

# What are the Types of Questions on the MSA/HSA?

**Selected Response (SR) Items.** These are multiple choice items.

- Stem (start of the problem) of a few sentences, which is followed by a question.
- Work in a context as often as possible.
- Some problems will include a graphic (graph, model, etc.).
- No extra information.
- Four answer choices – alternate between ABCD and FGHI, usually on separate lines.
- Good distractors but they need to be clearly wrong (no ‘best’ choice).
- ‘None of These’ option will not appear as an answer choice on the Maryland selected response items.
- It should take students a little more than a minute to answer an SR.

**Student-Produced Response (SPR) Items.** These responses will require students to record their answers on a grid by shading in circles corresponding to the numbers in their answer. Item type starts in grade 7.

- Problem situation in context. Question includes label, so it is not needed in the label.
- No negative numbers or very large numbers (greater than 99,999) are possible.
- It should take students about two minutes to solve an SPR.

**Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Items.** These require students to write an answer consisting of a few sentences. Item type will not be on the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA starting May 2008.

- Problem situation in context, written as a command.
- Incorporates the processes of analysis, representation, explanation, application, and justification.
- Scored holistically using a rubric on a 0-3 scale.
- It should take students five to eight minutes to answer an BCR.

**Extended Constructed Response (ECR) Items.** These items will require students to write an answer that will consist of more information than will be required for a brief constructed response item. Item type will not be on the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA starting May 2008.

- Problem situation in context, written as a command.
- Incorporates the processes of analysis, representation, explanation, application, and justification.
- Scored holistically using a rubric on a 0-4 scale.
- It should take students ten to fifteen minutes to answer an ECR.

Use the simplest vocabulary possible. Use vocabulary from the content standards whenever possible.

All items are linked to specific Voluntary State Curriculum or Core Learning Goal indicator as well as judged for their level of cognitive demand. There will be a balance of content standards and cognitive demand on the assessment. There are three levels of cognitive demand:

Low/Easy – Recalling facts, solving simple step problems

Medium – Applying, explaining, solving multi-step problems

High/Hard – Abstracting, justifying, drawing conclusions, making generalizations