



Foundation Skills Assessment Provincial Marking Monitoring Report

2025-26



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Foundation Skills Assessment Score Monitoring

Large-scale assessments – like British Columbia’s Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) – are continuously evaluated based on evidence-based best practices as recommended by national and international assessment experts and psychometricians (e.g., “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing”, published collaboratively by the American Educational Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association, and National Council of Measurement in Education, 2014)ⁱ. This document, referred to as the “Standards”, provides guidance on all aspects of the assessment process, including development, administration, scoring and reporting. According to *Standard 10.2: Monitoring Accuracy and Reliability of Scoring*, test developers have a responsibility to “monitor and document the accuracy and reliability of scoring, and correct sources of scoring errors” (p. 118). In adherence to this standard, the B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care monitors district and school-based scoring of the written-response sections of the FSA through re-assessment of a sample of student response booklets from each district and a select number of independent schools.

The purpose of this report is to describe the degree of consistency between local- or district-assigned scores to their students’ responses in district/school-based scoring sessions and scores assigned by provincial monitoring session participants. The report also provides general comments regarding student performance based on participants’ observations during the monitoring session.

The scoring of constructed-response questions for the FSA is based on rubrics developed under guidance from *Standard 10.1: Developing Procedures for Human Scoring* (AERA et al., 2014) and adapted from the B.C. Performance Standards. Scoring rubrics and related scoring materials are available at <https://www.gov.bc.ca/foundation-skills-assessment>.

Scorers

Forty-nine scorers from public and independent schools participated in a virtual score monitoring session (see *Appendix 1: Monitoring Session Scorer Demographics*).

Scoring Process

Using the *FSA Scoring Guide*, scorers were familiarized with the scoring rubrics for each component and trained in holistic scoring. The training they received would be similar to training offered at their local scoring sites.

Scorers used professional judgment, guided by training using established scoring materials, to assign each student response an accurate score. Based on advice from assessment experts if 80% of sample scores are within a one-point discrepancy between the monitoring session score and the score from district/school-based scoring sessions, the scoring alignment with the provincial scoring standards specific to each assessment is considered high.



Note: Percentage differences may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Approximately 3,000 student response booklets from grades 4 and 7 were re-assessed during the monitoring session.

Scoring Feedback

A compilation of session participant observations from the session is organized by item. A general summary of observations for literacy and numeracy at each grade is included at the end of each section of the report, respectively.

Scorers also provided general feedback on support materials and the session itself.

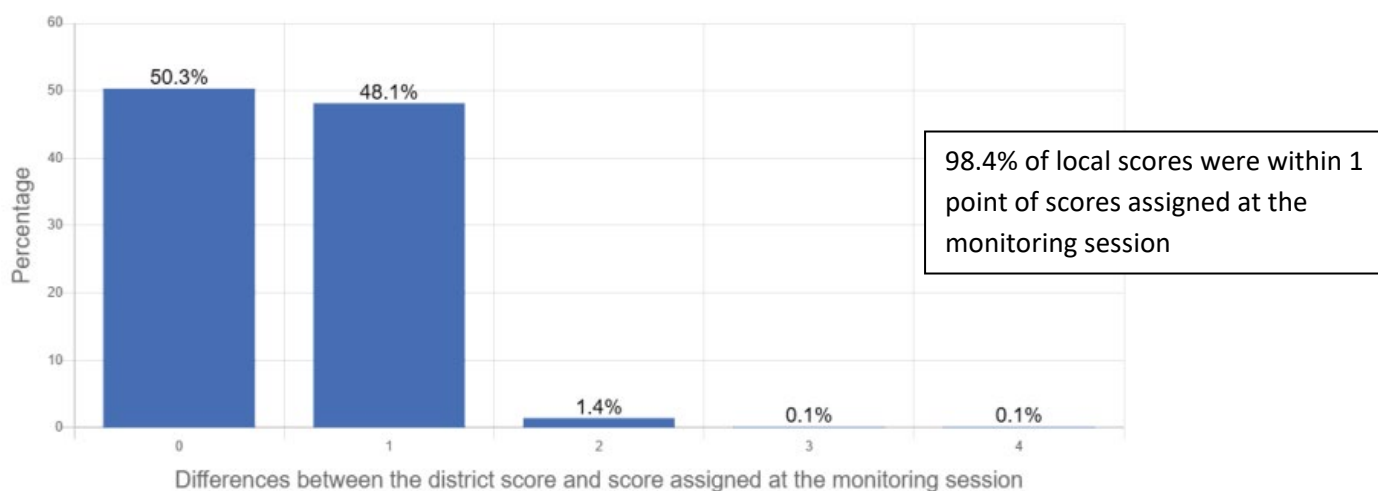
Overall, session feedback was positive – participants agreed that it was a valuable professional development experience and suggested they learned useful information to improve their local scoring activities (refer to Appendix 1).

Grade 4 Numeracy

Written Response Question 1

Theme: Number and Computational Fluency

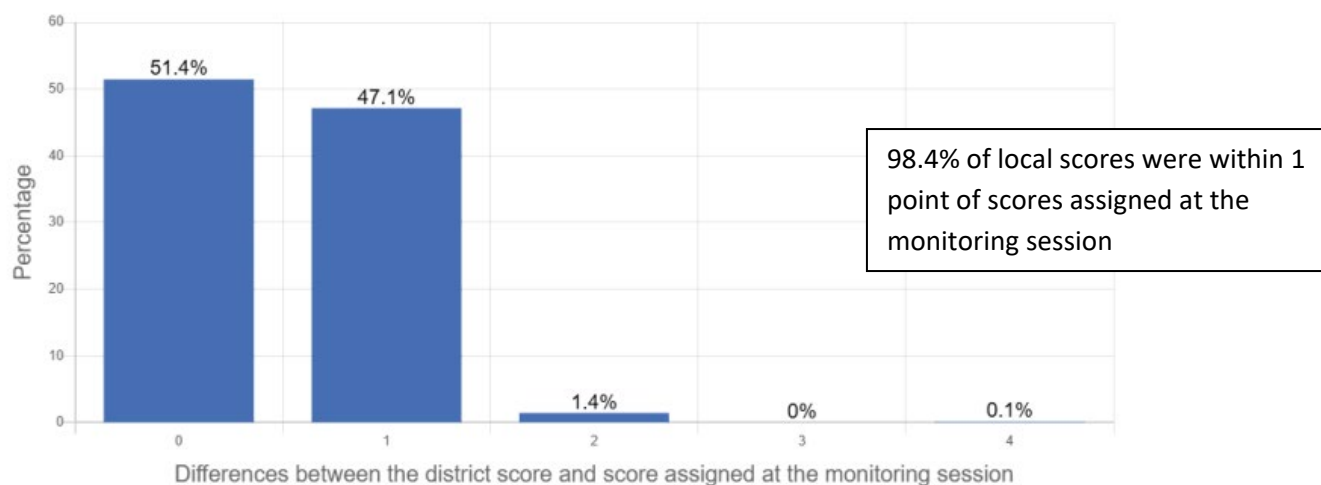
Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Numeracy - Question 1



Written Response Question 2

Theme: Data and Probability / Number and Computational Fluency

Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Numeracy - Question 2

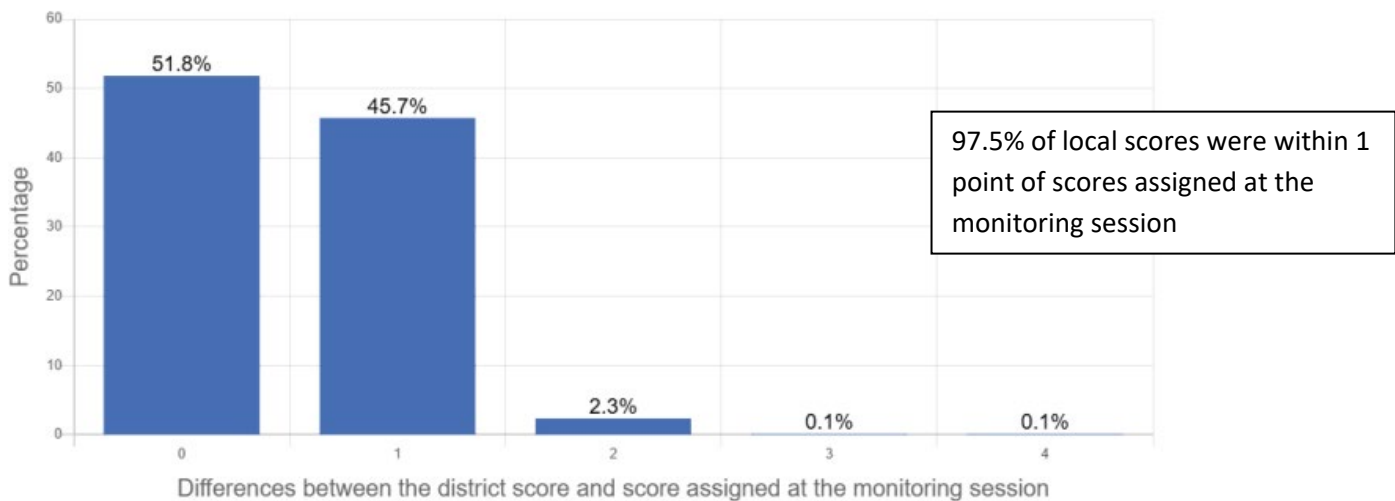


Grade 4 Numeracy (continued)

Written Response Question 3

Theme: Patterning

Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Numeracy - Question 3



Monitoring Comments: Grade 4 Numeracy

General comments regarding student performance on numeracy constructed-response questions, according to the 2025 FSA monitoring session participants:

Student Strengths

- Overall, students did relatively well - understood the questions/answered well and used a variety of strategies.
- Seems students were better able to understand what was being asked. On the whole, basic computation skills appear to be solid.
- The visual nature of the geometry portion led to greater student success.
- Students were often able to use the correct equations. A variety of strategies were used to solve problems. ex. equations, pictures, etc.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Teachers need to remind students that they need to add words and numbers as one of those components were missing for each section
- Using both words and numbers in describing how they got to answers.
- Students need to work on explaining their reasoning and showing all of their work :). Some students were sidetracked in the geometry portion about the design being symmetrical rather than even.
- How to break their responses into component parts to show their thinking clearly.
- How to create a bar graph correctly
- The graphing is always challenging, Students seem to make more errors on the graphing questions (not labeling or mislabelling, etc.)

Implications for Instruction

Scorers suggest teachers could focus on

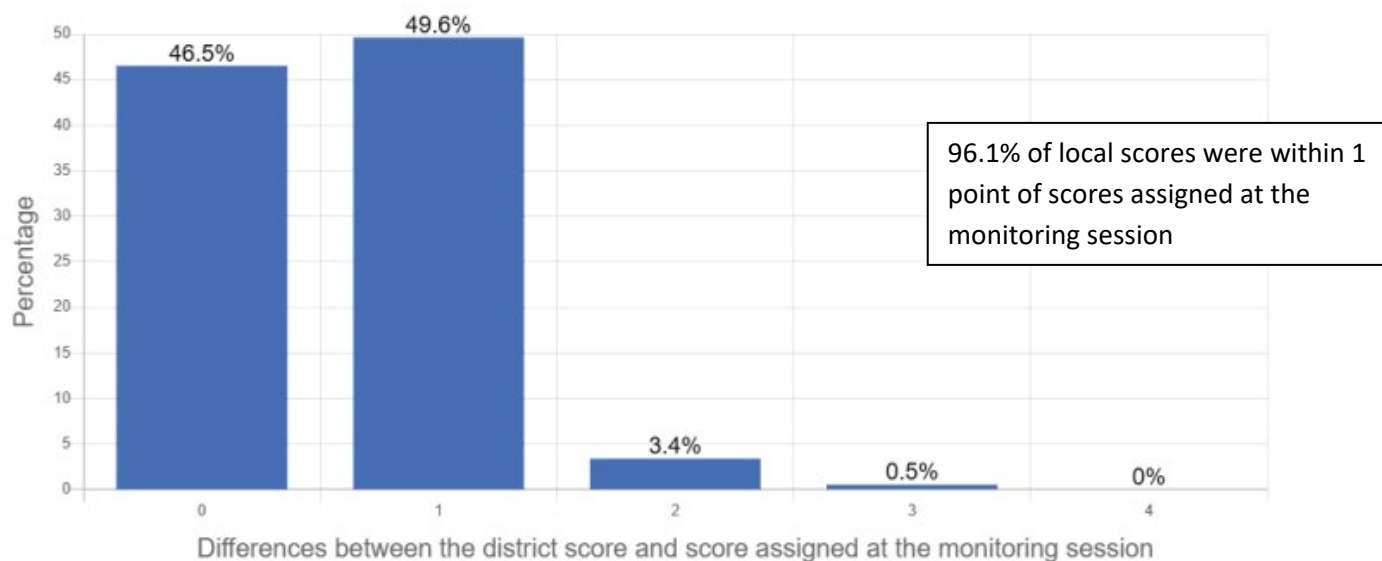
- Reading and completing graphs. Reading and completing all parts of a question.
- Providing visual examples, which could be helpful for some kids - ex: bar graphs
- Process over product. Understanding things conceptually...asking [if] response makes sense.
- Instructing students on how to label numbers to their corresponding meaning. There could be more work on the components of a graph.
- Highlighting key information, showing all of their work, explaining thinking mathematically. More explicit instruction around graphing. Some graphs were beautiful but it appears this continues to be a really tricky area for many kids
- Providing students with more real-world examples to make sense of their learning

Grade 7 Numeracy

Written Response Question 1

Theme: Number and Computational Fluency

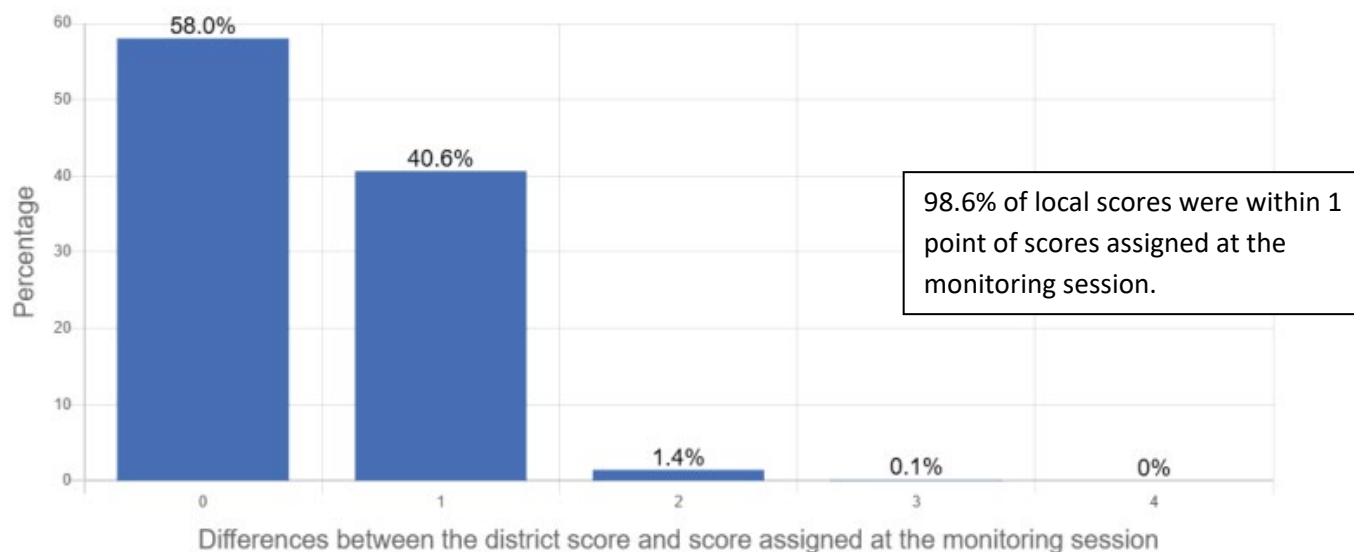
Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Numeracy - Question 1



Written Response Question 2

Theme: Number and Computational Fluency

Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Numeracy - Question 2

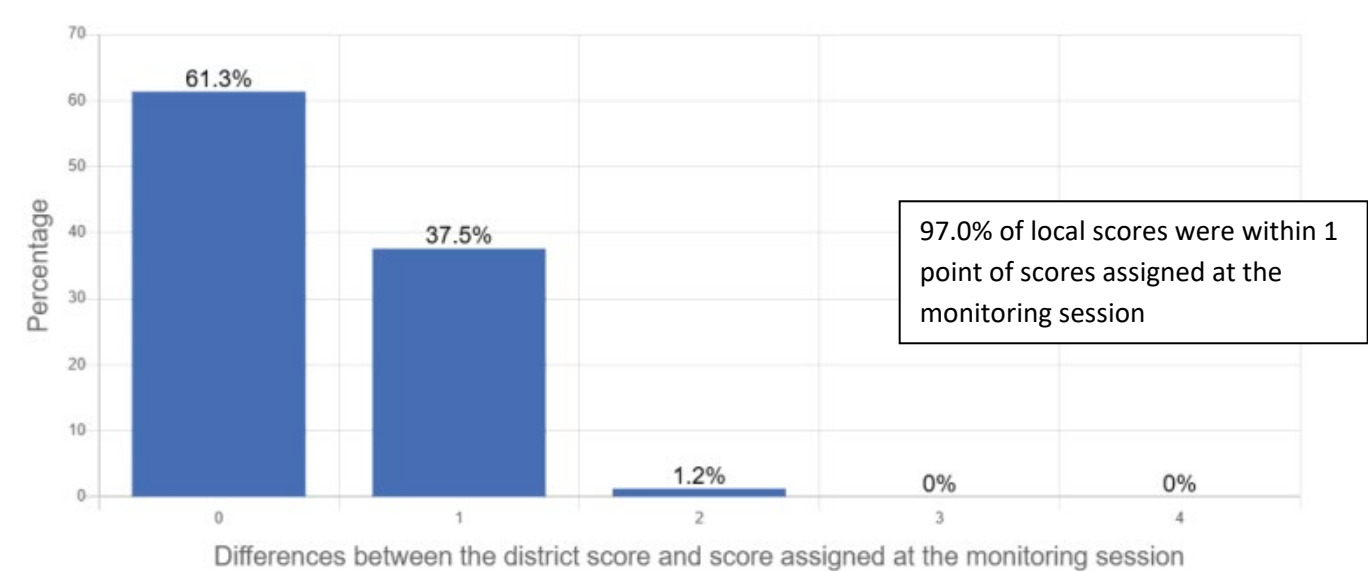


Grade 7 Numeracy (continued)

Written Response Question 3

Theme: Geometry and Measurement / Number and Computational Fluency

Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Numeracy - Question 3



Monitoring Comments: Grade 7 Numeracy

General comments regarding student performance on numeracy written response questions, according to FSA monitoring session participants:

Student Strengths

- Good prior knowledge.
- Students did a good job of showing their work; basic calculations generally accurate; seemed to generally understand the questions
- Students were able to visualize to solve problems.
- Students showed good problem-solving ability using a variety of techniques and were able to solve multi-step equations with ease
- Showing various ways to calculate area. They were creative in their solutions to incorporating brackets and other operations into their questions.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Show thinking clearly.
- Re-read the question to make sure all components are answered correctly.
- Practice organizing thinking so that the response is easy to understand.
- Students need to take a moment to think through the question before trying to solve. Look for details. Think about what the question is asking for. Create a diagram.
- Students' problem solving broke down when they had to do multiple types of computations (multiplying then dividing in one problem).
- Order of operations! Coordinates. Checking their answers / reasoning.
- Many students could not find the area of a triangle; students could slide but not rotate

Implications for Instruction

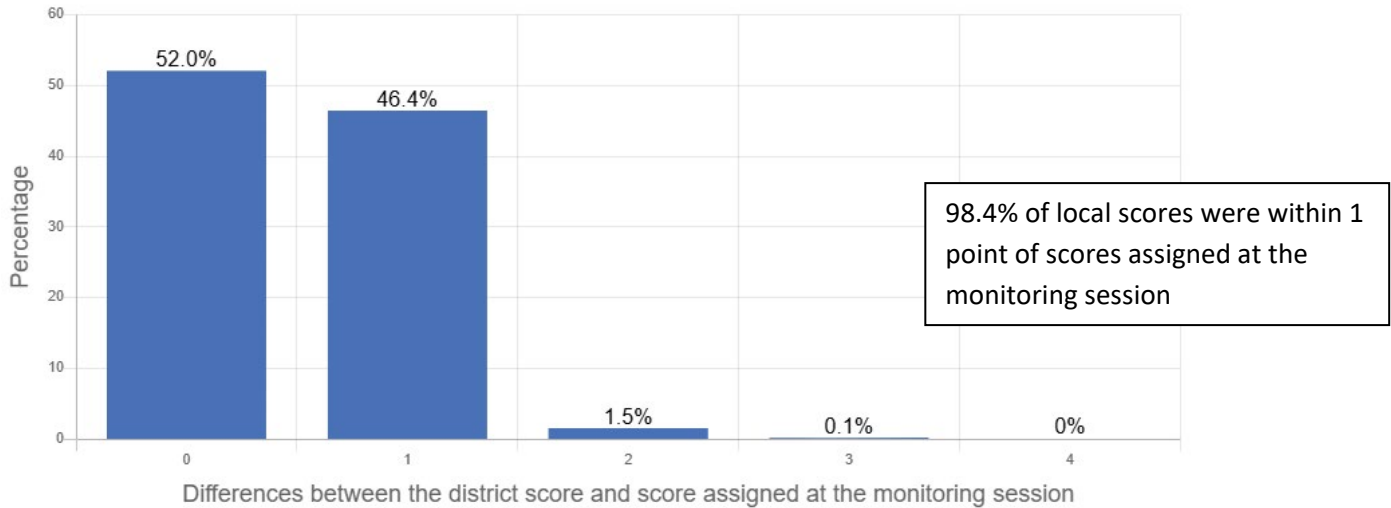
Scorers suggests teachers could focus on

- Showing how they reached their answer.
- Calculating time.
- Reviewing strategies for area and perimeter. Also order of operations. And, when adding brackets [to an expression or equation] makes sense.
- Providing more opportunities for students to practice specific concepts to solidify their understanding of how different numeracy question progress.
- Reading details and showing their work.

Grade 4 Literacy

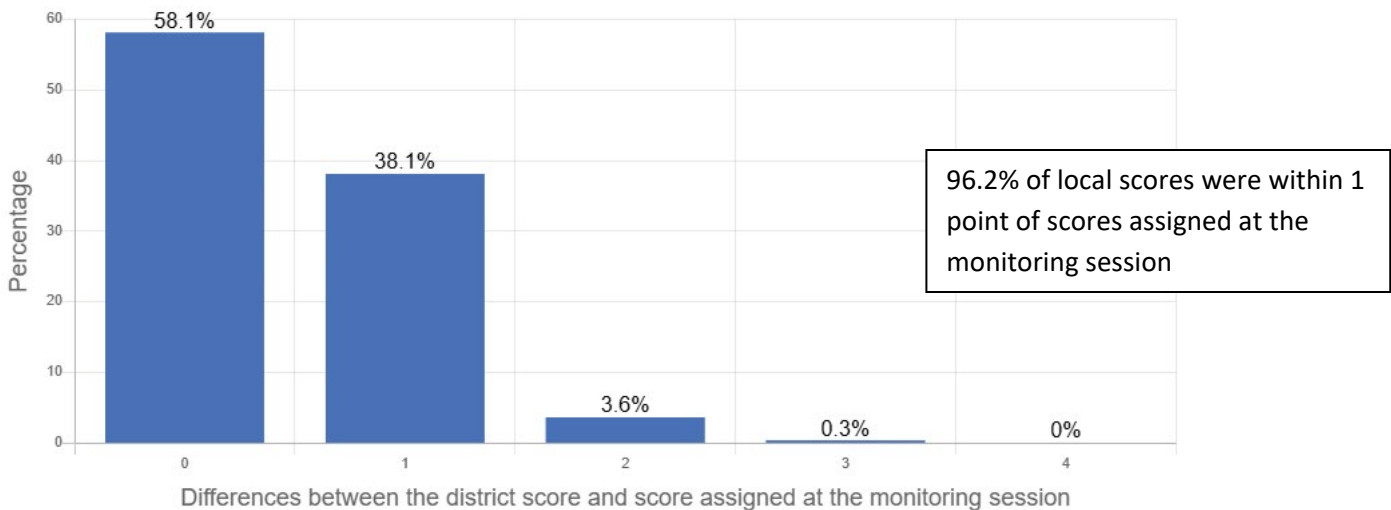
Theme 1 Written Response Question 1

Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 1 (Theme 1)



Theme 1 Written Response Question 2

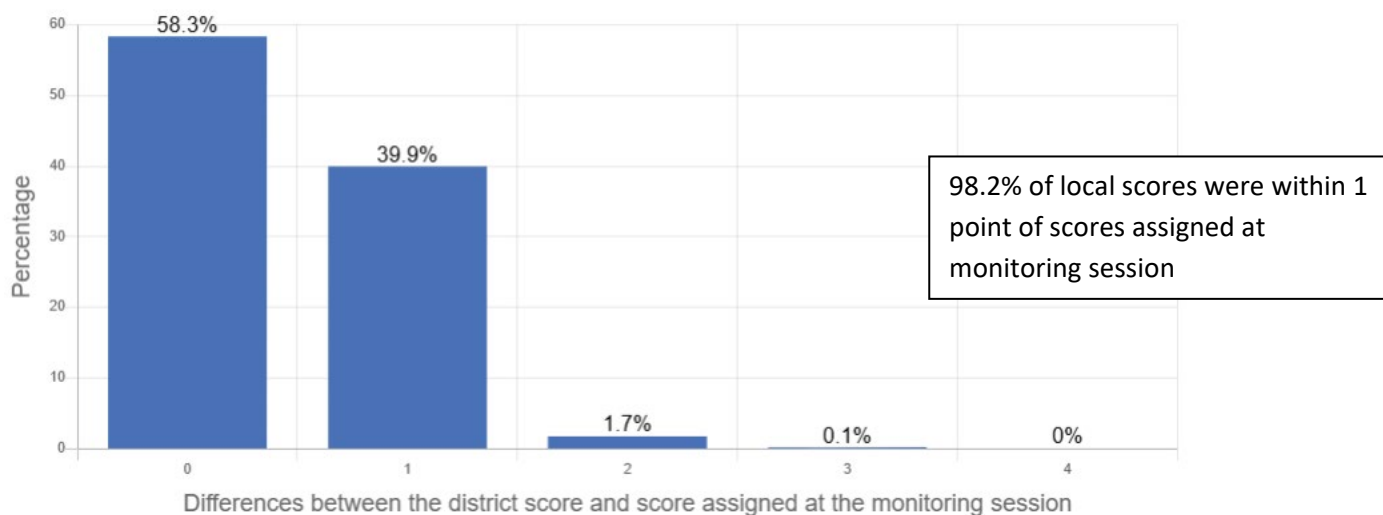
Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 2 (Theme 1)



Grade 4 Literacy (continued)

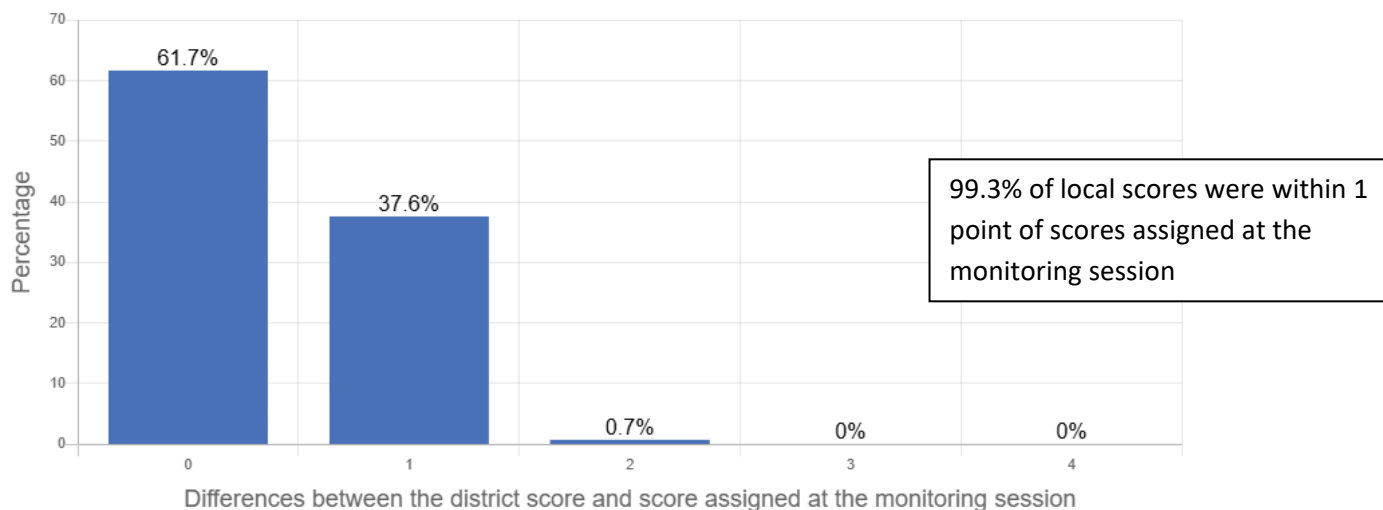
Theme 1 Written Response Question 3

Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 3 (Theme 1)



Theme 2 Written Response Question 1

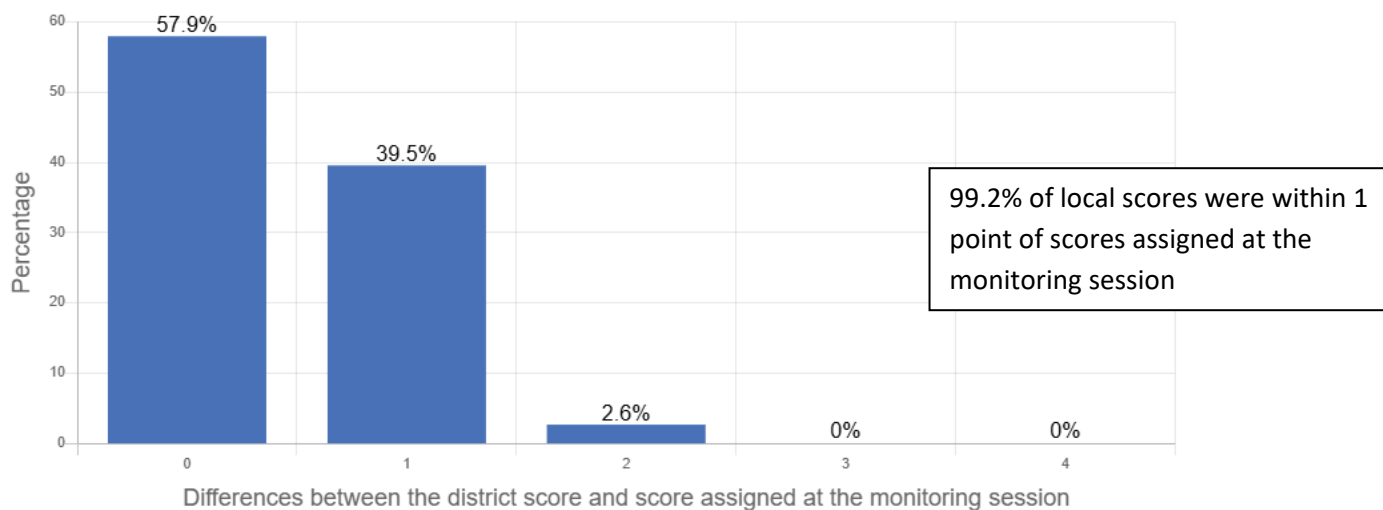
Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 1 (Theme 2)



Grade 4 Literacy (continued)

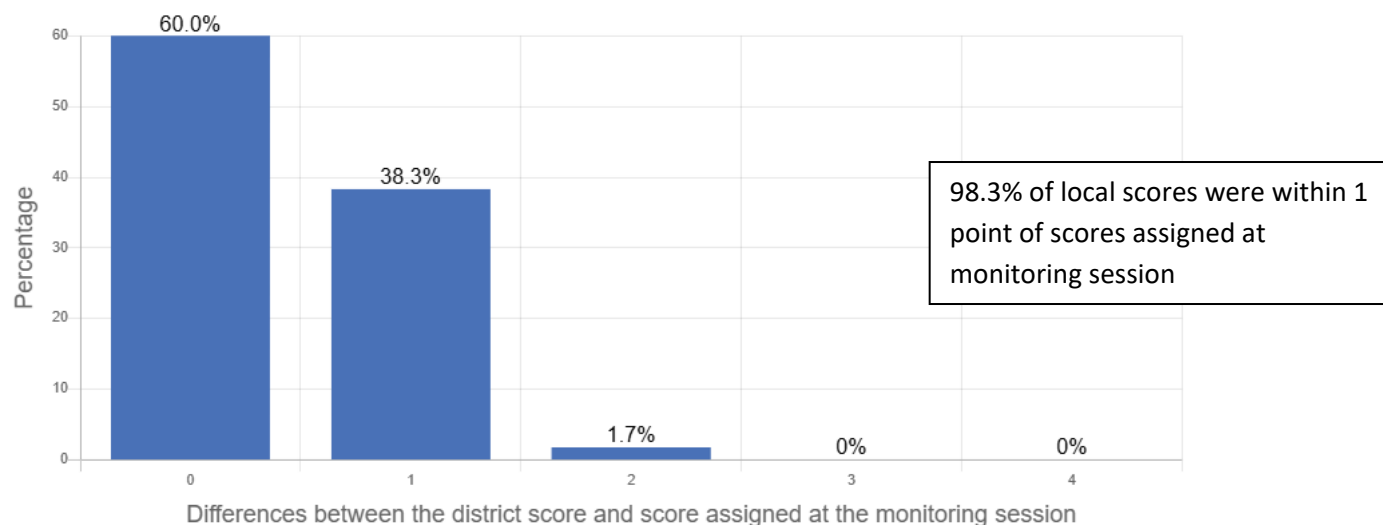
Theme 2 Written Response Question 2

**Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 2
(Theme 2)**



Theme 2 Written Response Question 3

**Score Discrepancies for Grade 4 Literacy - Question 3
(Theme 2)**



Monitoring Comments: Grade 4 Literacy

General comments regarding student performance on literacy written response questions, according to the participants of the July 2025 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students were able to share interesting stories from their life experiences.
- Great ability to make connections and link it to the text.
- Most students showed an ability to infer and or an ability to be able to relate.
- For the most part the questions were well understood, I also saw lots of creativity.
- There were more examples of voice than usual. Organization of ideas has improved.
- Students had voice, humour, thoughtfulness.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Adding more details to their written pieces.
- Using supporting details from texts, especially for the Out on a Limb change of feelings question. Making personal connections to text.
- Voice and more powerful vocabulary
- Basic conventions. Transitions.
- Inferencing, organization, and clarity of message.

Implications for Instruction

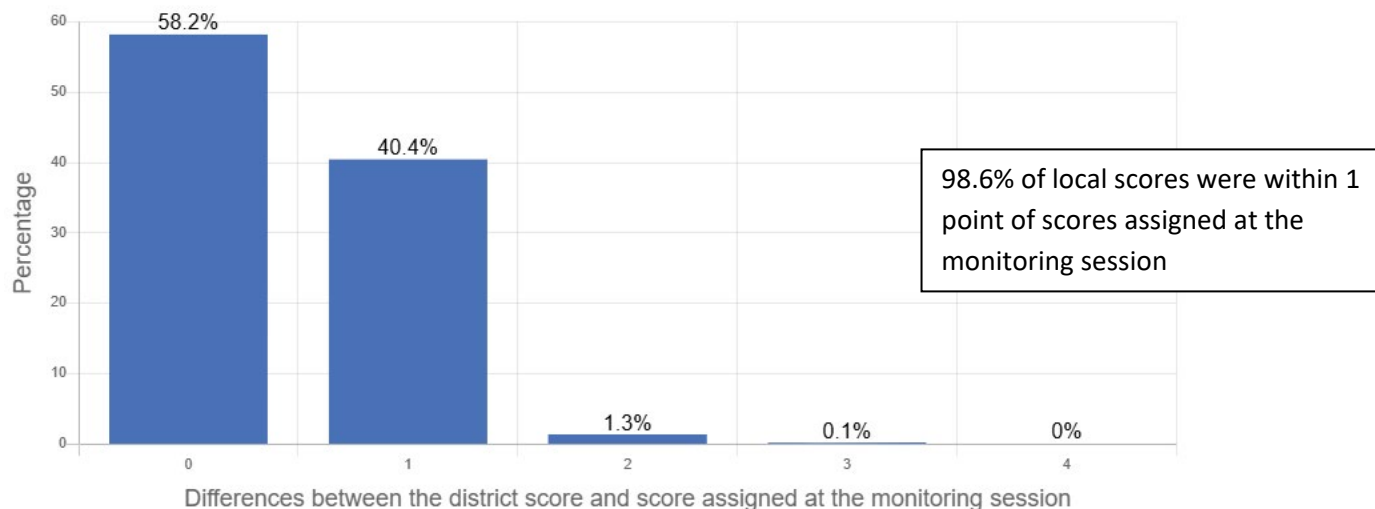
Scorers suggest teachers could focus on

- Direct instruction on summarizing and pulling details from texts Working on adding details that support own insight, not just verbatim responses.
- Sentence structure; use of periods and capital letters. Sequencing of sentences. Using descriptive words and supporting providing supporting details from text.
- Making meaningful connections with support from the text.
- Understanding the question before answering. Writing with their own words as many copied almost word for word in some of the assignments.
- Finding different ways - perhaps visual - to organize thoughts before writing.

Grade 7 Literacy

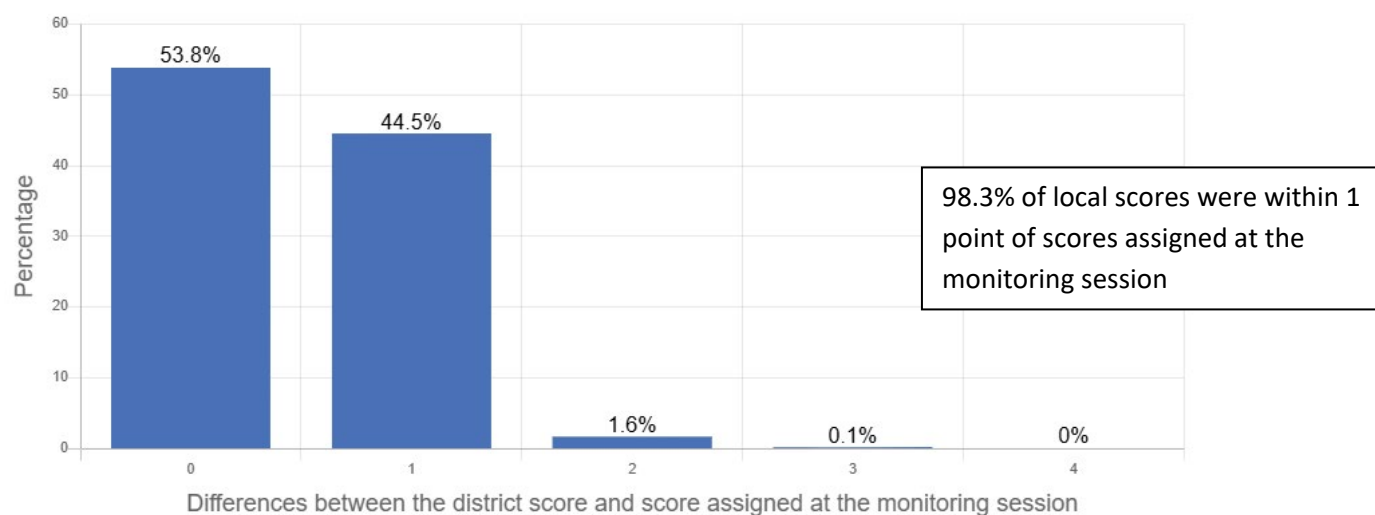
Theme 1 Written Response Question 1

Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 1 (Theme 1)



Theme 1 Written Response Question 2

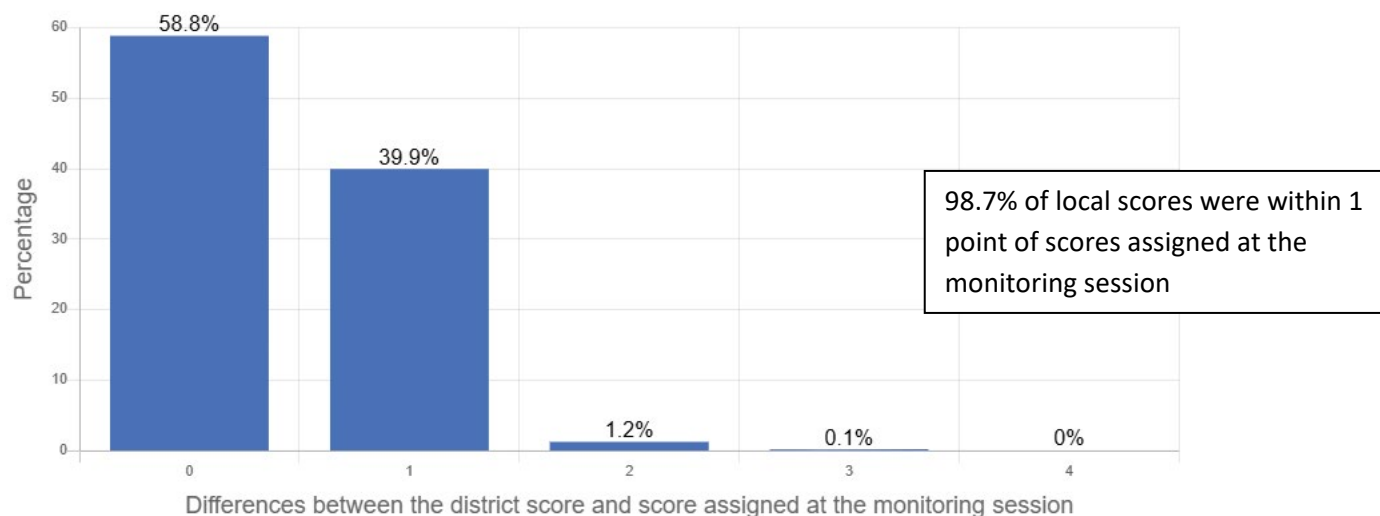
Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 2 (Theme 1)



Grade 7 Literacy (continued)

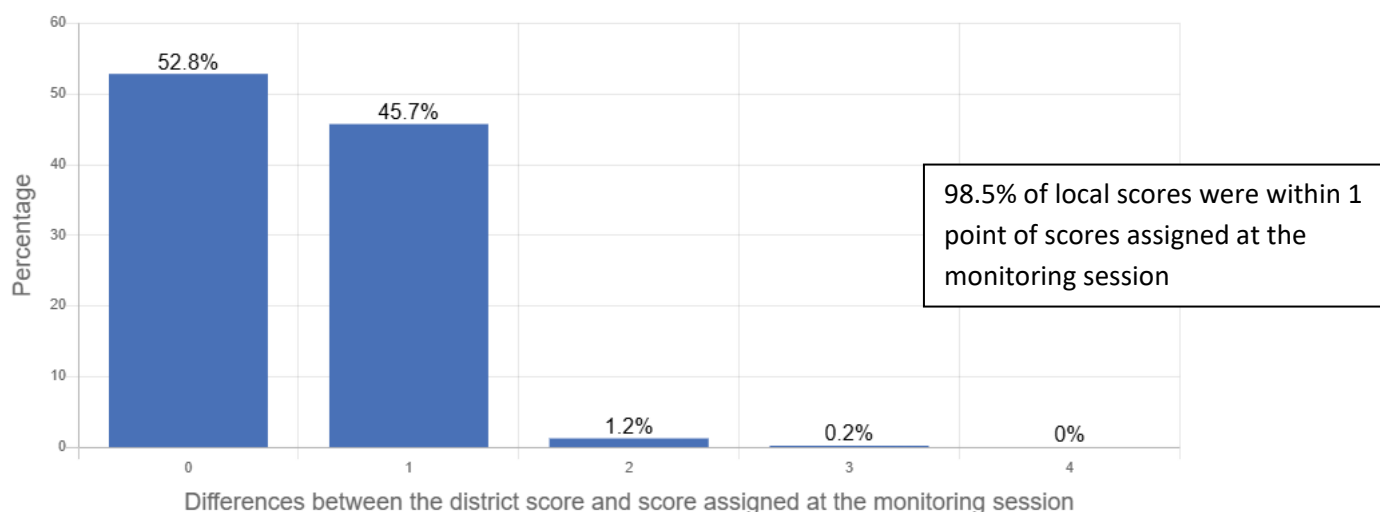
Theme 1 Written Response Question 3

Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 3 (Theme 1)



Theme 2 Written Response Question 1

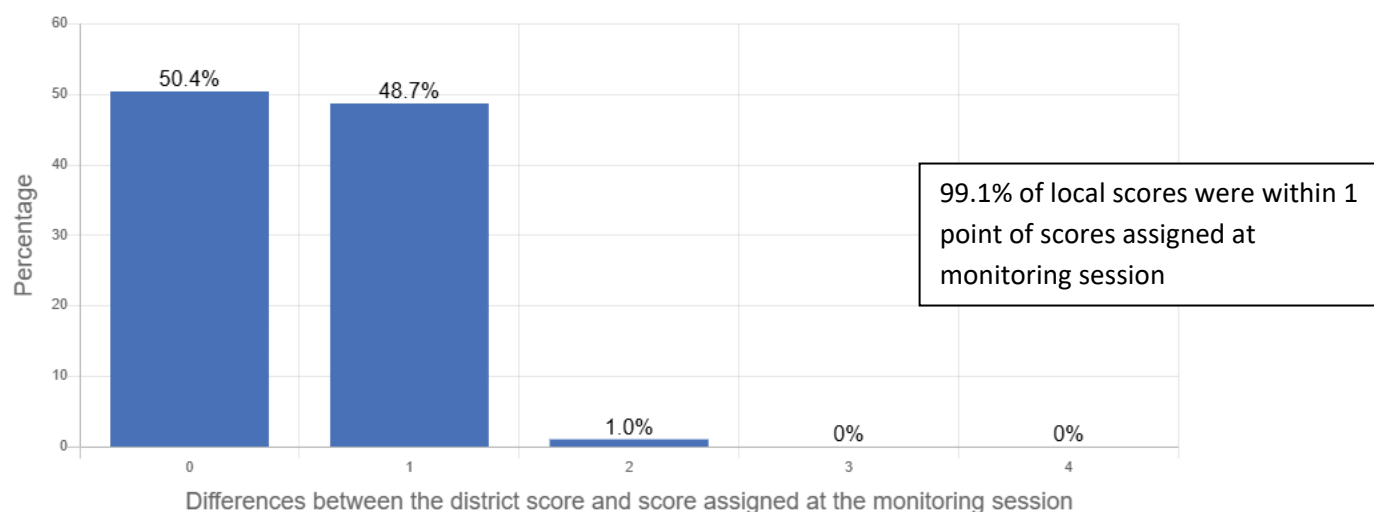
Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 1 (Theme 2)



Grade 7 Literacy (continued)

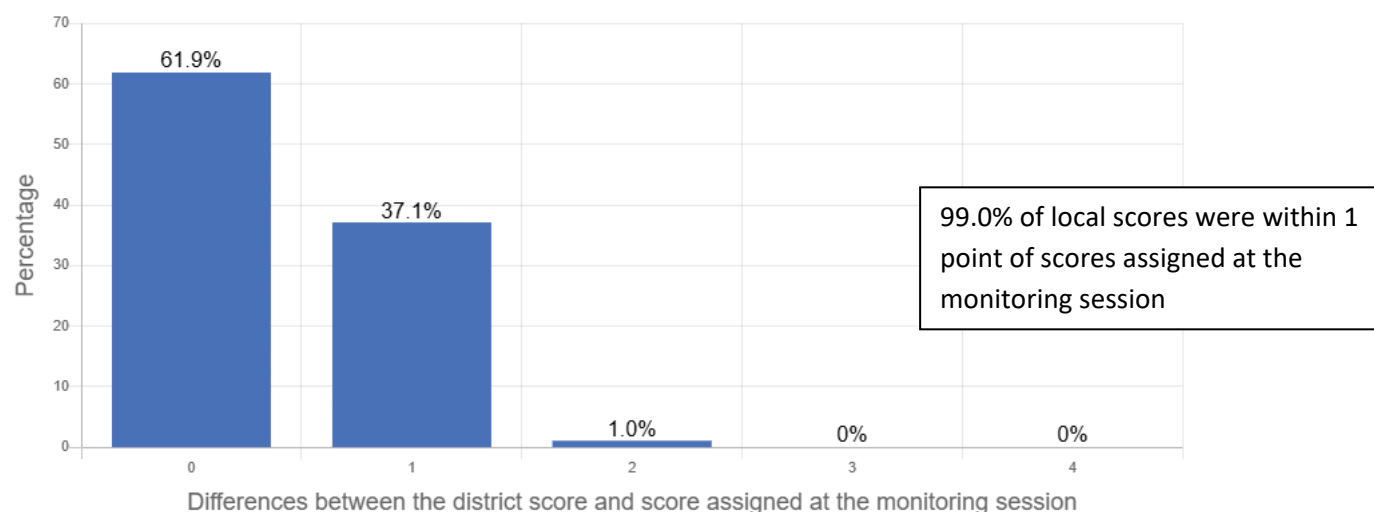
Theme 2 Written Response Question 2

**Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 2
(Theme 2)**



Theme 2 Written Response Question 3

**Score Discrepancies for Grade 7 Literacy - Question 3
(Theme 2)**



Monitoring Comments: Grade 7 Literacy

General comments regarding student performance on literacy constructed response questions, according to the participants of the July 2025 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Understood the questions well. Able to refer to details within texts to support their writing.
- Students showed a varied strength in responses. Length was a contributing factor.
- Good understanding of text, ability to make good inferences and connections.
- Students willing to use inclusive language and reference their understanding of social justice issues connected to the prompts and texts. Students willing to take risks with their language, despite spelling and grammatical errors.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Syntax. Structuring/grouping ideas within their writing. Penmanship.
- Concluding sentences and using more varied vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Developing ideas and using evidence explicitly from the text.
- Students need to take time to read and answer the questions. Not enough supporting details in most responses. Students need to work on sentence structure as well.
- Developing their ideas in thoughtful ways. Basic mechanics often interfered with the reader understanding what they were trying to say. Most had no evidence of editing or proofreading.

Implications for Instruction

Scorers suggest teachers could focus on

- Encouraging students to refer directly to the text; add supporting detail(s) to their responses.
- Determining main ideas and details, cause and effect, character development. Making inferences. Organizing writing into beginning, body, conclusion. Thoroughly rereading and considering work.
- Paragraph development. Few students used transition words as well.
- Syntax.
- Editing and revising answers, teaching students how to properly quote text, transition words, fragments/run-on sentences, appropriate voice and word choice.

Summary of Scoring Reliability

Maintaining FSA scoring standards helps ensure provincewide consistency when a student's response is assessed. The purpose of the FSA score monitoring session was to gather evidence from schools across the province for reliability, validity, and fairness of the FSA scoring process in accordance to the *Standards*¹ at a provincial level. Overall results show a high level of agreement as 96.2 to 99.3% of scores assigned at the monitoring session were within 1 point of local or district scores. No significant difference in scoring consistency was found between grades.

These results allow the ministry to assess the reliability of scores assigned at district levels, provide useful information about the FSA scoring process in terms of how to effectively use the assessment rubric and knowing what to look for when scoring student responses, etc.

All public school districts receive a report from an analysis of sample responses from their district, offering feedback on their local scoring activities.

An overall independent school-level summary report is also provided to the Executive Director of Independent Schools. It is expected that such reports will highlight the importance of ensuring high scoring standards are followed so that FSA scoring is reliable, valid, and fair.

Considerations for Scoring

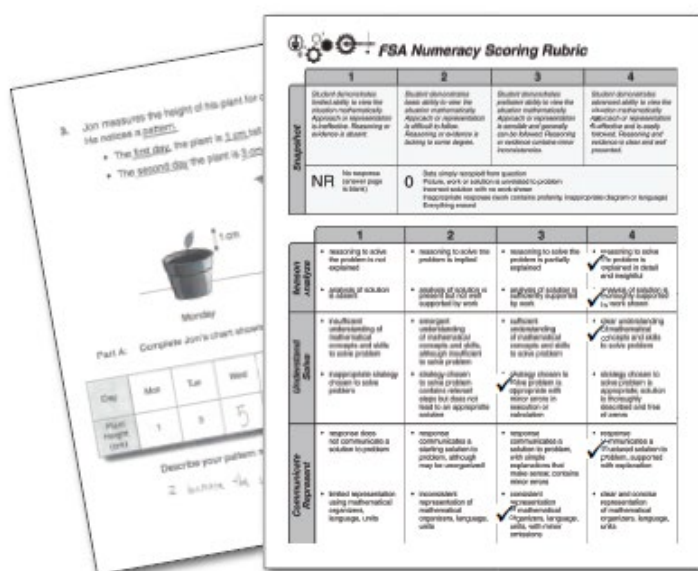
Score holistically and for overall fit. Holistic scoring gives an overall score for the student response. The focus is on what the student *can* do, and the strengths demonstrated in the student's work. No one aspect of the student's work carries more importance or weight than another when scoring holistically.

Give the student response a complete and careful readthrough for a general impression. Using both professional experience and rubric descriptors, assign each response a score. Be aware of personal biases when scoring.

A student response may be represented by descriptors at different levels in the rubric. The final score should reflect where most of the student's response lies.

Based on the balance of strengths and weaknesses according to the rubric, arrive at an overall score for the response.

Refer to the rubrics and training exemplar papers to stay focused. Scoring rubrics form the basis for assessment; refer to them often, especially if unsure what score to give the student's work. Scorers should review the rubrics at the beginning of each scoring session, and continue to refer to them during scoring, adding notes and highlighting aspects of importance. Exemplar papers, with provided scores and rationales, establish a standard against which all student responses can be assessed.



*The student's work received the greatest number of checkmarks for Score 4 descriptors, therefore, the **overall fit** would be a score of 4 (even though if, for example, the student made a calculation error).*

Some noteworthy participant comments about what they found valuable

- *I won't lie...the money is great. I also always appreciate knowing how students across the province write and read and do numeracy. This helps me calibrate as a classroom teacher of grade four students.*
- *A greater understanding on consistency of scoring. Helpful to help our districts with marking process.*
- *It was a great experience, thank you.*
- *Being able to chat through rationales from the Ministry's perspective and discussing this with fellow markers. Reading samples from across the province is always enjoyable too. Learned a few new tips for taking back to marking sessions in our districts.*
- *Grew in my FSA scoring confidence. Enjoyed hearing others opinions. I will take back general student areas for growth and focus on those areas in my grade 4 classroom*
- *Helpful to see how others score and rational behind it.*
- *The leaders!*
- *Sharing the ideas helps a lot in understanding the problems and personal growth.*
- *Seeing patterns in st learning from across the province.*
- *The scoring platform is very intuitive and easy to navigate.*
- *Was very efficient except when those who scanned documents were not careful.*
- *Excellent! Expectation and instructions were very clear.*
- *I found this extremely organized and everyone very helpful.*

Appendix 1: Scorer demographics

Who were the participants?

- 45.8% classroom educators
- 54.2% administrators

Where did they teach?

- 87.5% taught at English language schools
- 4.2% taught at French immersion schools
- 6.3% taught in English and French immersion
- 2.1% taught at other schools (e.g., multilingual school, postsecondary)

Experience with the FSA:

- 31.3% had participated in previous FSA score monitoring sessions
- 95.8% had participated in the FSA school or district-level scoring

Summary of responses to Likert scale statements (sample)

- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the training was an opportunity to develop a common understanding of FSA scoring.
- 93.8% agreed or strongly agreed that the exemplars during training were useful in explaining and supporting the scoring process.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the leaders were effective in guiding and coordinating throughout the session.
- 93.8% agreed or strongly agreed that the scores and rationales in the exemplars were consistent with my own

ⁱ American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). *Standards for educational and psychological testing*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.