

TJHSST Admissions — Written Assessment - Student Overview

Main Assessment Date: Saturday, January 9th

Time: 1.5 hours total (90 minutes)

Sections: Student Portrait Sheet (SPS) and Problem-Solving Essay (PSE)

1) Student Portrait Sheet (SPS)

- **You'll write 4 short essays.**

- ☐ Each essay can be **up to 1,500 characters** (about 200–250 words).

- These essays will focus on **Portrait of a Graduate (POG)** skills:

- ☐ Collaborator, Communicator, Creative & Critical Thinker, Ethical/Global Citizen, Goal-Directed & Resilient.

- **Before the test:** think of specific times you showed these skills (at school, home, or in your community). Try to link them to STEM activities when you can.

- **During the test:**

- ☐ Read the prompt carefully — answer everything it asks.
 - ☐ Use scratch paper to make a quick outline.
 - ☐ Be specific: say **what you did**, **why it mattered**, and **what you learned**.
 - ☐ Watch the character counter and save your work
-

2) Problem-Solving Essay (PSE)

- **You'll write 1 longer essay** (max **3,700 characters**).
 - It will include math and science (Algebra I level through first semester, and 7th/8th grade science).
 - You must show both your **answer** and **your thinking** — explain and justify every step.
 - **Before the test:** ask math/science teachers for sample questions and practice writing full explanations.
 - **During the test:**
 - Read the whole problem carefully.
 - Answer all the questions you are asked.
 - Do calculations on scratch paper.
 - Write your solution as an essay — explain your reasoning, not just the final number.
 - Check the character count
-

Time plan (suggested)

- **SPS: 4 essays × 15 minutes = 60 minutes**
 - **PSE: 30 minutes**
Keep an eye on the character counter (bottom right).
-

Extra tips

- Look at TJ’s lab options (Chemistry, Oceans, Planetarium, Tech, Robotics) — note which ones excite you and mention them if it fits an essay.
 - Practice short, clear writing. Try prompts like: “Describe a time you showed strong communication skills.”
 - Ask math and science teachers for practice “Problem-Solving” Essay questions.
-

Test-day checklist

- Print your **test site letter** and know where you’re going.
 - **Charge your computer** and make sure you can log into your TJ application account.
 - Bring **two pencils**
 - **Arrive by 7:30 AM.**
 - **Leave phones and smartwatches at home.**
-

You’ve got this — be specific, show your thinking, and let your passion for STEM shine through.