



The Smarter Balanced English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) Summative Assessments are a computer adaptive test that measure skills in reading, writing, listening, and research. In Connecticut, there is no ELA performance task in the summative assessment. Although the majority of ELA Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) items in Grades 3–8 are designed to be machine scored (e.g., multiple choice, hot text, multi-select, tables), at least one item will require hand scoring.

In the Connecticut version of the Smarter Balanced ELA Summative Assessments, content-specific claim scores are reported for Reading (Claim 1) and Listening (Claim 3). However, Writing and Research (Claims 2 and 4) have been combined by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) into a single reporting category titled Writing and Research/Inquiry. For the ELA portion of the summative assessment, each student will receive an overall ELA/literacy score, and three claim scores or subscores.

For assessment purposes, the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Studies were organized or combined into targets, thus changing the presentation of the standards without changing the content. This was done to develop efficient strategies for assessment and reporting. Rather than tapping only isolated skills within one strand, such as reading, standards-based instruction requires students to integrate skills and concepts across strands; subsequently, Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Assessment Claims and Targets represent the ways in which students may be expected to learn and demonstrate their knowledge of ELA. The ELA assessment targets are focused on a subset of skills and aligned to a variety of standards. The demands within the assessment targets vary by grade and demonstrate the progression of learning as students advance from grade to grade. Aligned to the CCS for English Language Arts, Smarter Balanced ELA Assessments were designed to measure the success of students as they progress towards college and career readiness in reading, writing, listening, and research.

Smarter Balanced uses Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) to determine the expected rigor of a target and subsequently, any item measuring that target. In the CAT portion of the summative ELA assessment, an algorithm has been configured to ensure that all students in Grades 3-5 will receive at least seven items at DOK 2 and two items at DOK 3 or higher in Claim 1. For Claim 2, a student will receive at least four items at DOK 2 and one item at DOK 3 or higher. Each student will receive at least three Listening items at DOK 2 or higher. In Grades 6-8, a student will receive no more than 5 items at DOK 1 and at least 2 items at DOK 3 or higher to measure Claim 1. For Claim 2, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students will receive at least five items at DOK 2 or higher, at least one of which will be DOK 3 or higher. Each of those, students will receive at least three Listening items at DOK 2 or higher. In all grades, Claim 4 Research items will be DOK 2.

Because the CCS require that students in Grades 3-5 evenly balance literary and informational texts, each student will receive one long passage set for Reading Literary Texts and one long passage set for Reading Informational Texts. They may also see up to two additional short passage sets in each of the Reading sections. Items requiring a short answer may appear in those questions measuring Targets 2 or 4, or Targets 9 or 11 in literary and information reading respectively.



The CCS expects that students in Grades 6-8 spend more time with informational text (55%) than literary (45%). Therefore, students in those grades will receive at least one literary passage set and may receive one short answer item measuring Targets 2 or 4. Each student will also receive at least one informational passage, which may contain a short-answer item measuring Targets 9 or 11, and up to two additional short informational passage sets.

For all grades assessed by the CSDE, Writing, Claim 2, measures three dimensions: organization/purpose, evidence/elaboration, and conventions. Each student will receive at least one item in organization/purpose, and at least one item in evidence/elaboration, for a total of three items, assessed in either Write Brief Texts or Revise Brief Texts. Among these three items will be one, and only one, Write Brief Text.

For more information on content categories and DOK levels, see the Content Specifications document at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>.



ELA/Literacy Grades 3-5 Summative Assessment Blueprint				
Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	CAT Stimuli	CAT Items	Total Items by Claim
1. Reading	Literary	2	7-8	14-16
	Informational	2	7-8	
2. Writing	Organization/Purpose	0	5	10
	Evidence/Elaboration	0		
	Conventions	0	5	
3. Speaking/Listening	Listening	3-4	8-9	8-9
4. Research	Research	0	6	6



ELA/Literacy Grades 6-8 Summative Assessment Blueprint				
Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	CAT ⁵ Stimuli	CAT Items	Total Items by Claim
1. Reading	Literary	1-2	4-7	14-17
	Informational	2-3	10-12	
2. Writing	Organization/Purpose	0	5	10
	Evidence/Elaboration	0		
	Conventions	0	5	
3. Speaking/Listening	Listening	3-4	8-9	8-9
4. Research	Research	0	6	6



Target Sampling ELA/Literacy Grades 3–5								
Component	Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	Assessment Target	DOK	CAT Items	Item Type		Total Items
						Machine Scored	Short Answer	
CAT	1. Reading	Literary	2: Central Ideas	2, 3	1–2	6–8	0	0–1
			4: Reasoning & Evidence	3	1–2			
			1: Key Details	1, 2	3–6			
			3: Word Meanings	1, 2				
			5: Analysis Within or Across Texts	3, 4				
			6: Text Structures or Features	2, 3				
			7: Language Use	2, 3				
		Informational	9: Central Ideas	2, 3	1–2	6–8	0	0–1
			11: Reasoning & Evidence	3	1–2			
			8: Key Details	1, 2	3–6			
			10: Word Meanings	1, 2				
			12: Analysis Within or Across Texts	3, 4				
			13: Text Structures or Features	2, 3				
			14: Language Use	2, 3				



Target Sampling ELA/Literacy Grades 3–5								
Component	Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	Assessment Target	DOK	CAT Items	Item Type		Total Items
						Machine Scored	Short Answer	
CAT	2. Writing	Organization/Purpose	1a/3a/6a: Write Brief Texts	3	3	0	0–1	10
			1b/3b/6b: Revise Brief Texts	2		0–2	0	
		Evidence/Elaboration	1a/3a/6a: Write Brief Texts	3		0	0–1	
			1b/3b/6b: Revise Brief Texts	2		0–2	0	
		Conventions	9: Edit	1, 2	2	2	0	
	3. Speaking/Listening	Listening	4: Listen/Interpret	1, 2, 3	8-9	8-9	0	8-9
	4. Research	Research	2: Interpret & Integrate Information	2	6	6	0	6
			3: Analyze Information/Sources	2				
			4: Use Evidence	2				



Target Sampling ELA/Literacy Grades 6–8								
Component	Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	Assessment Target	DOK	CAT Items	Item Type		Total Items
						Machine Scored	Short Answer	
CAT	1. Reading	Literary	2: Central Ideas	2, 3	1	1-2	0-1	4-7
			4: Reasoning & Evidence	3, 4	1			
			1: Key Details	2	2-5	2-5	0	
			3: Word Meanings	1, 2				
			5: Analysis Within or Across Texts	3, 4				
			6: Text Structures or Features	2, 3				
			7: Language Use	3				
		Informational	9: Central Ideas	2, 3	2-5		0-1	10-12 ¹
			11: Reasoning & Evidence	3, 4				
			8: Key Details	2	7-10	10-12	0	
			10: Word Meanings	1, 2				
			12: Analysis Within or Across Texts	3, 4				
			13: Text Structures or Features	2, 3				
			14: Language Use	3				

¹ For grade 8, the minimum number of Informational Reading items is 12 and the maximum is 12
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Target Sampling ELA/Literacy Grades 6–8									
Component	Claim/Score Reporting Category	Content Category	Assessment Target	DOK	CAT Items	Item Type		Total Items	
						Machine Scored	Short Answer		
CAT	2. Writing	Organization/Purpose	1a/3a/6a: Write Brief Texts	3	3	0	0–1	10	
			1b/3b/6b: Revise Brief Texts	2		0–2	0		
		Evidence/Elaboration	1a/3a/6a: Write Brief Texts	3		0	0–1		
			1b/3b/6b: Revise Brief Texts	2		0–2	0		
		8: Language & Vocabulary Use	1, 2	2		2	0		
		Conventions	9: Edit	1, 2		5	5		0
	3. Speaking/Listening	Listening	4: Listen/Interpret	1, 2, 3	8–9	8–9	0	8–9	
	4. Research	Research	2: Analyze/Integrate Information	2	6	6	6	0	6
			3: Evaluate Information/Sources	2					
			4: Use Evidence	2					