

Practice FCAT Reading

The FCAT reading test is comprised of a number of articles sufficient to yield 50–55 questions for the purpose of assessing student comprehension levels based on the *Sunshine State Standards*. Each article is 300–1700 words with a general average length of 900 words. For the practice tests, we have included articles of more substantial length to better prepare students for the actual test. The breakdown of items on the test is 45–50 multiple-choice questions and 5–7 performance tasks.

Multiple-choice questions require respondents to select the best answer from four possible choices. These questions are machine scored. Performance task questions require respondents to answer questions in their own words. Two types of performance task questions are on the FCAT reading test: Short-Response (SR) and Extended-Response (ER). Each performance task answer is scored separately by a minimum of two professional evaluators. The final raw score is the result of these multiple evaluations. All performance task questions are scored using rubrics. All performance task evaluators must successfully complete mandated training approved by the Department of Education (DOE) and are carefully monitored throughout the entire process to ensure continued accuracy and compliance with all established assessment criteria. Scoring for each type performance task is as follows:

Short-Response (SR) Task	
Complete and Correct Answer	2 Raw Score Points
Partially Correct Answer	1 Raw Score Point
Extended-Response (ER) Task	
Complete and Correct Answer	4 Raw Score Points
Partially Correct Answer	3, 2, or 1 Raw Score Point(s)

Respondents are given 8 lines to complete an SR answer and 14 lines to complete an ER answer. It is important to keep all writing within the framed area provided for the response as all responses are digitally scanned and routed to assessment centers. It is impossible for a student to get credit for any portion of a performance task that is written outside the framed response area.

Some things to remember when preparing to take the actual FCAT reading test:

- As FCAT is a nonpenalty test, try to answer all questions.
- No pattern exists for the correct answers.
- The myth that the longest answer (normally 'D') is the correct answer is absolutely not true.
- The developers and reviewers of the actual FCAT review items to ensure that the answer to any question is not provided in another question.
- The reading test is geared to 10th grade vocabulary. Vocabulary questions may appear on the test where context clues are considered sufficient to give direction to a correct response.
- This is a reading comprehension test. Performance task answers should not include opinions of the respondent, and correct answers are always somewhere in the material presented.
- Be certain to address all parts of a question, particularly performance tasks. Some tasks will ask for more than one answer, and other tasks will ask for one data type but require the respondents to support their answers from more than one source (for example, details and information from both the article and the graphic).
- It is perfectly acceptable to mark in your test booklet. If underlining or making margin notes helps you as you read, feel free to do so on the actual test. You may want to practice this discipline as you take these practice tests. (Do not use highlighters or other marking implements during the practice tests, as this is not allowed on the actual FCAT.)

You should explore the Florida Department of Education website for additional information including practice tests, released items, and a link to FCAT Explorer at www.FLDOE.ORG or <http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat.htm>. Additionally, please read the Message to Educators and Parents in this book.