

Assessment Target Reports Frequently Asked Questions

The California Department of Education has released the assessment target reports as part of the 2022–23 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress reporting.

1. How Are Smarter Balanced Scores Reported?

Smarter Balanced uses an evidence-centered design to develop assessment items aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics. That design results in a hierarchical scoring and reporting system that includes an overall scale score and achievement level, claim performance levels, and target reports. If the overall scale score and achievement level is the broadest measure of student achievement, the assessment target report represents a more detailed, or granular, level of summative assessment data available to educators. This is presented graphically in [figure 1](#).

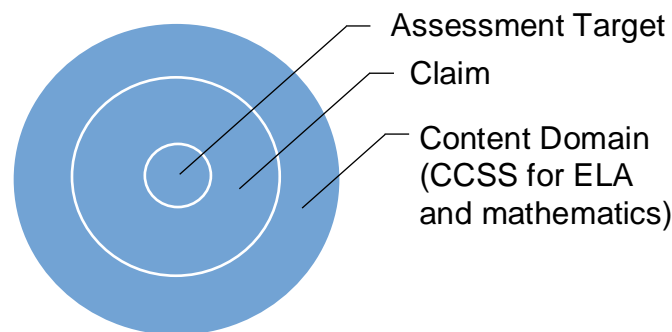


Figure 1. Hierarchical scoring and reporting system design

2. What Is the Hierarchy of Scores and Reporting?

To maximize the use of assessment results, it is important to understand the Smarter Balanced hierarchical scoring and reporting system. Using these reports together will help inform instruction.

Scale Score and Achievement Level

For the first level in the hierarchy, each student receives a total score, expressed as a four-digit overall scale score and one of four achievement levels for each content area. The possible achievement levels are Standard Exceeded (Level 4), Standard Met (Level 3), Standard Nearly Met (Level 2), and Standard Not Met (Level 1).

Claims

For the second level in the hierarchy, the student's performance on each claim is represented by one of three performance levels—Below Standard, Near Standard, or Above Standard. A claim is a statement about what a student knows or is able to do. Smarter Balanced has identified four claims specific to ELA and four claims for mathematics that focus on what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level. Claims can include more than one target. All claims and targets—as well as assessment blueprints and other test development resources—can be found in the [Smarter Content Explorer](#).

Example of a Mathematics Claim

Concepts and Procedures Claim #1:

Students can explain and apply mathematical concepts and carry out mathematical procedures with precision and fluency.

Targets

The third level of reporting is at the assessment target level. An assessment target defines the grade-specific knowledge, skill, or ability that students should know or be able to demonstrate within a domain in either ELA or mathematics. The assessment target reports provide additional information about groups of students at the more granular target level.

Example of a Mathematics Assessment Target

Grade 5—Concepts and Procedures Claim 1 Assessment Target D:

Understand the place value system

Note: California uses the adjusted form blueprints for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics. Because the adjusted form blueprint reduced the number of questions on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments by approximately 50 percent, the reduction of items on the adjusted form blueprint does not allow for reliable claim result reporting at the individual student level. For the 2022–23 test administration year, aggregated claim results for student groups of 30 or more are reported only on the [Test Results for California's Assessments](#) website.

3. What do the Assessment Target Reports indicate?

For ELA, the assessment target reports are produced for each of claims 1 through 4:

- Claim 1—Reading
- Claim 2—Writing
- Claim 3—Listening
- Claim 4—Research/Inquiry

For mathematics, the assessment target reports are produced for Claim 1 only.

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For mathematics claims 2, 3, and 4, items are intended to emphasize the mathematical practices; therefore, items may align to the content included in several mathematics assessment targets. The best common descriptors of the items included in these claims are the claim labels themselves.

Unlike the overall ELA or mathematics score, the assessment target reports do not address absolute performance. Rather, the reports provide two **relative** indicators of performance.




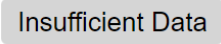
Relative Indicator 1: Performance Relative to the Entire Test

Relative indicator 1, performance relative to the entire test, indicates strengths and weaknesses relative to the test performance as a whole. Unlike achievement levels provided at the content area level, these strengths and weaknesses do not imply proficiency or that a particular content standard has been met. This indicator shows how a group of students performed on a target compared to the group's overall performance on the assessment.

For example, a group of students may have performed extremely well in ELA overall, but their performance in some of the target areas may be relatively lower than the overall performance. Thus, the [**Down-arrow**] icon for a target does not imply a lack of proficiency. Instead, it simply communicates that these students' performance on that target was statistically lower than their performance on the test as a whole. Although the students performed well on the test as a whole, an educator may want to focus instruction on lower-performance areas, particularly if other sources of evidence support that decision.

[Table 1](#) displays the description of the assessment target icons for this indicator.

Table 1. Assessment Target Icon Descriptions




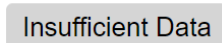
Icon	Target Level	Description
 Better	Better than performance on the test as a whole	This target is a relative strength. The group of students performed better on items from this target than they did on the rest of the test as a whole.
 Similar	Similar than performance on the test as a whole	This target is neither a relative strength nor a relative weakness. The group of students performed about as well on items from this target as they did on the rest of the test as a whole.
 Worse	Worse than performance on the test as a whole	This target is a relative weakness. The group of students did not perform as well on items from this target as they did on the rest of the test as a whole.
 Insufficient Data	Insufficient data	Not enough information is available to determine whether this target is a relative strength or weakness.

Relative Indicator 2: Performance Relative to Met Standard (Level 3)

Relative indicator 2, performance relative to Met Standard, is an indicator of whether students' performance on a target was above, near, or below Met Standard (Level 3). A "Below" indicator suggests that students have not yet mastered the content assessed in a target; however, the students' overall performance on the test may be near or above standard.

[Table 2](#) displays the description of each of the assessment target icons for this indicator.

Table 2. Assessment Target Icons for Performance Relative to the Met Standard Indicator

Icon	Target Level	Description
	Performed above Met Standard (Level 3)	Student group performance was above Met Standard (Level 3) for this target.
	Performed near Met Standard (Level 3)	Student group performance was near Met Standard (Level 3) for this target.
	Performed below Met Standard (Level 3)	Student group performance was below Met Standard (Level 3) for this target.
	Insufficient data	Not enough information is available to determine student group performance for this target.

4. How Are the Assessment Target Reports Accessed?

Assessment target reports are available in the California Educator Reporting System (CERS) for groups of 30 or more students for targets with more than 10 items the item pool. The [How to View Summative Assessment Target Group Reports](#) quick reference guide provides instructions to access the reports.

5. What Considerations and Cautions Are Applied When Using the Assessment Target Reports?

The following are key considerations and important cautions to keep in mind when using the assessment target reports:

- The reports that are currently available are based on data from the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment 2022–23 administration.
- Due to the transition to the adjusted form blueprint, assessment target reports are not available for the 2020–21 and the 2021–22 test administrations.

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- CERS is updated regularly. The data for the current administration in this system may change as a result of updated scoring, relevant appeals, and rescores that are processed.
- For assessment target performance, relative strengths and weaknesses at each target are reported for aggregate-level reports only (e.g., roster, grade level, school, or local educational agency) for student groups of 30 or more students.
- Assessment target score reports should serve as a starting point in an overall investigation of students' strengths and weaknesses and constitute only one of many sources of evidence that should be used in evaluating student performance. ELA and mathematics targets with fewer than 11 contributing items to the assessment target are being suppressed in this report and will not be viewable in CERS.
- In keeping with the test blueprint, individual students may respond to only a few items within a target or no items at all. Therefore, targets that have too few items or too few students responding to items aligned to those targets are suppressed in the assessment target report. Further, educators should not assume individual student needs on the basis of the apparent needs of groups of students. It is critical that educators use multiple pieces of information before determining the needs of individual students.
- Because the relative strengths and weaknesses at each target are computed within a group with a particular overall total performance, comparing target performance across groups may not be appropriate, as different groups will yield different overall performances.
- As with all tests, there is some uncertainty in scores. Please include multiple measures when making instructional decisions about students and classrooms.