

Ohio's State Tests: How can a student earn a zero on a written response question?

Students earn between zero and 10 points on questions that require a written response. Understanding the reasons why a student could earn a zero can help educators support students in providing responses that will earn them points. A score of zero does not necessarily indicate that a student failed to provide a response to a question. Rather, a score of zero indicates that one or more of the following was true:

Blank – A student who fails to provide any response to a question will not earn any points toward his or her overall score.

Unreadable – A student also could receive a score of zero on a response that is unreadable. While correct spelling and grammar count for up to two points of the 10 possible points on a written response question, the words a student types must be recognizable to be scored. An online response would be deemed unreadable if it only contains repeated/random keystrokes (e.g., “yyyyyyyyyyyy”; “av:aeoiahvb;e”; “hrrttuuvv”).

Duplicate text – A score of zero also is earned when a student response is substantially comprised of repeated text copied over and over. A response such as, “I don't know. I don't know. I don't know.” would earn a student no points toward the overall score.

Not enough data to score – There is wide variance in the length of an acceptable response to an extended-response question. Some students can provide a succinct response and earn full credit, while others write a lot but only earn a few points. If a response contains fewer than 15 words, the response is deemed inadequate to be scored.

Prompt copy – A score of zero also is earned when there is a significant amount of text copied directly from the prompt and/or reading passage, with little to no original writing from the student. Copying limited text from the prompt is allowable but, as a rule, at least 30 percent of a response needs to be original to demonstrate understanding and earn points.

Earned zero – In the case of an earned zero, a student provides a scorable response that meets the rubric description for zero points. Put simply, the student response was entirely incorrect or failed to address the question(s) asked.

NOTE: *Beginning spring 2018*

- *The zero point codes will be given for students in the Online Reporting System (ORS) so that districts can better understand the reasons why students are earning zero points toward their overall scores.*
- *An earned zero will still be represented with a “0” in the online student report.*