Overview of Claims and Evidence for CCSS ELA Assessment

Content Specifications: Mapping Assessment Targets to Standards

Claims and Evidence for CCSS English Language Arts & Literacy Assessment

Defining Assessment Claims and Sufficient Evidence: The theory of action articulated by the Consortium illustrates the vision for an assessment system that will lead to inferences that ensure that all students are well prepared for college and careers after high school. “Inference is reasoning from what one knows and what one observes, to explanations, conclusions, or predictions. One attempts to establish the weight and coverage of evidence in what is observed” (Mislevy, 1995, p 2).

“Claims” are the broad statements of the assessment system’s learning outcomes, each of which requires evidence that articulates the types of data/observations that will support interpretations of competence towards achievement of the claims. A first purpose of this document is to identify the critical and relevant claims that will “identify the set of knowledge and skills that is important to measure for the task at hand” (NRC, 2001), which in this case are the learning outcomes for the CCSS for English language arts and literacy.

In close collaboration with content and technical experts, Consortium work groups and staff, and authors of the CCSS, this document proposes five claims for ELA/Literacy learning – an “overall claim” corresponding to performance on the entire assessment of ELA/Literacy, and four domain-specific claims corresponding to performance in different areas of the assessment. In the sections that follow, each claim is explained with a rationale describing the importance of the learning (embedded in the claim) in preparing students for college and careers.

Four Major Claims for SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Assessments of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Overall Claim (Gr 3-8) - Students can demonstrate progress toward college and career readiness in English language arts and literacy.

Overall Claim (High School) - Students can demonstrate college and career readiness in English language arts and literacy.

Claim #1 - Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Claim #2 - Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Claim #3 - Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

Claim #4 - Students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.
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Relevant and sufficient evidence needs to be collected in order to support each claim. This can be accomplished using a variety of assessment items and tasks applied in different contexts. Data collection for the SBAC ELA/literacy assessments is designed to be used to measure and make interpretations about within- and across-year student progress. The sufficient evidence section includes, for each claim, a brief analysis of the assessment issues to be addressed to ensure accessibility to the assessment for all students. Each claim is accompanied with a description of the sufficient relevant evidence from which to draw inferences or conclusions about learning.

Assessment Targets: For each of the domain-specific claims, a set of summative assessment targets tables is provided. Based on the description of sufficient evidence necessary to support each claim, the assessment targets describe the expectations of what will be assessed by the items and tasks within each claim. These summative assessment targets (evidence) at each grade level represent the prioritized content for summative assessment, and will be used to develop more detailed item and task descriptions through the item specification process.

The assessment targets after each domain-specific claim in this document are provided at three grade levels -- Grade 4, Grade 8, and Grade 11 -- as illustrations of the approach.

Each of the summative assessment targets tables:

- **Indicates prioritized content for the summative assessment.** The assessment targets link the Common Core standards for ELA/Literacy to the kinds of items and tasks to which students will be expected to respond.

- **Shows how one or more of the Common Core State Standards (or parts of standards) address the target.** Each target is mapped back to the CCSS standards. Item/task specifications will include the requirement that specific Common Core State Standards are referenced when writing items/tasks.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Assessment Targets for Reading Literary Texts (Grade 4)</th>
<th>Foundation in the Common Core</th>
<th>Underlined Common Core content indicates what this assessment target could assess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: Cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the text(s) Standards: RL-1</td>
<td>RL-1 focuses on students using evidence to support their analyses (claims, conclusions, inferences) about texts. Hence, whether students are asked to determine key details, the central ideas, point of view, or meaning of words and phrases, etc., they will be using RL-1 in addition to one of the other reading standards 2-9. As a result, Standard 1 underlies each of the following Assessment Targets.</td>
<td>RL-1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. KEY DETAILS: Use</td>
<td>Parts of two CCSS standards</td>
<td>RL-1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from: Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
Content Specifications for the Summative Assessment of the "Common Core State Standards for ELA"
DRAFT TO ACCOMPANY GOVERNING STATE VOTE ON ASSESSMENT CLAIMS
March 20, 2012
Posted by Oregon Dept. of Education, May 2012 - to be updated following future updates from Smarter Balanced
- Identifies the intended Depth of Knowledge level for assessment targets and test items/tasks. The likely depth-of-knowledge level (DOK) for each assessment target is provided. (The schema used for the DOK designations is provided in Appendix A of this document. Similar tables for reading targets and item types for the other grade levels are provided in Appendix B.)

The annotated graphic on the following page uses an excerpt from the assessment targets for Claim #1, Grade 4, reading literary texts, showing the features of the Assessment Target tables and how to read/interpret them.

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In many, but not all, cases, when students analyze deeply and draw information from multiple (or full) texts for supporting evidence, the DOK level becomes level 4, whereas the same task using a single text (or shorter excerpts) would be DOK level 3.

CCS Standards that are underlined indicate that more than one text or more than one text format is required for assessment items.
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How to Read and Interpret the Summative Assessment Targets Tables

**[Excerpt from Claim #1 – Gr. 4, Reading Literary Texts]**

### Grade 4 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT TARGETS

**Providing Evidence Supporting Claim #1**

ELA/Literacy Claim #1

Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

**To the degree possible, all literary passages will include at least one item assessing each of the assessment targets (#1-#4) below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supports &amp; Evidence</th>
<th>Targets are mapped to standards or objectives from CCSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:</strong> Cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the text(s)</td>
<td><strong>Targets are mapped to standards or objectives from CCSS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standards:</strong> RL-1, RL-3, RL-4, RL-6 (DOK 3, DOK 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RL-1 is a component of each of the seven targets listed below.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Targets

- **RL-1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RL-2:** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- **RL-3:** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- **RL-4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
- **RL-5c:** Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).
- **RL-6:** Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between

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**Proposed Reporting Categories:** For each claim a set of “Potential Reporting Categories” follows the

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade and Claim # shown</th>
<th>Text of Claim is General conditions, emphasis, or assessment constraints on what is presented to students are shown here</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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### Notes

4 In many cases, but NOT ALL, when students analyze deeply and draw information from multiple (full) texts for supporting evidence, the DOK level becomes level 4, whereas the same task using a single text (or shorter excerpts) would be DOK level 3.

5 CC Standards that are underlined indicate that more than one text or more than one text format is required for assessment items.

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