



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Dictionary Policy

Dictionaries must be available to **all** students taking:

- STAAR grades 3–8 reading tests
- STAAR grades 4 and 7 writing tests, including revising and editing
- STAAR Spanish grades 3–5 reading tests
- STAAR Spanish grade 4 writing test, including revising and editing
- STAAR English I, English II, and English III tests

The following types of dictionaries are allowable:

- standard monolingual dictionaries in English or the language most appropriate for the student
- dictionary/thesaurus combinations
- bilingual dictionaries* (word-to-word translations; no definitions or examples)
- ESL dictionaries* (definition of an English word using simplified English)
- sign language dictionaries
- picture dictionary

Both paper and electronic dictionaries are permitted. However, electronic dictionaries that provide access to the Internet or have photographic capabilities are **NOT** allowed. For electronic dictionaries that are hand-held devices, test administrators must ensure that any features that allow note taking or uploading of files have been cleared of their contents both before and after the test administration.

While students are working through the tests listed above, they must have access to a dictionary. Students should use the same type of dictionary they routinely use during classroom instruction and classroom testing to the extent allowable. The school may provide dictionaries, or students may bring them from home. Dictionaries may be provided in the language that is most appropriate for the student. However, the dictionary must be commercially produced. Teacher-made or student-made dictionaries are not allowed. The minimum schools need is one dictionary for every five students testing, but the state's recommendation is one for every three students or, optimally, one for each student.

Although thesauruses are not required, they are allowable on all the tests listed above, either in combination with a dictionary or as a separate resource. If districts make thesauruses available to students during testing, it is recommended that there be one thesaurus for every five students.

*Bilingual and ESL dictionaries should be provided in accordance with individual student needs based on how much students use them in instruction and classroom testing. While there is no requirement regarding a minimum number of bilingual or ESL dictionaries schools must provide, for ELLs who depend heavily on a dictionary in language arts instruction, it is recommended that there be one dictionary for each student. Additionally, it is important for LPACs to consider the degree to which an ELL student relies on a dictionary during language arts instruction or testing when making exit decisions at the end of the year.