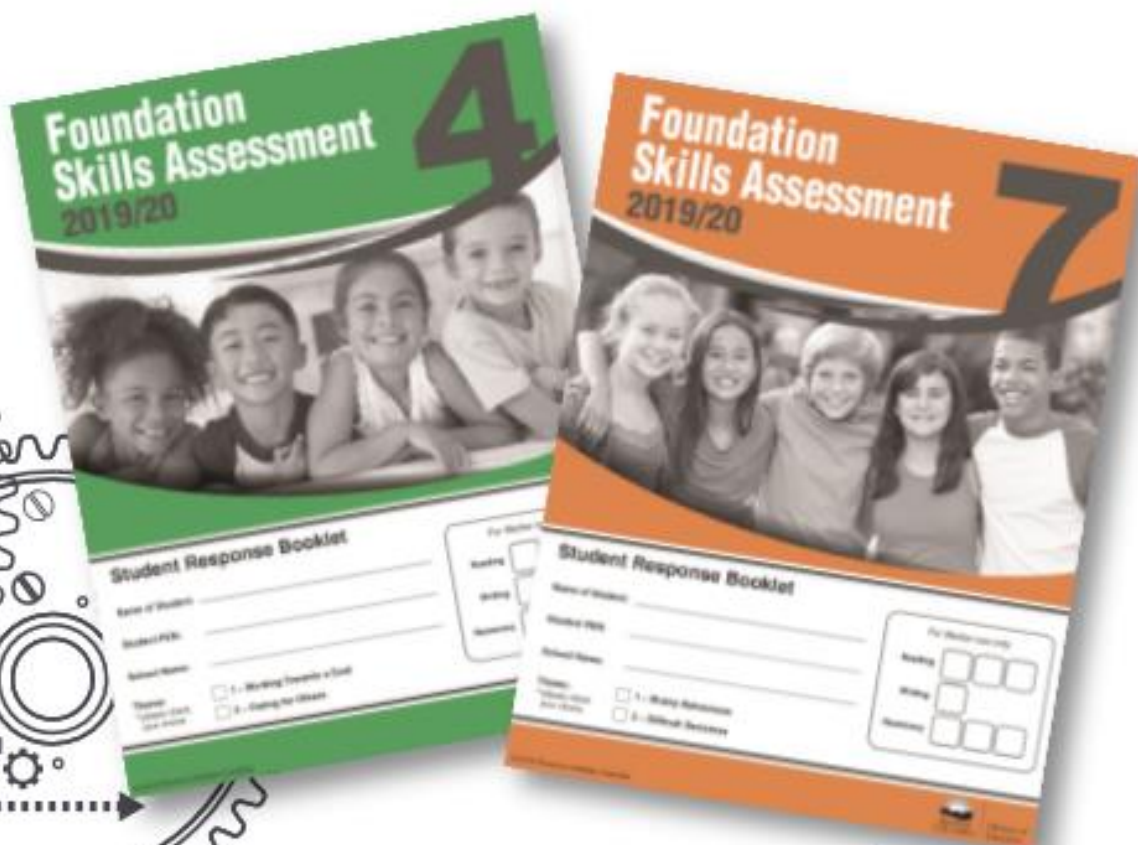




Foundation Skills Assessment Provincial Marking Monitoring Report

2020



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of
Education

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Foundation Skills Assessment: Marking Monitoring

Large scale assessments in British Columbia are carefully developed and continuously evaluated based on evidence-based best practices as recommended by national and international assessment experts in the “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing” (published collaboratively by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council of Measurement in Education (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014)ⁱ. This document, referred to as the “Standards”, provides guidance on all aspects of the assessment process from 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” (AERA et al., 2014; p. 118). In adherence to this standard, the B.C. Ministry of Education monitors district and school-based scoring of the written-response sections of the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) by re-scoring a sample of student response booklets from each district and a select number of independent schools.

This report describes the degree of consistency between the score local markers assigned to their students' responses in district/school-based scoring sessions and scores assigned by the markers participating in the provincial monitoring session. The report also provides general comments regarding student performance based on the participants' observations during the monitoring session.

The scoring of the written-response questions for the FSA is based on scoring rubrics which were developed under guidance from *Standard 10.1: Developing Procedures for Human Scoring* (AERA et al., 2014), and adapted from the BC Performance Standards. Scoring rubrics and related scoring materials are available at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/training.htm.

Scorers

64 scorers from public and independent schools participated in a virtual marking monitoring session. (Appendix 1: Monitoring Session Scorer Demographics)

Scoring Process

Health and safety of students, staff, and their families is a top priority for government. For this reason, the 2020 FSA Marking Monitoring Session was held virtually.

Using the FSA Scoring Guide, scorers were familiarized with the FSA Scoring Rubrics and trained in holistic marking, using the ‘best line of fit’. The training they received is similar to the training markers should receive at their local marking sites.

Scorers used professional judgment, guided by the scoring materials, to give each student response a fair and reliable reading and score. Differences of one scale point between the score assigned at the monitoring session and the score assigned at the district/school-based scoring session are considered to be reasonable. An 80% or higher correlation (scores are within one scale point) between locally assigned scores and the scores assigned at the provincial monitoring session indicates that local scores are highly aligned with the provincial scoring standards specific to each assessment.



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

Over 3,400 student response booklets from grades 4 and 7 were remarked during the monitoring session.

Scoring Feedback

During the scoring session, scorers' observations were compiled, based on student responses for each of the FSA items. A summary of observations for Reading, Writing, and Numeracy can be found at the end of each section of the report.

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

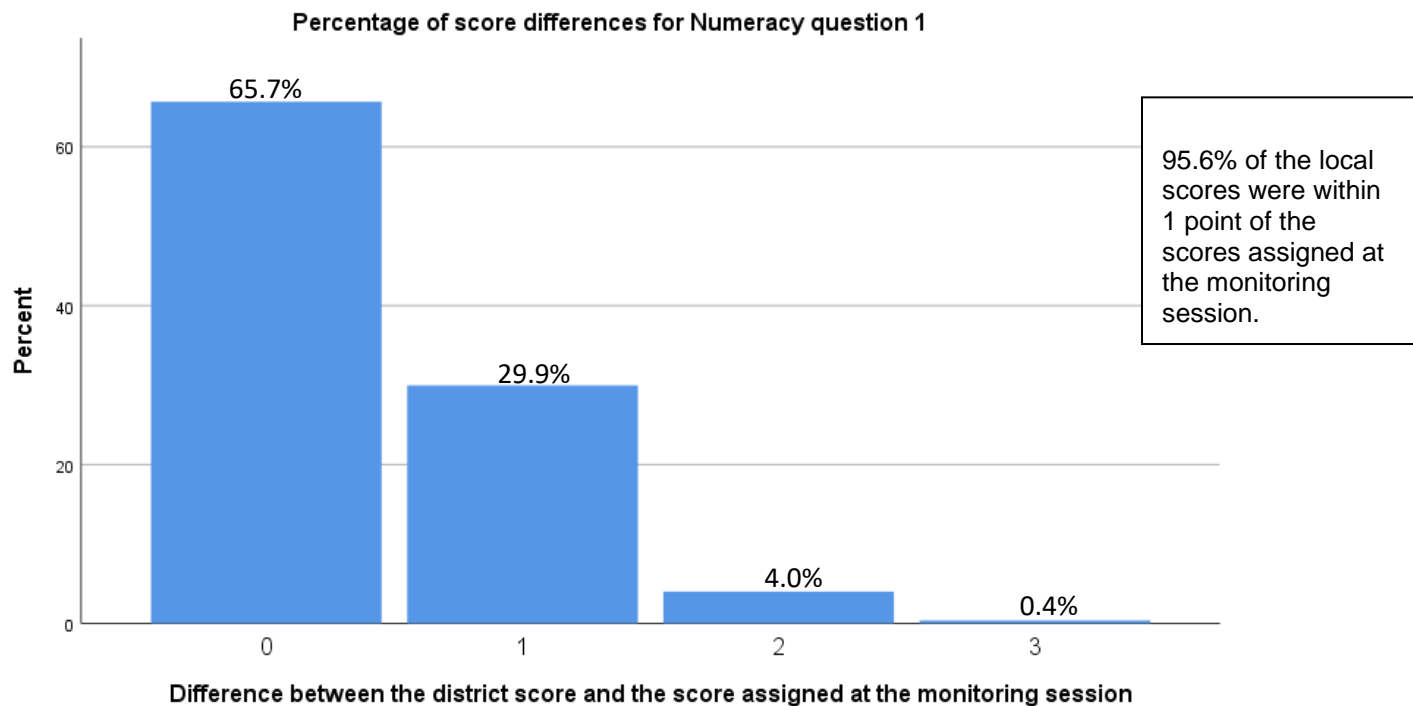
Overall, the feedback was extremely positive – all participants enjoyed the session, agreed that it was a valuable professional development experience, and suggested they learned useful information to improve their local scoring activities.

Information is summarized in Appendix 1.

Grade 4 Numeracy

Written-Response Question 1

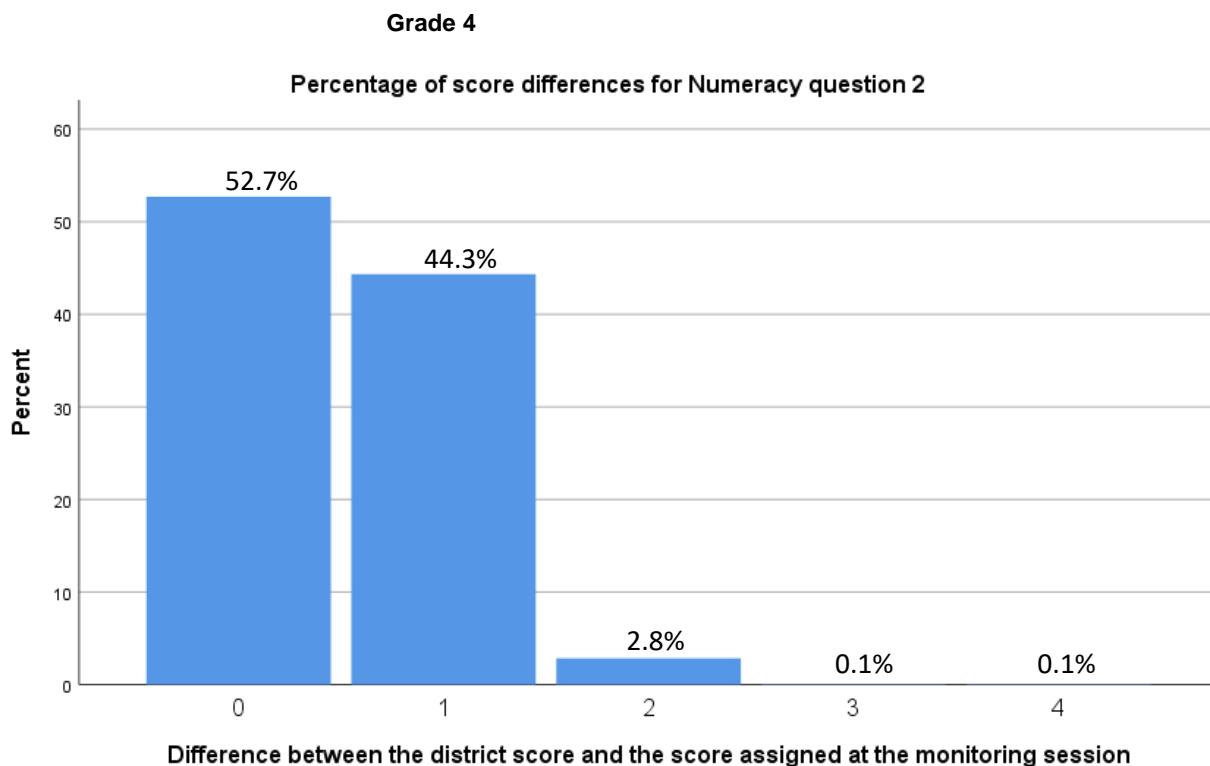
Curriculum Theme – Number and Computational Fluency



Grade 4 Numeracy (continued)

Written-Response Question 2

Curriculum Theme – Number and Computational Fluency, Patterns

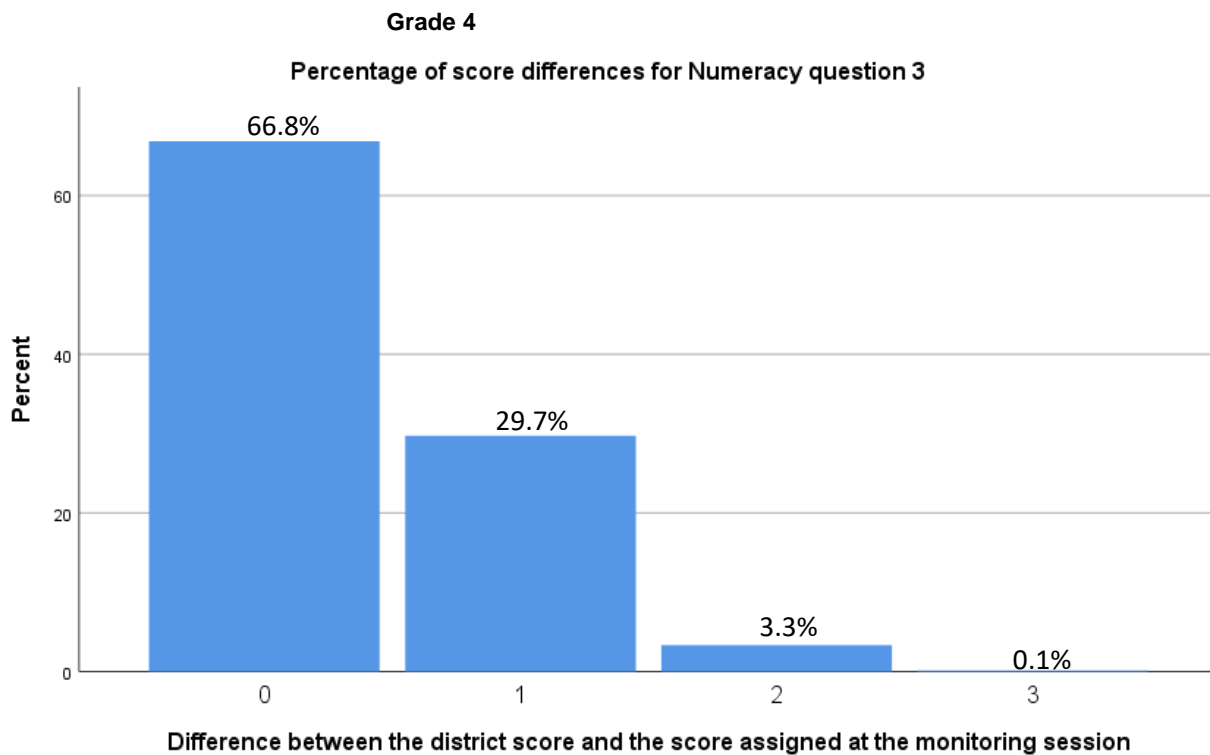


97.0% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 4 Numeracy (continued)

Written-Response Question 3

Curriculum Theme – Number and Computational Fluency



96.5% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 4 Numeracy

General comments regarding student performance on numeracy written response questions, according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students demonstrated strong problem solving skills.
- Students used multiple strategies to solve the problem.
- Students showed their thinking and understanding in creative ways.
- Students showed a good understanding of coins and their values and numerical operations.
- Students showed a strong understanding of numeracy language.
- Students showed strong mental computation skills.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Students need to read the questions more carefully.
- Students need to show their work and explain their thinking and strategy in writing.
- Students need to focus more on mathematics language and terminology, e.g., “fewest” vs “smallest coin” vs “change” or “cost” vs “change”.
- Students need to check their calculations for accuracy, as well as their final answers.

Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- encourage students to use language and sentence answers to show their thinking and understanding.
- teach more math language and vocabulary.
- create problem-solving opportunities in class, using multiple strategies.
- make sure students understand what is being asked.
- create more opportunities for hands-on experience with coins and their values, linking decimals and money.
- create opportunities to play with data and teach about graphing in Grade 3.
- create more opportunities to develop develop number sense.
- instruct students to ensure that they check their work so errors in initial steps are not carried through the problem.
- focus on the importance of showing their work and marking their answers.
- encourage students to underline or circle important numbers in the questions.

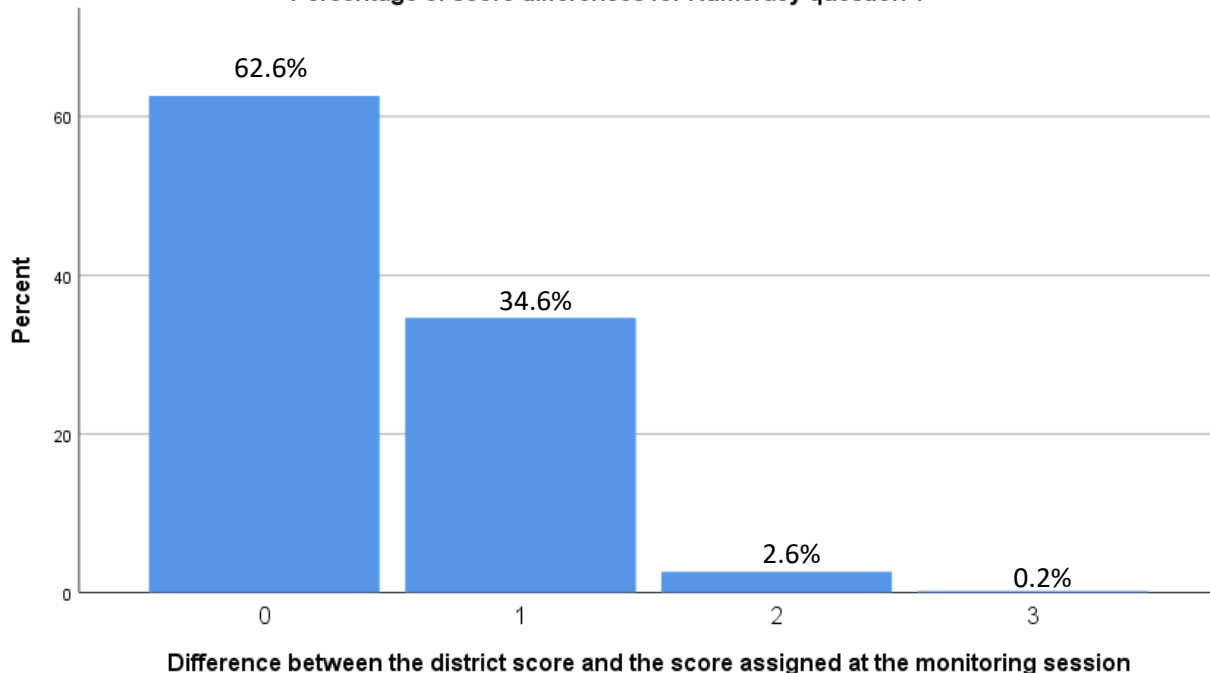
Grade 7 Numeracy

Written-Response Question 1

Curriculum Theme – Number and Computational Fluency

Grade 7

Percentage of score differences for Numeracy question 1

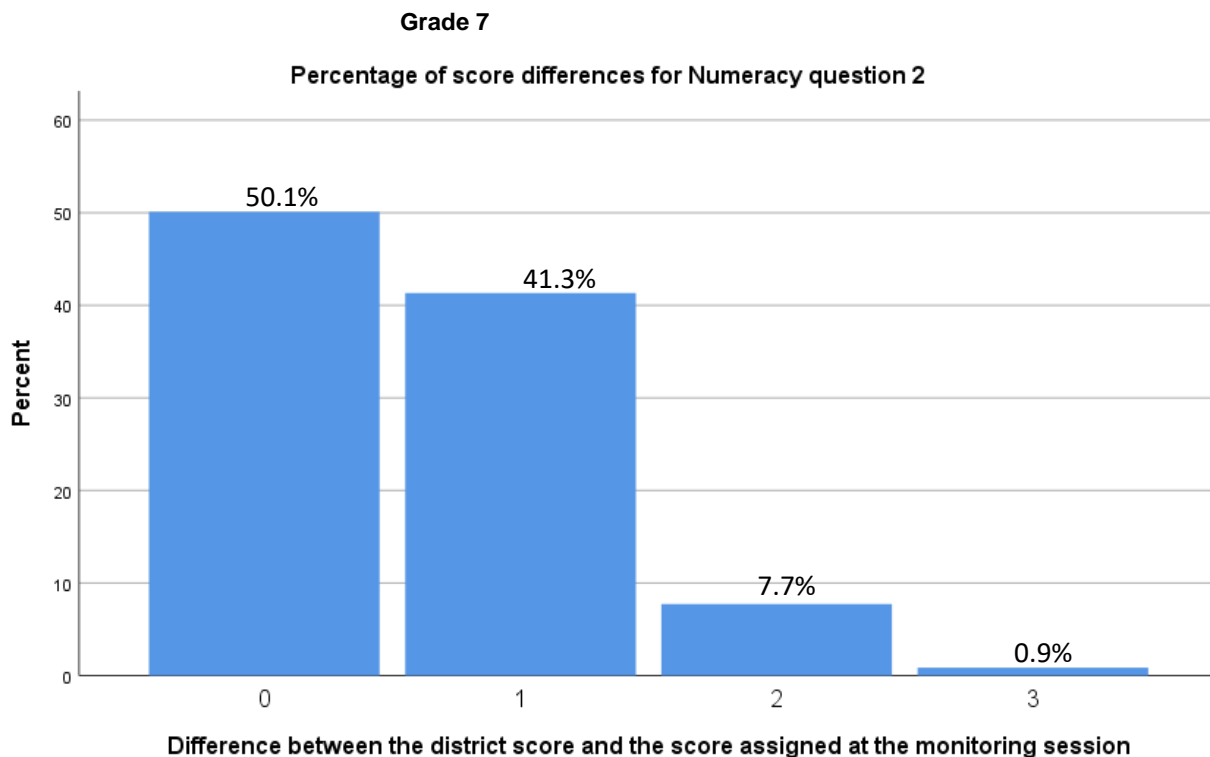


97.2% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 7 Numeracy (continued)

Written-Response Question 2

Curriculum Theme – Data and Probability

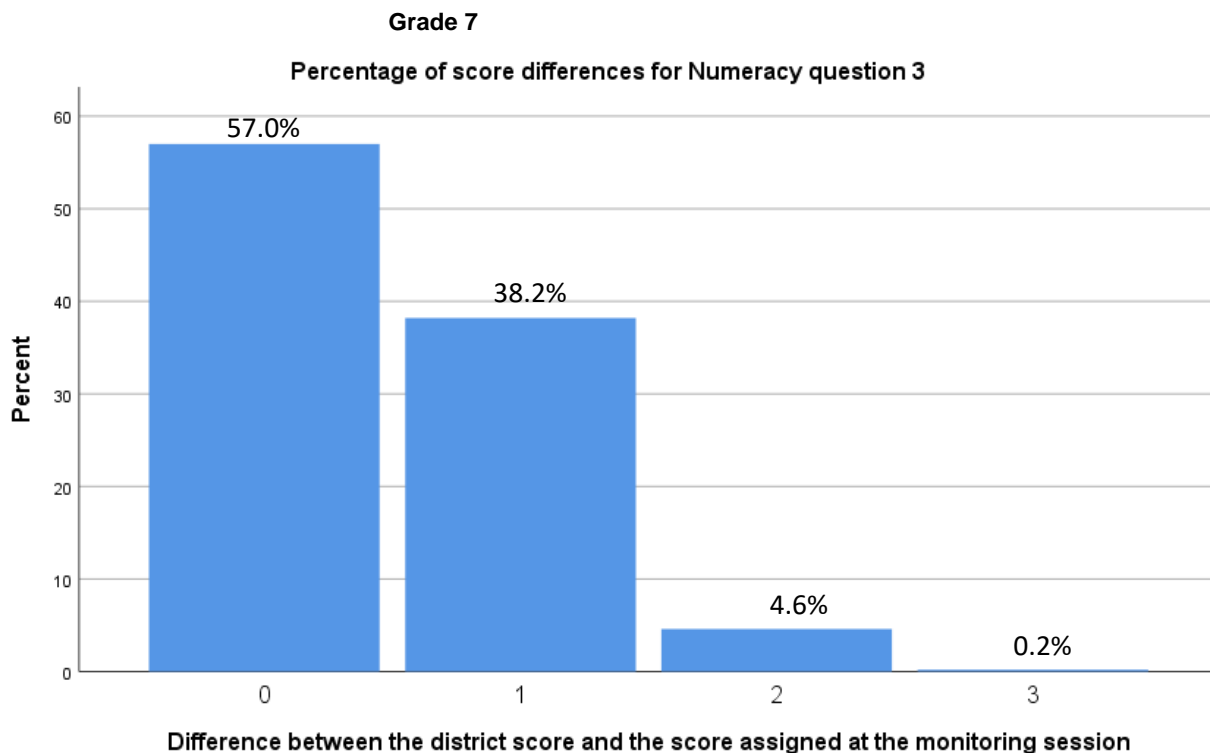


91.4% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 7 Numeracy (continued)

Written-Response Question 3

Curriculum Theme – Geometry and Measurement



95.2% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 7 Numeracy

General comments regarding student performance on numeracy written response questions, according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students showed an ability to understand how to represent numbers.
- Students used a variety of strategies and demonstrated their critical and conceptual thinking skills.
- Students engaged with the problem and were willing to try solving it.
- Students showed their understanding of the concepts of perimeter and areas of squares and rectangles.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Students need to read the questions more carefully.
- Students need to organize mathematical ideas, show their work clearly, and communicate their final answer.
- Students need to learn how to make a table.
- Students need to learn basic mathematical reasoning about the use of equations.

Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- encourage students to read the question thoroughly and understand what is being asked.
- remind students that when answering the question they need to use all the information given in the question.
- encourage students to show their work using numbers and words.
- create more opportunities for practice with solving multi-step problems and real-life scenarios.
- spend more time working on understanding word problems and solving them.
- spend more time playing math games.
- focus more on the importance of units and how to use a grid.

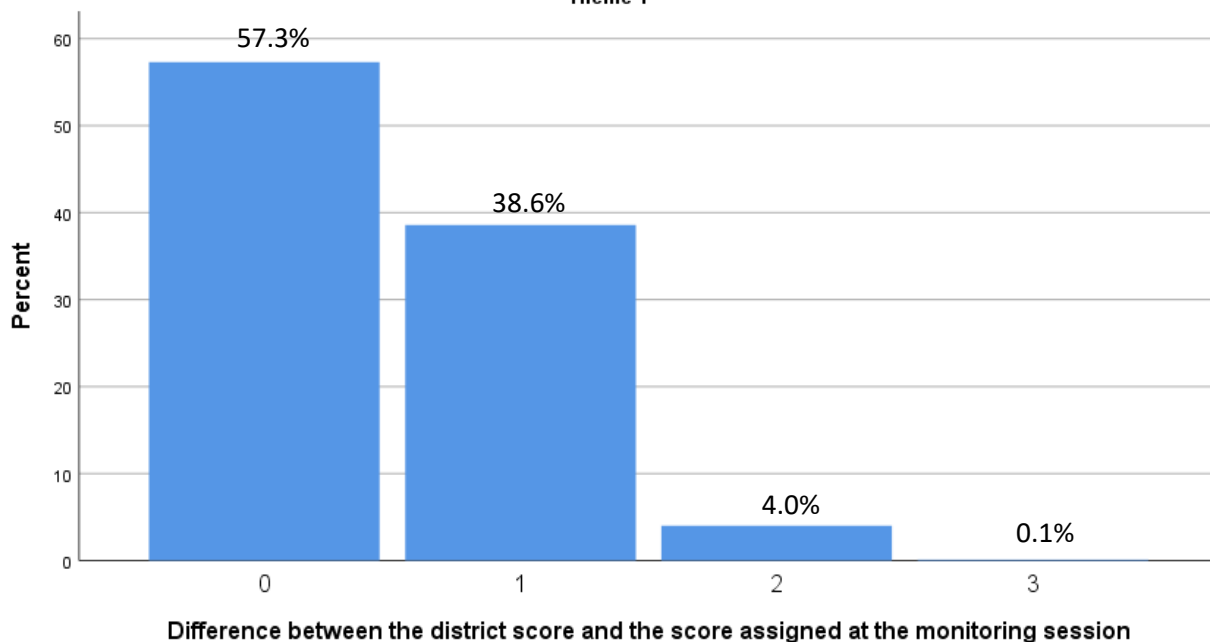
Grade 4 Reading

Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 1

Grade 4

Percentage of score differences for Reading question 1

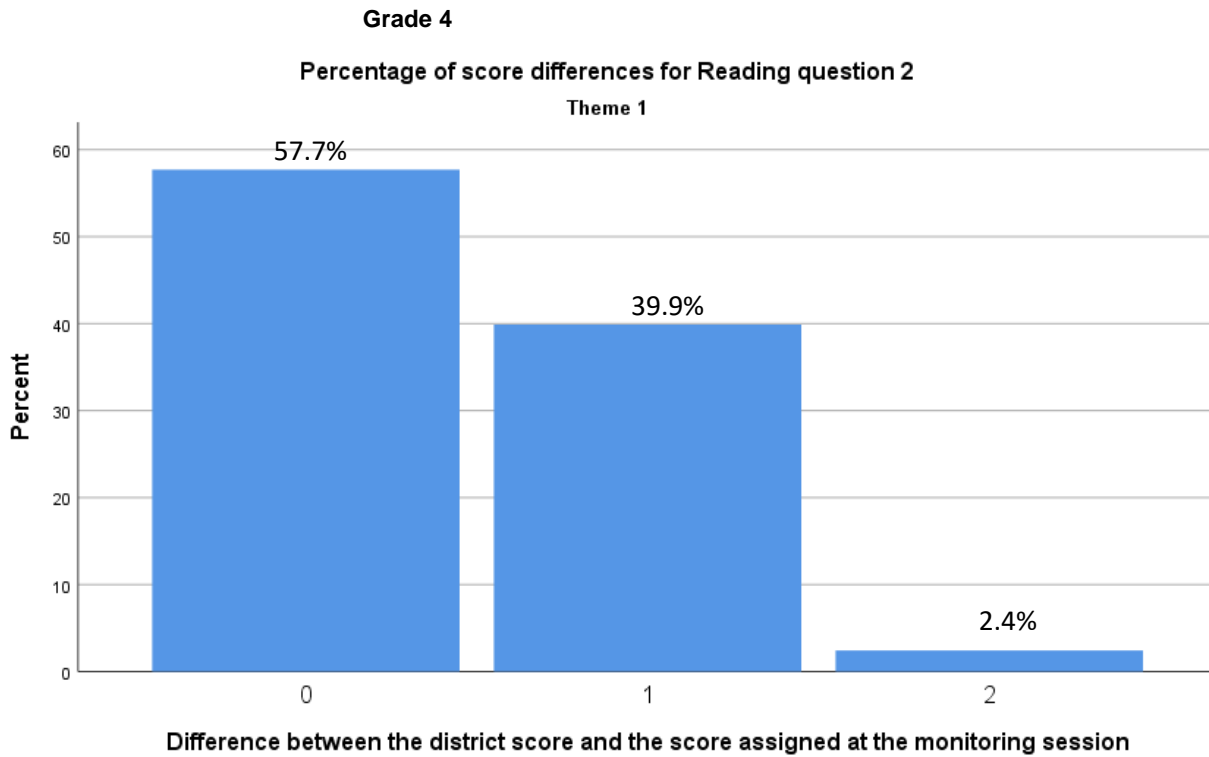
Theme 1



95.9% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 4 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 2



97.6% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

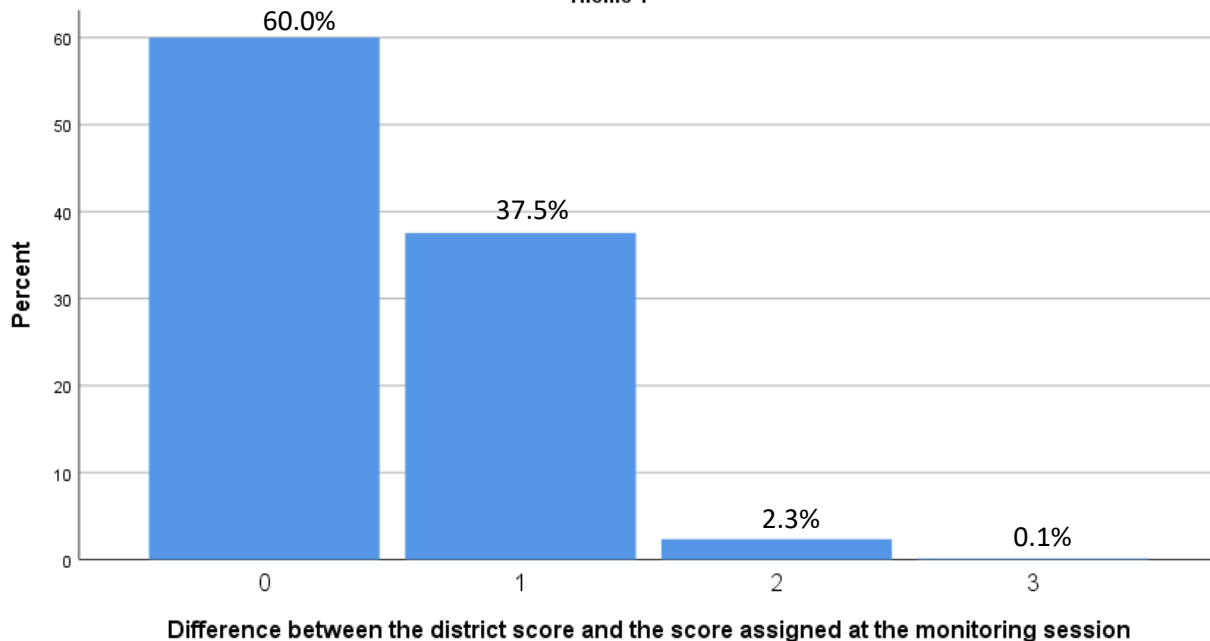
Grade 4 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 3

Grade 4

Percentage of score differences for Reading question 3

Theme 1



97.5% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

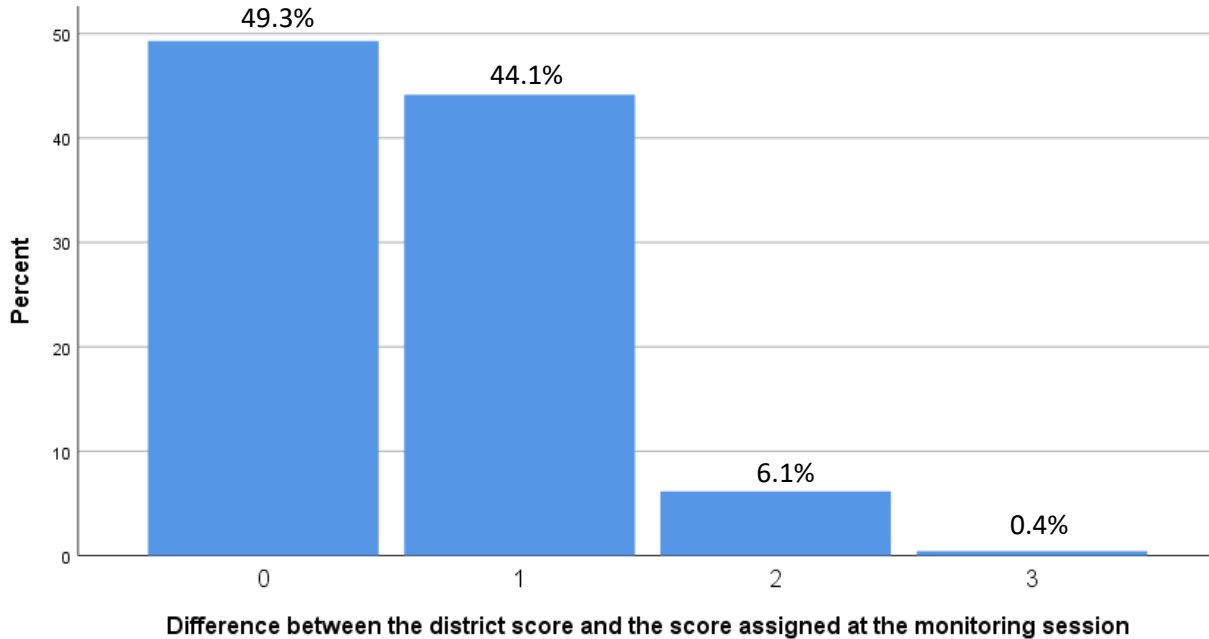
Grade 4 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 1

Grade 4

Percentage of score differences for Reading question 1

Theme 2

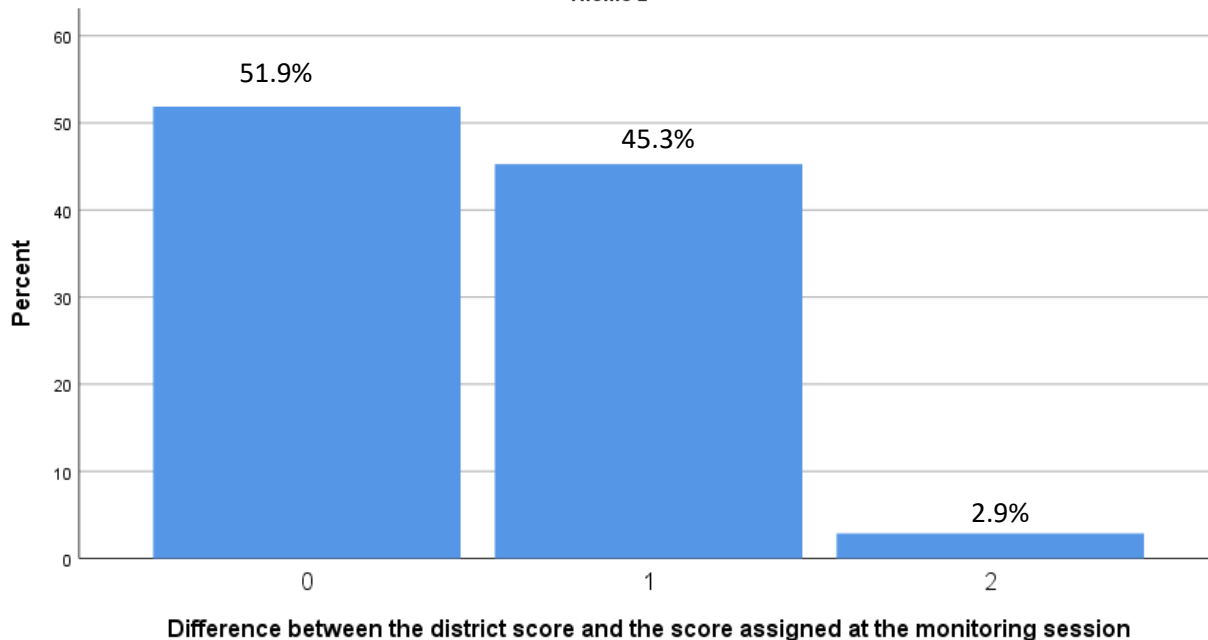


93.4% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 4 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 2

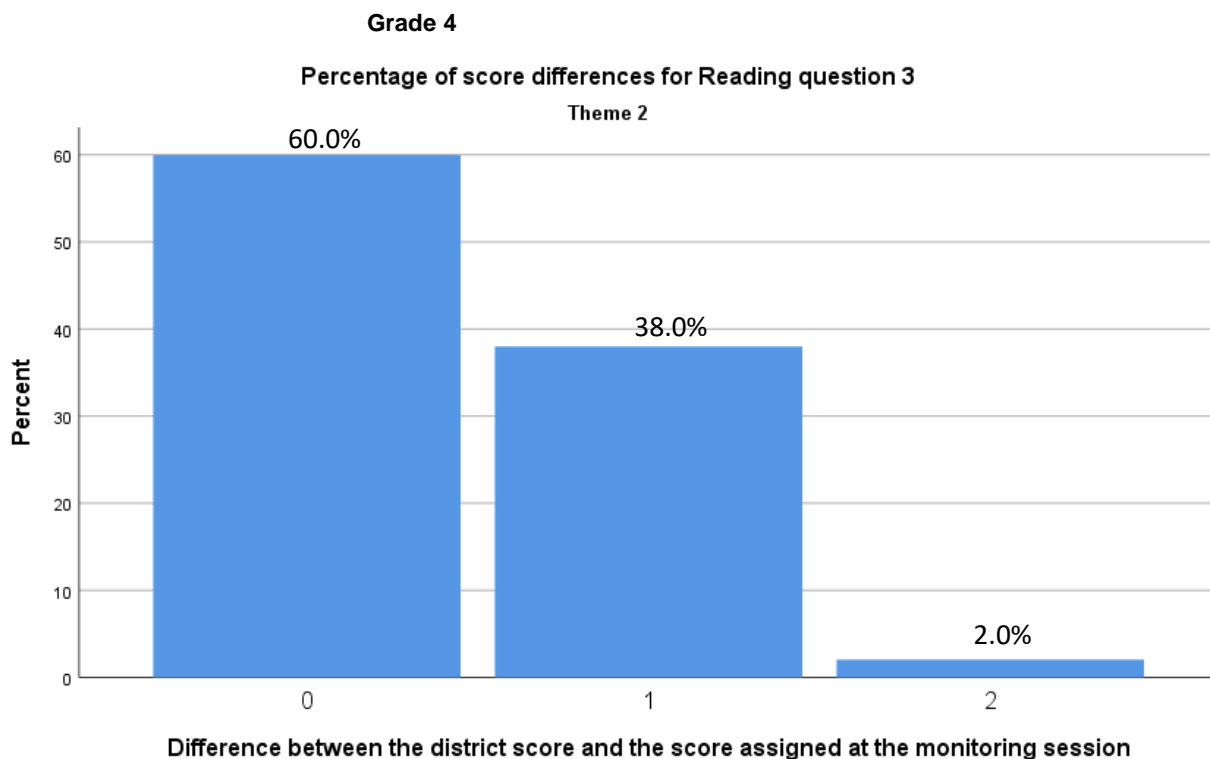
Grade 4
Percentage of score differences for Reading question 2
Theme 2



97.2% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 4 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 3



98.0% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 4 Reading

General comments regarding student performance on reading written response questions according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students demonstrated strong comprehension of the texts and task.
- Students were able to pull out the main ideas and supporting details and collate that information into clear, cohesive, and creative responses.
- Students were able to offer opinions and provide support from the text.
- Students were able to take aspects from both texts, make connections, and compare.
- Students showed an understanding that there can be connections between fiction and non-fiction.
- Students were able to start with a topic sentence.
- Students were able to relate to the theme of caring and kindness.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Students need to make personal connections between texts and self, and also go beyond the text.
- Students need to practice using a variety of sentences in their responses.
- Students need to use their own words to interpret.
- Students need to read the questions more carefully.

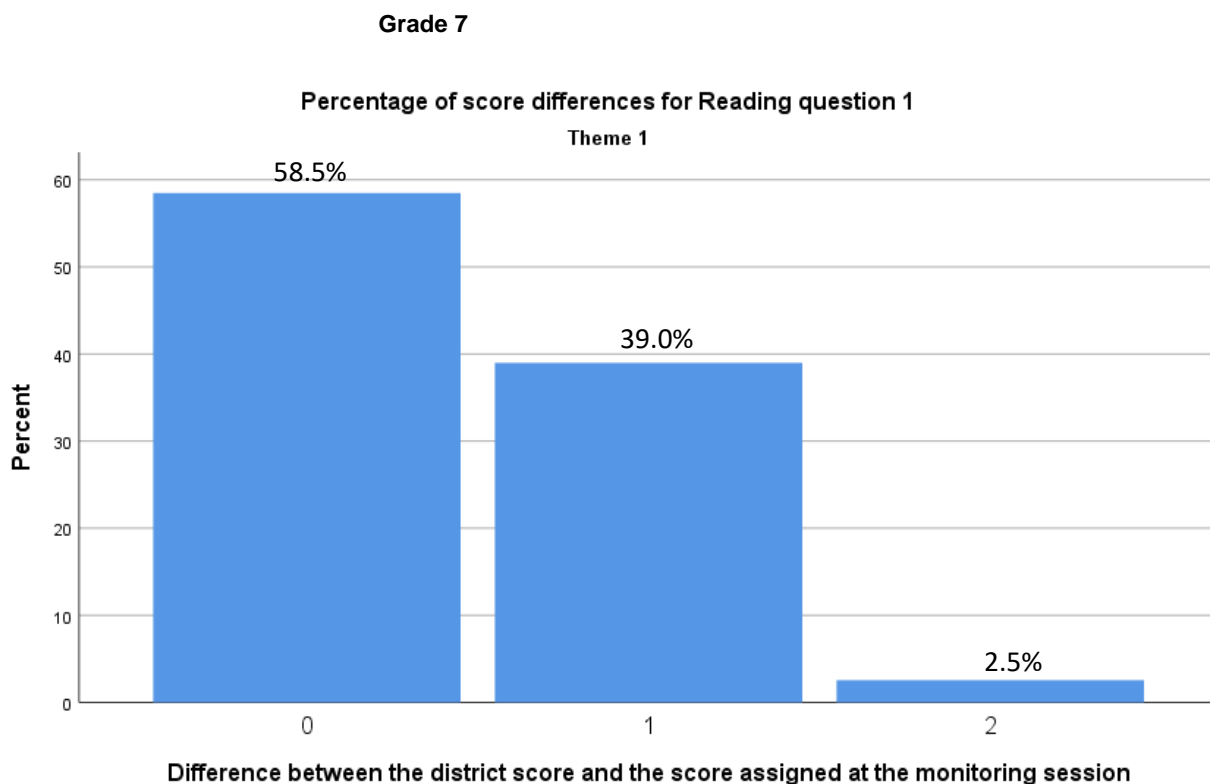
Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- provide cues to students reminding them to provide evidence and supporting statements (examples and details) when comparing two texts.
- create more opportunities for comparing and contrasting and synthesis.
- create opportunities for students to relay their ideas orally and then put them on paper.
- teach students how to highlight relevant information from text and question.
- teach students about inferencing and give them more time and opportunities for making connections (text to text, text to self, text to world) and finding meaning.
- work on using a variety of sentence types and lengths, alternating vocabulary, and giving their writing nuance and depth.
- keep students reading on a daily basis.
- focus on reading for meaning.
- create opportunities for similar reading and response exercises in class.
- make use of graphic organizers when practicing writing paragraphs, e.g., making a list of reasons in two columns before writing.
- focusing on reading a question carefully.

Grade 7 Reading

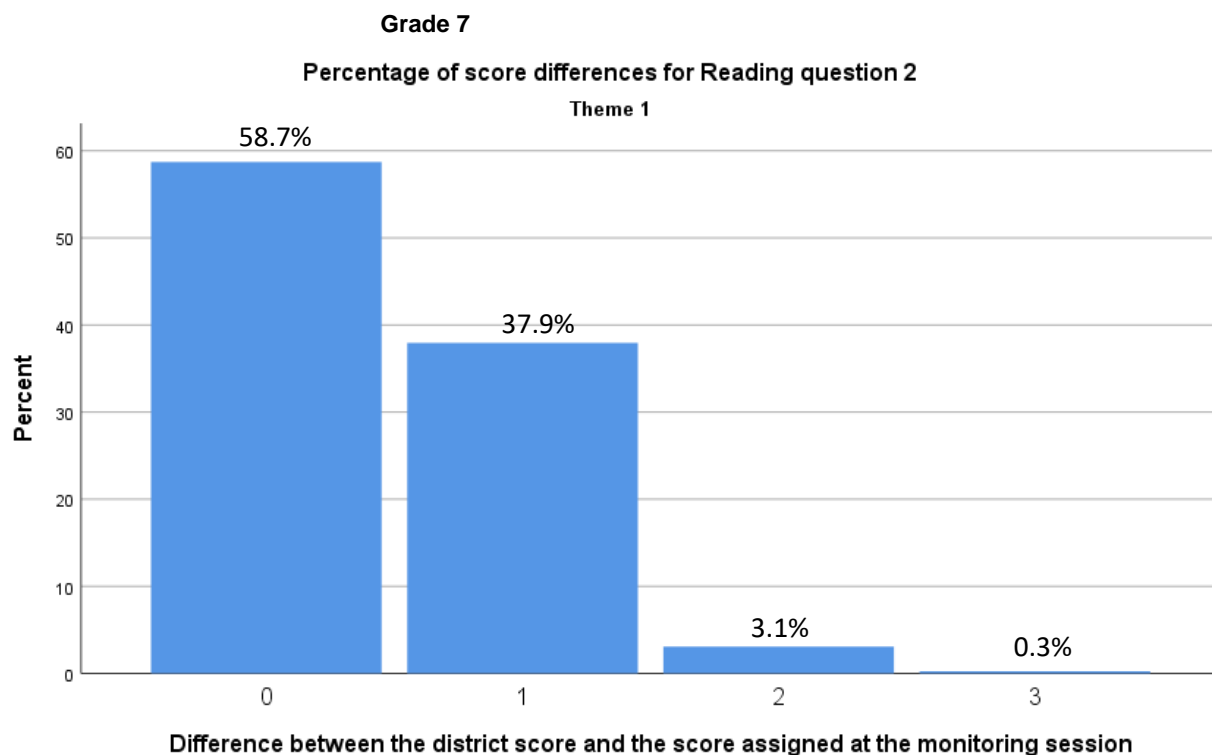
Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 1



97.5% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 7 Reading (continued)

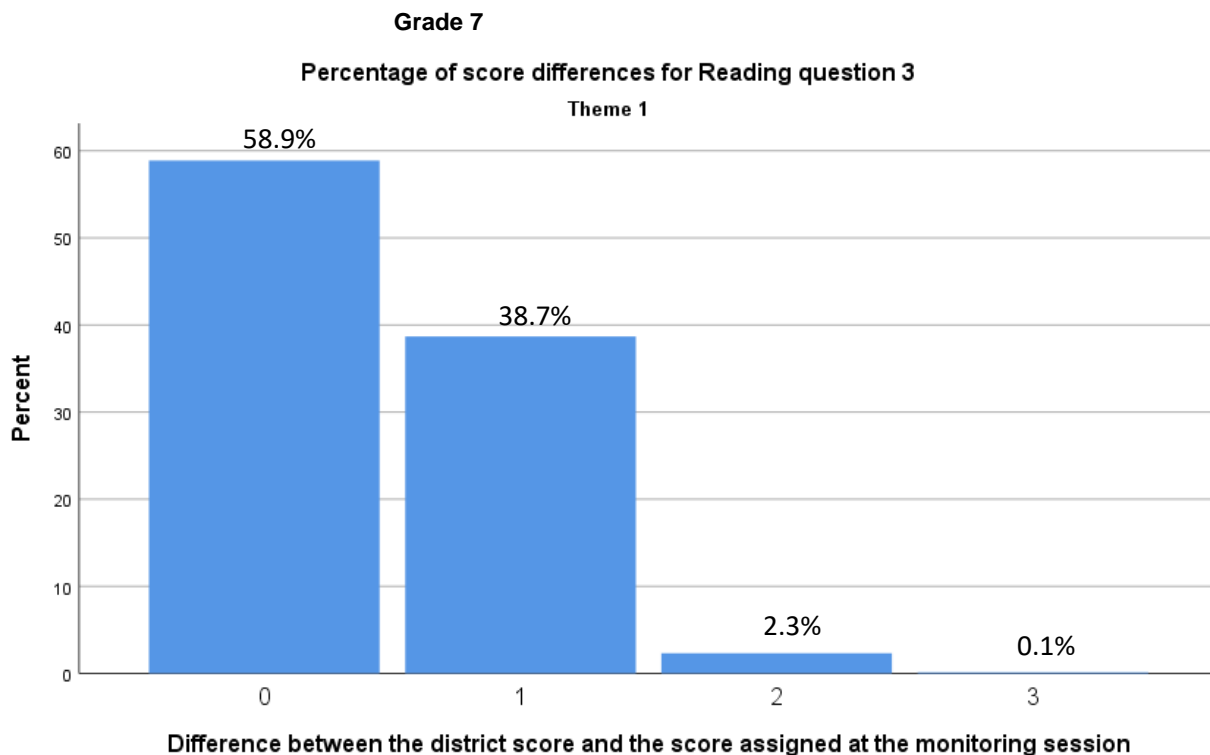
Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 2



96.6% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 7 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 1, Question 3



97.6% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

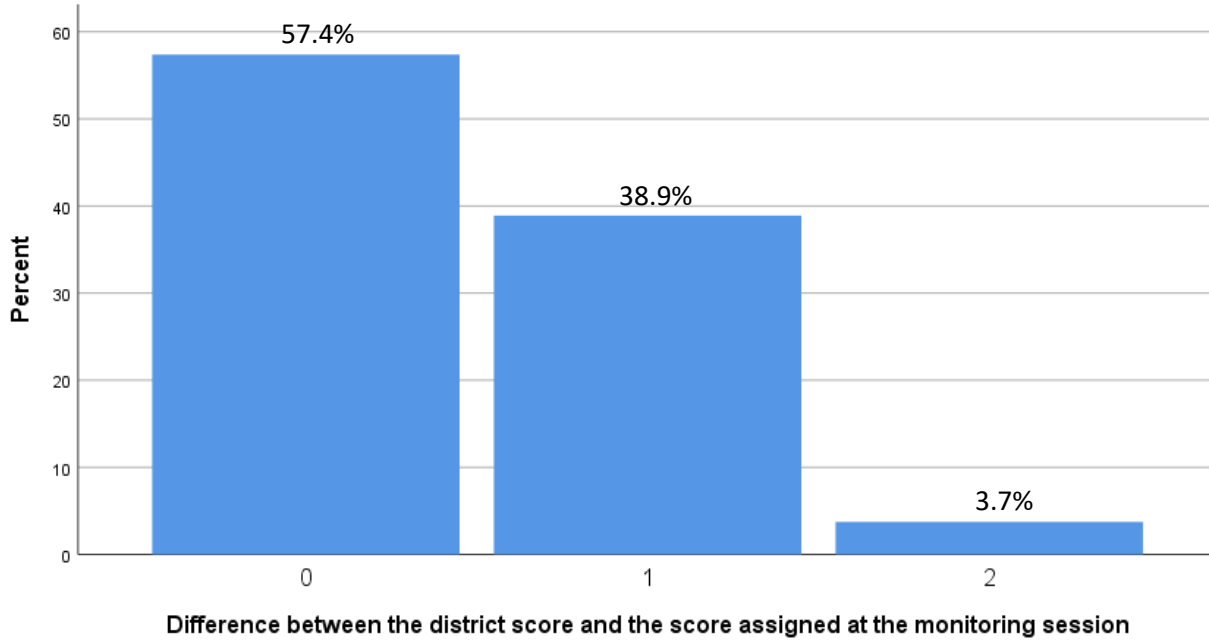
Grade 7 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 1

Grade 7

Percentage of score differences for Reading question 1

Theme 2



96.3% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

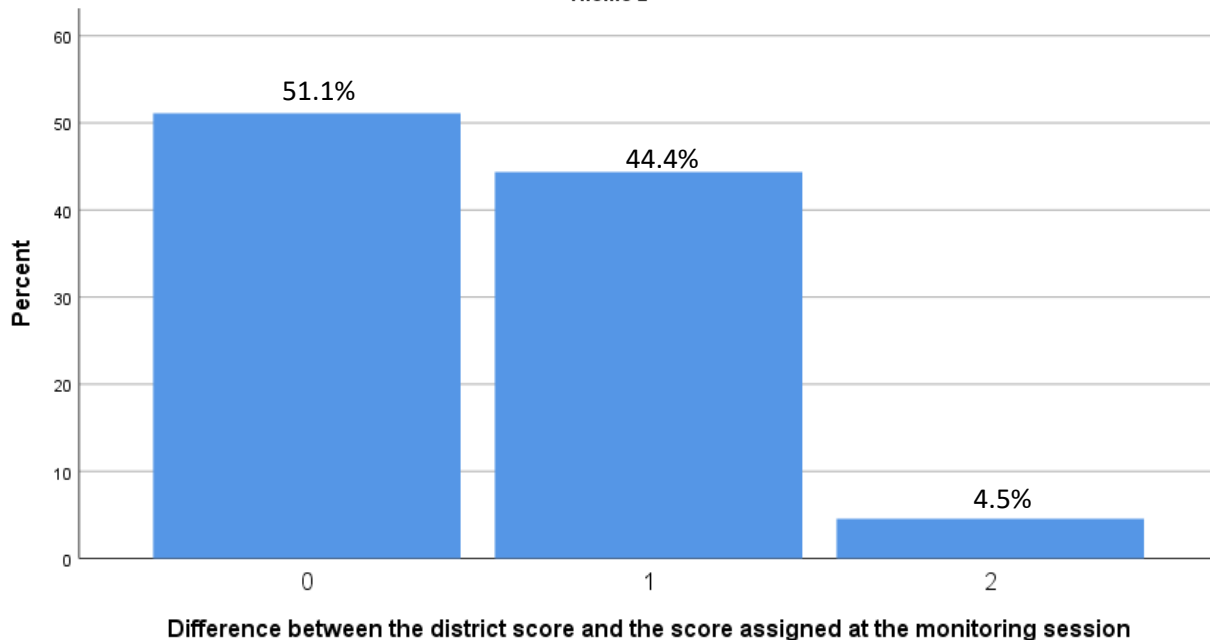
Grade 7 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 2

Grade 7

Percentage of score differences for Reading question 2

Theme 2

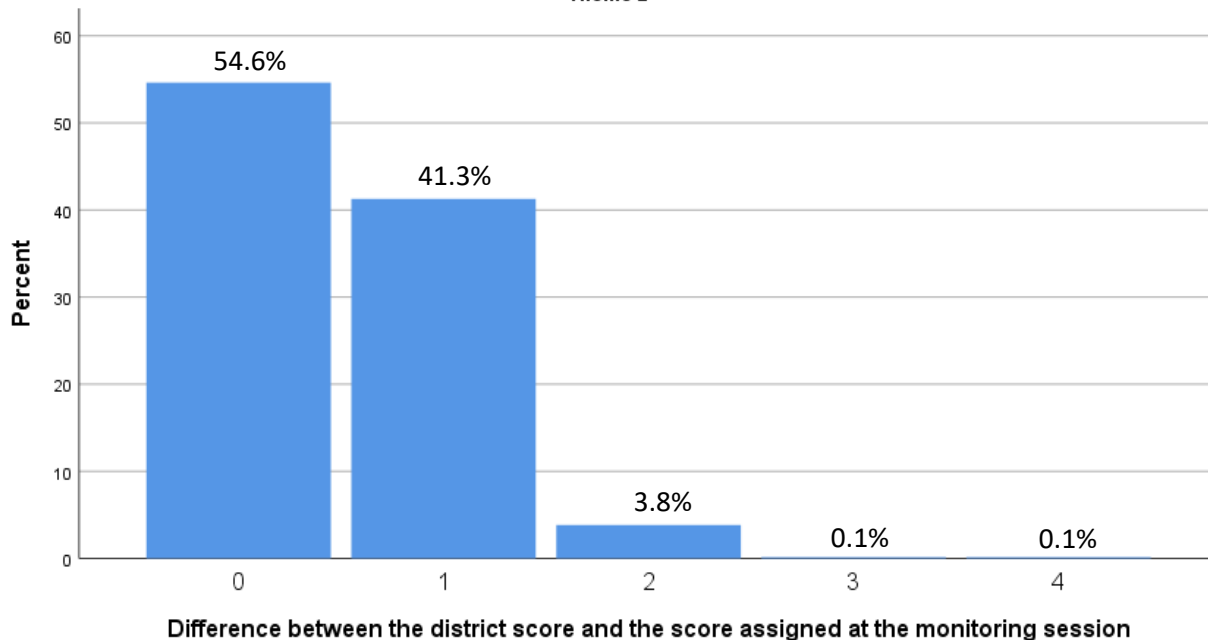


95.5% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Grade 7 Reading (continued)

Written-Response: Theme 2, Question 3

Grade 7
Percentage of score differences for Reading question 3
Theme 2



95.9% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 7 Reading

General comments regarding student performance on reading written response questions according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students demonstrated good comprehension of the texts.
- Students were able to find the main idea in texts and provide their opinion, with simple examples and details from the text.
- Students demonstrated an ability to identify the change and conflict between the characters.
- Students were able to organize and sequence their ideas and write about the topics given.
- Students were engaged with both stories.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Students need to work on adding more connections in the response to other texts or their own experiences.
- Students need to work on comparing and contrasting two texts and the use of comparative language.
- Students need to focus on the use of introductory and conclusion sentences.
- Students need to practice punctuation.
- Students need to read the entire text and question.
- Students need to focus on the audience.
- Students need to provide more than one example to make a point.

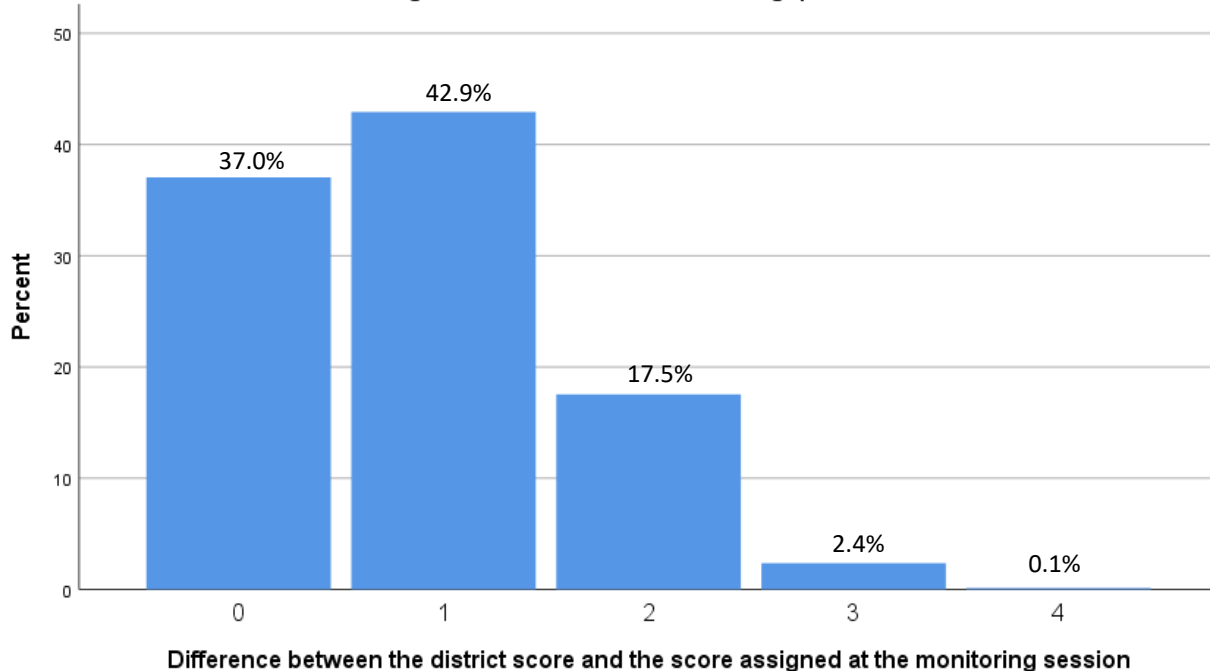
Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- create opportunities to discuss and examine writing.
- create opportunities to practice synthesizing two pieces of writing that are connected, including fiction and non-fiction.
- remind students to look for connections between themselves and the text, between texts, or between characters within a text.
- ask students to make sure they are providing a complete answer.
- teach how to think critically about text and avoiding retelling when comparing.
- teach the students to read the question before they start reading the passage.
- focus on cause and effect patterns.
- teach the students about paragraph structure and using graphical organizers when brainstorming.
- teach the students focus on punctuation skills.
- teach students how to use the rubric.

Grade 4 Writing

Percentage of score differences for Writing question 1



79.9% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 4 Writing

General comments regarding student performance on the writing written response question according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students were able to understand the question and compare the two passages.
- Students showed an ability to talk about the topic.
- Students showed an ability to develop ideas and write with clear examples and supporting details.
- Students attempted to engage the audience.

Areas Requiring Improvement

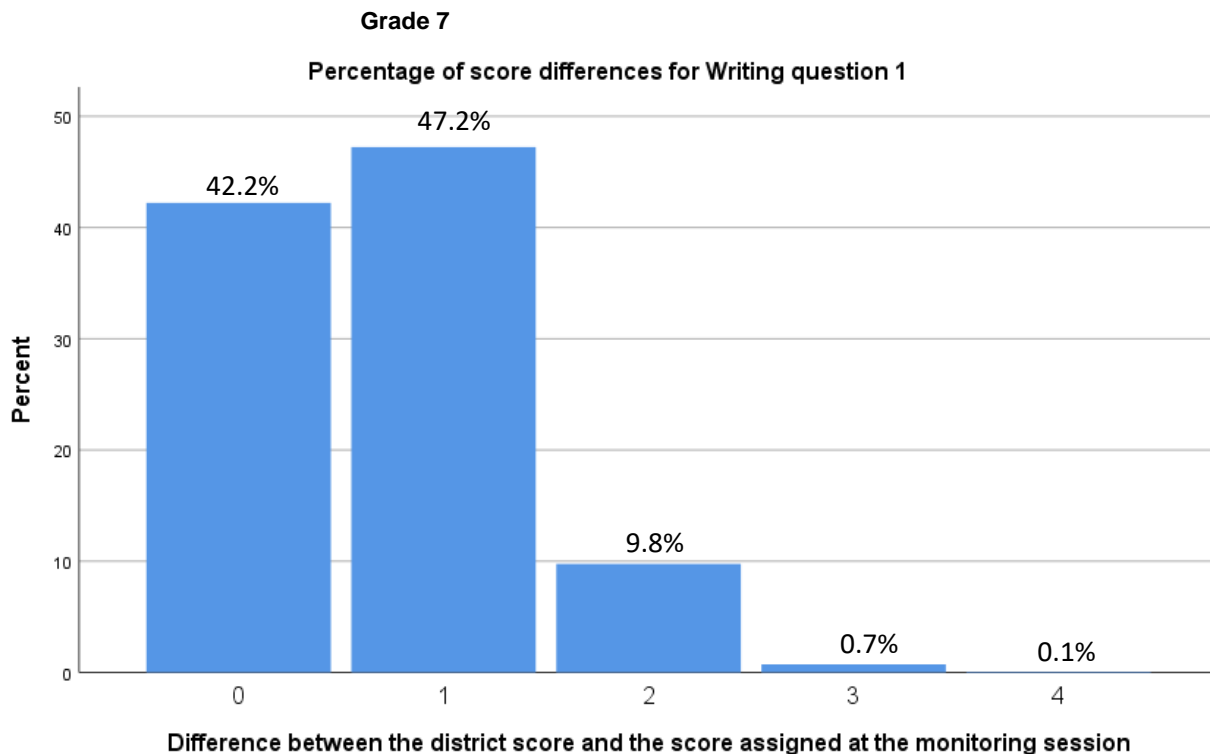
- Students need to work on organizing their writing.
- Students need to focus on coherence when covering more than one idea.
- Students need to practice using a variety of sentence structures.
- Students need to use transition words.
- Students need to think about a sense of voice and style.
- Students need to be able to connect to the story and describe the connection.

Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- encourage students to read for understanding.
- teach students to write conclusions.
- teach students to pay attention to sentence variety in writing.
- teach students how to create complex sentences.
- create opportunities to work on organizing ideas and structure of paragraphs.
- teach students how to write and follow an outline.
- create more opportunities for students to write on a daily basis.
- teach writing a thesis statement and supporting it with evidence from the text.
- focus on increasing student vocabulary.
- spend time working on short stories (both reading and listening).
- teach colloquial vs formal writing.
- teach students to use Core Competencies to help end their stories.
- share exemplars with students before the FSA.

Grade 7 Writing



89.4% of the local scores were within 1 point of the scores assigned at the monitoring session.

Monitoring Comments: Grade 7 Writing

General comments regarding student performance on the writing written response question according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

Student Strengths

- Students were able to understand the question and enjoy the topic.
- Students wrote about topics they can relate to.
- Students were able to identify an audience.
- Students used variation in sentence style.
- Students were able to use an introduction, body, and a conclusion.
- Students demonstrated overall competence with grammar.

Areas Requiring Improvement

- Students need more practice with writing conclusions that tie all the ideas together.
- Students need to write opening sentences that grab a readers' attention.
- Students need to focus on the flow of ideas.
- Students need to add elaboration and details without going off topic.
- Students need to follow a logical sequence, rather than a stream of consciousness.
- Students need to focus on all parts of the question.

Implications for Instruction

The marking team suggests that teachers could:

- work on brainstorming and building an outline with students, using graphic organizers when grouping ideas.
- teach writing for different purposes.
- teach colloquial vs formal writing.
- provide students with many examples of engaging pieces of writing.
- make students work on real samples and correcting them.
- focus on using adjectives and increased vocabulary.
- create opportunities for writing paragraphs and avoiding lists.
- create opportunities for writing prose rather than strictly responses to questions.
- create opportunities to explore how authors capture readers' attention.
- work on vocabulary development.
- make students write journals and engage in daily writing.
- teach about punctuation and how it changes meaning.

Summary of Marking Reliability

Maintaining consistent FSA marking standards across the province helps to ensure that no matter where a student takes the FSA, his or her responses will be marked in a consistent manner. The purpose of the FSA marking monitoring session was to gather evidence for the reliability, validity, and fairness of the FSA marking process in accordance to the Standards¹. Overall results show a high level of consistency; between 79.9 – 98.0% of the scores assigned at the monitoring session were within 1 point of the local or district scores. No significant difference in scoring consistency was found between the grades, although marking reliability for numeracy was slightly higher than for reading, which was higher than for writing in both grades.

The results from the FSA marking monitoring session provide evidence for the reliability, validity, and fairness of the FSA marking process at the provincial level. The results also allow the Ministry to assess the reliability of the marks assigned at district levels, provide useful information to FSA markers about the FSA marking process in terms of how to effectively use the assessment rubric and knowing what to look for when marking student responses, etc. A district level and an independent school level summary report are also generated to help inform local scoring.

Considerations for Marking

General comments regarding district/school marking according to the participants of the July 2020 monitoring session:

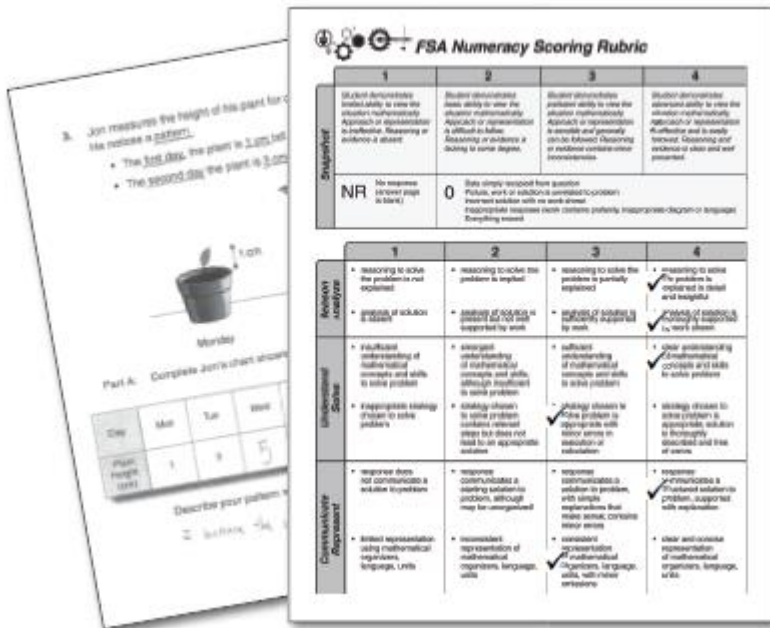
Score holistically. Holistic scoring gives an overall score for the student response. When scoring holistically, the focus is on what the student CAN do and the strengths demonstrated in the student’s work. No one aspect of the student’s work carries more importance or weight than another when scoring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

Give the student response a complete and careful read for a general impression. Use professional experience, and based on the rubric, give each student paper a fair score. Be aware of personal biases when scoring and refer to the rubric and exemplars, especially when in doubt.

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

Refer to the rubrics regularly to stay focused. The scoring rubrics form the basis for assessment; refer to them often, especially if unsure what score to give the student’s work. Markers 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.

Score for the ‘best line of fit’. Markers should give an overall score for the student response, based on the score of the rubric where most of their response falls. Often students will score across two or three score points on the rubric. The final score should reflect where most of a student’s response lies.



When being scored, this student’s work received the greatest number of checkmarks for descriptors in Score 4, therefore, ‘best line of fit’ would be a score of 4. (even though there is a calculation error in this numeracy example)

Some noteworthy comments from participants

- *I really enjoyed this experience and checking in professionally during the summer break.*
- *It was very well run and the presenters and trainers were very helpful. I found the experience valuable.*
- *It was a lot of work to pull this off in this format and it was done very well.*
- *Overall an excellent learning experience. The team did a fantastic job facilitating online. I look forward to participating in years to come.*
- *I felt this was a very efficient use of time. Thank you for the experience.*
- *Great work on doing this in Zoom! A very strong team of positive educators who were both helpful and thoughtful.*
- *I am impressed with how smoothly the marking sessions went over the two days.*
- *I found the online approach to be very efficient and focused. The monitors/hosts were organized and very helpful. I would encourage the team to consider using this approach in the future.*
- *This session was very engaging and informative.*
- *I cannot express how well I feel these two days went. This was my first time participating in an FSA marking in this capacity. The organization was exceptional and I feel that any time there was an issue it was effectively and efficiently dealt with.*
- *Thank you for the training! It was great to do this!*
- *Great team...went really well!*
- *It was great pro-D for me and I learned a lot.*
- *Thank you for your well-thought through organization in handling this digital environment.*

Appendix 1: Monitoring session Scorer demographics

64 participants completed the feedback form.

Who were they?

- 21% classroom educators
- 58% administrators
- 21% other

Years of experience:

- 23% had less than 15 years of experience
- 77% had more than 16 years of experience

Where did they teach?

- 94% taught at English language schools
- 4% taught at French immersion schools
- 2% taught at French immersion and English schools

Experience with the FSA:

- 43% had experience with FSA standard setting
- 70% participated in the FSA district-level marking
- 25% participated in the FSA marking monitoring 2019

Summary of responses to Likert scale statements (sample):

100% agreed or strongly agreed that the training provided an opportunity to develop a common understanding of the scoring criteria.

98% agreed or strongly agreed that the exemplar papers were useful in explaining and supporting score allocation.

98% agreed or strongly agreed that the marking leaders were effective in guiding and coordinating the monitored marking process.

100% agreed or strongly agreed that the monitored marking process was efficient and well-coordinated.

97% agreed or strongly agreed that the online platform was suitable for training and marking.

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.