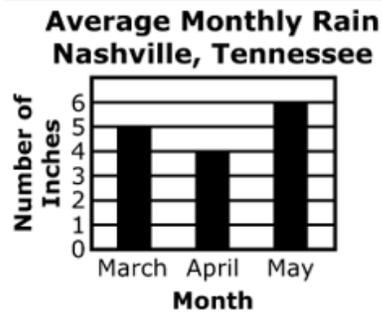Based on the weather data shown, which word describes the weather?

A. cold
B. warm

*Samples are not to scale.

Category:	Weather and Climate
Standard Text:	Analyze and interpret data from weather conditions, weather maps, satellites, and radar to predict probable local weather patterns and conditions.
AAT/UC:	Ability to interpret weather information (e.g., weather map) to make predictions about future conditions (e.g., precipitation, temperature).
Correct Answer:	C Tier: 2

Student Copy*	Directions for Test Administrator Copy*

Student Copy*

This is about weather.

Rain data can be used to describe the weather.

**Average Monthly Rain
Nashville, Tennessee**

Based on the graph, which month usually has the most rain?
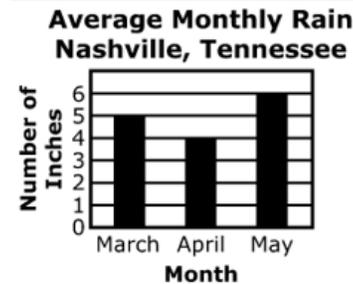
○ A. March

○ B. April

○ C. May

Directions for Test Administrator Copy*

This is about weather.

Rain data can be used to describe the weather.

Point to the graph.
*[For all students, read, "The graph shows the number of inches of rai
that fell in three months in Nashville, Tennessee. March (point to the
bar above March) received 5 inches of rain. April (point to the bar
above April) received 4 inches of rain. May (point to the bar above
May) received 6 inches of rain.]*

**Average Monthly Rain
Nashville, Tennessee**

Point to and read each option to the student.

Based on the graph, which month usually has the most rain?

A. March

B. April

C. May

*Samples are not to scale

Category:	Weather and Climate
Standard Text:	Analyze and interpret data from weather conditions, weather maps, satellites, and radar to predict probable local weather patterns and conditions.
AAT/UC:	Ability to interpret weather information (e.g., weather map) to make predictions about future conditions (e.g., precipitation, temperature).
Correct Answer:	B/C Tier: 3

Student Copy*

This is about weather.

A weather map can help predict what the weather will be like in the future.

Which city is the cold front moving toward first?

- ○ A. Memphis, because the cold front is moving to the west

- ○ B. Nashville, because the cold front is moving to the east

- ○ C. Knoxville, because the cold front is moving to the north

What proof is there that Nashville will have thunderstorms?

- ○ A. The map shows storms behind the cold front line.

- ○ B. The map shows storms to the south of the cold front line.

- ○ C. The map shows storms in front of the cold front line.

*Samples are not to scale.

Directions for Test Administrator Copy*

This is about weather.

A weather map can help predict what the weather will be like in the future.
Point to the weather map.

[For all students, read "The weather map shows the weather in Tennessee for a day. From left to right, the cities of Memphis, Nashville, and Knoxville are shown. Between Memphis and Nashville there is a cold front with triangles point towards the east. To the east of the cold front are thunderstorms."]
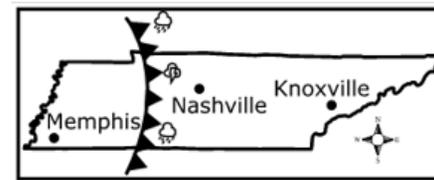
Point to and read each option to the student.

Which city is the cold front moving toward first?

A. Memphis, because the cold front is moving to the west

B. Nashville, because the cold front is moving to the east

C. Knoxville, because the cold front is moving to the north

Point to and read each option to the student.

What proof is there that Nashville will have thunderstorms?

A. The map shows storms behind the cold front line.

B. The map shows storms to the south of the cold front line.

C. The map shows storms in front of the cold front line.