
ELA Professional Development Activity

Unpacking a Performance Task

Overview

In this activity, participants will unpack a Smarter Balanced Practice Test performance task in order to better understand the design and purpose of the task, its alignment to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and its instructional implications.

Objectives

Participants will:

- * Examine a Smarter Balanced Practice Test performance task
- * Explicate the demands of the task, and anticipate issues students are likely to have in completing it
- * Understand the alignment of the task to the Smarter Balanced Claims and Targets
- * Review the scoring rubric for the task

Time

- * Approximately 2 hours

Activity

MATERIALS & PREPARATION

Presenter Preparation:

- * Choose a task that is appropriate for the grade level of the teachers in your group. You can view tasks in the scoring guides available on the ELA/Literacy grade-level pages of Understanding Proficiency.
- * Do the task as if you were a student.
- * Prepare the materials needed.

Materials:

1. Handout: Full ELA performance task (stimuli and items – found in the scoring guide). This can be found on the ELA/Literacy grade-level pages.
2. Handout: Smarter Balanced Claims and Targets for the appropriate grade band. See page 6 of this document.
3. Handout: Scoring rubrics for the full write. This can be found on the ELA/Literacy grade-level page associated with your task.

FACILITATING THE ACTIVITY

Setting the Stage

(5 minutes)

Let participants know the purpose of the session:

We will experience a performance task from the Smarter Balanced Practice Test in order to understand how the performance tasks are designed and structured, and to begin to reflect on the demands they place on students. We will then examine how the task is aligned to the Smarter Balanced Claims and Targets and the CCSS.

Activity (continued)

Do the Performance Task

(25–35 minutes)

Establish that the purpose of completing all or part of a task as a student is to directly experience the demands of a summative Smarter Balanced performance task. Once individuals have completed the full ELA task, the group will discuss the content knowledge, skills, and practices required to complete the task.

Once the purpose is clear, allow participants to work individually on the task for 20–30 minutes. Because this is not enough time to complete the full write, instruct participants to complete all the research questions, write a **thesis statement**, and, if time, write a brief **outline** of what they *would* write for the full essay.

While participants are completing the task, model the role of an educator administering the task (circulate, maintain positive environment, discourage talking, etc.).

You will need the following:

- * Handout: Full ELA performance task (stimuli and items – in the scoring guide)

Initial Reactions to the Task

(10–20 minutes)

Ask teachers to verbally share their initial impressions of the task. You may use prompting questions, such as

- * What did you notice?
- * What was challenging? Where would you expect students to struggle?
- * What questions arose?
- * Did anything surprise you?
- * What strategies did you use to manage the complexity of the task?

Activity

(continued)

Reflect on the Demands of the Task

(10–20 minutes)

Now that participants have experienced the task as a student would and have shared their initial impressions, spend several minutes reflecting on the demands of the task. Ask teachers to list, as comprehensively as possible, the demands of the task in terms of

- * Knowledge/understandings (Students must know/understand...)
- * Academic skills (Students need to be able to...)
- * Mindsets/executive functioning skills (Students must be willing and able to...)

Give teachers a few minutes to list ideas in pairs or small groups, and then discuss. Chart teachers' responses on poster paper or a whiteboard if possible.

Review Claims and Targets

(5–10 minutes)

Explain what claims and targets are and how the different portions of the ELA performance tasks align to the claims and targets

Presenter says:

Now that you have explored the full range of task demands, we will narrow our lens again to consider precisely what each part of the performance task measures. Smarter Balanced uses Claims and Targets to pinpoint what each item measures.

What are Smarter Balanced Claims and Targets?

"Claims are the broad statements of the assessment system's learning outcomes."

"For each Claim, a set of Assessment Targets are provided . . . the assessment targets describe the expectations of what will be assessed by the items and tasks within each claim." One of the primary purposes of claims and targets is to group or cluster multiple standards in meaningful ways.

In all of the ELA performance tasks, the first three items — the research questions — are designed to measure Claim 4: Research/Inquiry. The full-write measures Claim 2: Writing. Although reading skills are clearly involved, no part of the performance task is designed to directly measure Claim 1: Reading. The targets measured by each item will vary. Take a few minutes now to review the Claims and Targets relevant to your grade band. You will probably note that the Research claim integrates both reading and writing standards from the Common Core.

Activity (continued)

Distribute the Smarter Balanced Claims and Assessment Targets handout and give teachers a few minutes to review the documents. Field any questions they may have about claims and targets.

MATERIALS:

- * Handout: Smarter Balanced Claims and Targets for the appropriate grade band

Review the Scoring Rubrics

(10–15 minutes)

Distribute the appropriate Scoring Rubrics for the full write. Allow participants 5 minutes to review the rubrics individually, and then open a discussion about what they notice. Consider prompting the discussion with the following questions:

- * Does anything surprise you about how this full write is scored?
- * How do the scoring rubrics compare with your own approach to grading student writing?
- * Where might your students need support in order to score a 3 or 4 on a task like this?

MATERIALS:

- * Handout: Scoring rubrics for full write

Reflect on the Process

(5–10 minutes)

Ask teachers to reflect on the experience they just had. Give them a few minutes to jot down responses to questions such as the following:

- * What was difficult about the task?
- * What did you notice about your own responses to the items?
- * What will you take away from this experience? Did you have any “aha” moments?
- * Does this experience have any implications for your instruction?

Give teachers a few minutes to make some notes individually, and then invite a few to share out some thoughts from their reflections.

Ideas for Next Steps

- * In a separate session with teachers, you could have them analyze and score student work on this task and then reflect on the kinds of learning experiences students need in order to be prepared for success on Smarter Balanced performance tasks. The Understanding Proficiency professional development tool, “Conduct a Scoring Session Using Understanding Proficiency Tools” can help you plan this activity.
- * Following that, you could have teachers implement a performance task with their own students, and then analyze and score their work on the task together with colleagues. This activity is most meaning full if the teachers then plan the feedback they would give to help students understand expectations, and move their learning forward. The Understanding Proficiency professional development tool, “Conduct a Scoring Session Using Your Own Student Work” can help you plan an activity like this.
- * If teachers were helping students prepare for the Smarter Balanced summative assessment, you could have them use a similar protocol with students to help them become deeply familiar with the rubric and to reflect on their own work in light of the criteria.

Smarter Balanced Claims & Targets, ELA/Literacy Grades 3–5

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 1	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.
Target 2	CENTRAL IDEAS	Identify or summarize central ideas/key events.
Target 3	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended meanings of words, including academic/tier 2 words, domain-specific (tier 3) words, and words with multiple meanings (academic/tier 2 words), based on context, word relationships (e.g., synonyms), word structure (e.g., common Greek or Latin roots, affixes), or use of resources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus).
Target 4	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (character development/ actions/traits; first- or third-person point of view; theme; author's message).
Target 5	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Examine or compare relationships (literary elements: setting, conflict, dialogue, point of view, characterization) within or across texts.
Target 6	TEXT STRUCTURES & FEATURES	Relate knowledge of text structures, genre-specific features, or formats (visual/graphic/auditory effects) to obtain, interpret, explain, or connect information within text.
Target 7	LANGUAGE USE	Interpret figurative language, literary devices, or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning or tone.
Target 8	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 9	CENTRAL IDEAS	Identify central ideas, key events, or procedures.
Target 10	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended meanings of words, including academic/tier 2 words, domain-specific (tier 3) words, and words with multiple meanings, based on context, word relationships (e.g., synonyms), word structure (e.g., common Greek or Latin roots, affixes), or use of resources (e.g., dictionary, glossary), with primary focus on the academic vocabulary common to complex texts in all disciplines.
Target 11	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (author’s line of reasoning, point of view/purpose, relevance of evidence or elaboration to support claims, concepts, ideas).
Target 12	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Interpret, explain, or connect information presented within or across texts (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/effect, integrate information).
Target 13	TEXT STRUCTURES OR TEXT FEATURES	Relate knowledge of text structures or text features (e.g., graphs, charts, timelines) to obtain, interpret, explain, or integrate information.
Target 14	LANGUAGE USE	Interpret figurative language, literary devices, or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning or tone.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 1a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Write one or more paragraphs demonstrating specific narrative techniques (use of dialogue, sensory or concrete details, description), chronology, appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, or authors' craft appropriate to purpose (closure, detailing characters, plot, setting, or an event).
Target 1b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Revise one or more paragraphs demonstrating specific narrative techniques (use of dialogue, sensory or concrete details, description), chronology, appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, or authors' craft appropriate to purpose (closure, detailing characters, plot, setting, or an event).
Target 2	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full compositions demonstrating narrative techniques (dialogue, sensory or concrete details, description), text structures, appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, and authors' craft appropriate to purpose (closure, detailing characters, plot, setting, and events).
Target 3a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Write one or more informational/explanatory paragraphs demonstrating ability to organize ideas by stating a focus (main idea), including appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, or supporting evidence and elaboration, or writing body paragraphs, or a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and related to the information or explanation presented.
Target 3b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Revise one or more informational/explanatory paragraphs demonstrating ability to organize ideas by stating a focus (main idea), including appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, or supporting evidence and elaboration, or writing body paragraphs, or a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and related to the information or explanation presented.
Target 4	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full informational/explanatory texts on a topic, attending to purpose and audience; organize ideas by stating a focus (main idea); include structures and appropriate transitional strategies for coherence; include supporting evidence (from sources when appropriate to prompt) and elaboration; and develop an appropriate conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 5	USE TEXT FEATURES	Use text features (headings, bold text, captions, etc.) in informational texts to enhance meaning.
Target 6a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Write one or more paragraphs demonstrating ability to state an opinion about topics or sources; set a context, organize ideas, develop supporting evidence/reasons and elaboration, or develop a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and related to the opinion presented.
Target 6b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Revise one or more paragraphs demonstrating ability to state opinions about topics or sources; set a context, organize ideas, develop supporting evidence/reasons and elaboration, or develop a conclusion appropriate to purpose and audience and related to the opinion presented.
Target 7	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full opinion pieces about topics or sources, attending to purpose and audience: organize ideas by stating a context and focus (opinion), include structures and appropriate transitions for coherence, develop supporting evidence/reasons (from sources when appropriate to prompt) and elaboration, and develop an appropriate conclusion related to the opinion presented.
Target 8	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	Strategically use language and vocabulary (including academic or domain-specific vocabulary) appropriate to the purpose and audience when revising or composing texts.
Target 9	EDIT	Apply or edit grade-appropriate grammar usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to clarify a message and edit narrative, explanatory/informational, and opinion texts.
Target 10	TECHNOLOGY	Use tools of technology to gather information, make revisions, or produce texts.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #3 (Speaking and Listening): Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 1	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	Strategically use precise language (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary), syntax, grammar, and discourse appropriate to the purpose and audience when speaking.
Target 2	CLARIFY MESSAGE	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating grade-level formal English when appropriate.
Target 3	PLAN / SPEAK / PRESENT	Gather and organize information, compose, and orally deliver short (e.g., summarize, paraphrase) and longer presentations for different purposes and audiences, adding visual/graphic/audio enhancements when appropriate for clarifying the message.
Target 4	LISTEN / INTERPRET	Interpret and use information delivered orally.

ELA/Literacy Claim #4 (Research/Inquiry): Students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 3–5)*
Target 1	PLAN / RESEARCH	Conduct short research projects to answer multi-step questions or to investigate different aspects (subtopics) of a broader topic or concept.
Target 2	ANALYZE / INTEGRATE INFORMATION	Locate information to support central ideas and subtopics that are provided; select and integrate information from data or print and non-print text sources for a given purpose.
Target 3	EVALUATE INFORMATION / SOURCES	Distinguish relevant/irrelevant information.
Target 4	USE EVIDENCE	Cite evidence to support conjectures or opinions based on prior knowledge and evidence collected and analyzed.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

Smarter Balanced Claims & Targets, ELA/Literacy Grades 6–8

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 1	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.
Target 2	CENTRAL IDEAS	Summarize central ideas/key events.
Target 3	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended meanings of words, including academic/tier 2 words, domain-specific (tier 3) words, and words with multiple meanings, based on context, word relationships (e.g., synonyms), word structure (e.g., common Greek or Latin roots, affixes), or use of resources (e.g., dictionary, glossary), with primary focus on the academic vocabulary common to complex texts in all disciplines.
Target 4	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (character development/ actions/traits; first- or third-person point of view).
Target 5	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Analyze relationships among literary elements (dialogue, advancing action, character actions/interactions, point of view) within or across texts.
Target 6	TEXT STRUCTURES & FEATURES	Analyze text structures, genre-specific features, or formats (visual/graphic/auditory effects) of texts and the impact of those choices on meaning or presentation.
Target 7	LANGUAGE USE	Interpret figurative language use (e.g., personification, metaphor), literary devices, or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning or tone.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 8	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.
Target 9	CENTRAL IDEAS	Summarize central ideas, key events, procedures, or topics and subtopics.
Target 10	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended or precise meanings of words, including domain-specific (tier 3) words and words with multiple meanings (academic/tier 2 words), based on context, word relationships (e.g., antonyms, homographs), word structure (e.g., common Greek or Latin roots, affixes), or use of resources (e.g., dictionary, glossary, digital tools).
Target 11	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (author’s line of reasoning, point of view/purpose, relevance of evidence or elaboration to support claims, concepts, ideas).
Target 12	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Analyze or compare how information is presented within or across texts (events, people, ideas, topic) or how conflicting information across texts reveals author’s point of view.
Target 13	TEXT STRUCTURES OR TEXT FEATURES	Relate knowledge of text structures or genre-specific features to analyze or integrate information.
Target 14	LANGUAGE USE	Interpret figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, personification, analogies), use of literary devices, or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning or tone.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 1a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, description) and appropriate text structures and transitional strategies for coherence when writing one or more paragraphs of narrative text (e.g., closure, introduce narrator or use dialogue when describing an event).
Target 1b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, description) and appropriate text structures and transitional strategies for coherence when revising one or more paragraphs of narrative text (e.g., closure, introduce narrator, or use dialogue when describing an event).
Target 2	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write longer narrative texts demonstrating narrative strategies, structures, and transitional strategies for coherence, closure, and authors' craft—all appropriate to purpose (writing a speech; style or point of view in a short story).
Target 3a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when writing one or more paragraphs of informational/explanatory text: organizing ideas by stating and maintaining a focus (thesis)/tone, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, developing a topic including relevant supporting evidence/vocabulary and elaboration, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the information or explanation presented.
Target 3b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when revising one or more paragraphs of informational/explanatory text: organizing ideas by stating and maintaining a focus (thesis)/tone, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, developing a topic including relevant supporting evidence/vocabulary and elaboration, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the information or explanation presented.
Target 4	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full informational/explanatory texts, attending to purpose and audience: organize ideas by stating a thesis and maintaining a focus/tone, develop a topic including citing relevant supporting evidence (from sources when appropriate) and elaboration, with appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, and develop a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the information or explanation presented.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 5	USE TEXT FEATURES	Employ text features and visual components appropriate to purpose and style.
Target 6a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when writing one or more paragraphs of text that express arguments about topics or sources: establishing and supporting a claim, organizing and citing supporting evidence using credible sources, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, appropriate vocabulary, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the argument(s) presented.
Target 6b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when revising one or more paragraphs of text that express arguments about topics or sources: establishing and supporting a claim, organizing and citing supporting evidence using credible sources, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, appropriate vocabulary, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the argument presented.
Target 7	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full arguments about topics or texts, attending to purpose and audience: establish and support a claim, organize and cite supporting evidence from credible sources, provide appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, and develop a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from the argument(s) presented.
Target 8	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	Strategically use precise language and vocabulary (including academic words, domain-specific vocabulary, and figurative language) and style appropriate to the purpose and audience when revising or composing texts.
Target 9	EDIT	Apply or edit grade-appropriate grammar usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to clarify a message and edit narrative, explanatory/informational, and argumentative texts.
Target 10	TECHNOLOGY	Use tools of technology to gather information, make revisions, or produce texts.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #3 (Speaking and Listening): Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 1	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	Strategically use precise language (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary), figurative language, syntax, grammar, and discourse appropriate to the intent, purpose, and audience when speaking.
Target 2	CLARIFY MESSAGE	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating grade-level formal English when appropriate.
Target 3	PLAN / SPEAK / PRESENT	Gather and organize information, compose, and orally deliver short (e.g., summarize key ideas) and longer presentations for different purposes and audiences, adding the use of visual/graphic/digital/audio enhancements when appropriate for clarifying the message or intent.
Target 4	LISTEN / INTERPRET	Interpret and use information delivered orally.

ELA/Literacy Claim #4 (Research/Inquiry): Students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (ELA Grades 6–8)*
Target 1	PLAN / RESEARCH	Conduct short research projects to explore a topic, issue, or problem, logically organizing ideas and supporting details.
Target 2	ANALYZE / INTEGRATE INFORMATION	Analyze information within and among sources of information (print and non-print texts, data sets, conducting procedures, etc.).
Target 3	EVALUATE INFORMATION / SOURCES	Use reasoning, evaluation, and evidence to assess the credibility and accuracy of each source in order to gather and select information to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Target 4	USE EVIDENCE	Cite evidence to support analyses, arguments, or critiques.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

Grade 11 Claims and Targets

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 ELA)*
Literary Texts		
Target 1	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.
Target 2	CENTRAL IDEAS	Summarize central ideas/key events using key relevant details.
Target 3	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended, precise, or nuanced meanings of words, including distinguishing connotation/denotation and words with multiple meanings (academic/tier 2 words), based on context, word patterns, word relationships, etymology, or use of specialized resources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, digital tools).
Target 4	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (character development/ actions/traits; first- or third-person point of view; theme; author's message).
Target 5	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Analyze interrelationships among literary elements (e.g., characterization, conflict, ordering of actions, setting, dialogue, point of view) within or across texts.
Target 6	TEXT STRUCTURES & FEATURES	Analyze text structures, genre-specific features, or formats (visual/graphic/auditory effects) of texts and the impact of those choices on meaning or presentation.
Target 7	LANGUAGE USE	Interpret or analyze the figurative (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, paradox) or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning and tone.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #1 (Reading): Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 ELA)*
Informational Texts		
Target 8	KEY DETAILS	Given an inference or conclusion, use explicit details and implicit information from the text to support the inference or conclusion provided.
Target 9	CENTRAL IDEAS	Summarize central ideas, topics/subtopics, key events, or procedures using supporting ideas and relevant details.
Target 10	WORD MEANINGS	Determine intended or precise meanings of words, including academic/tier 2 words, domain-specific/technical (tier 3) words, and connotation/denotation, based on context, word patterns, relationships, etymology, or use of specialized resources (e.g., dictionary, glossary, digital tools), with primary focus on the academic vocabulary common to complex texts in all disciplines.
Target 11	REASONING & EVIDENCE	Make an inference or provide a conclusion and use supporting evidence to justify/explain inferences (author's line of reasoning, point of view/purpose, relevance of evidence or elaboration to support claims, concepts, ideas).
Target 12	ANALYSIS WITHIN OR ACROSS TEXTS	Analyze texts to determine how connections are made in development of complex ideas or events or in development of topics, or rhetorical features.
Target 13	TEXT STRUCTURES OR TEXT FEATURES	Relate knowledge of text structures or formats, or genre features (e.g., graphic/visual information), to integrate information or analyze the impact on meaning or presentation.
Target 14	LANGUAGE USE	Analyze the figurative (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, paradox) or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of these word choices on meaning and tone.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 ELA)*
Target 1a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, description, pacing) and appropriate text structures and transitional strategies for coherence when writing one or more paragraphs of narrative text (e.g., closure, introducing narrator’s point of view, or using dialogue when describing an event or to advance action).
Target 1b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, description, pacing) and appropriate text structures and transitional strategies for coherence when revising one or more paragraphs of narrative text (e.g., closure, introducing narrator’s point of view, or using dialogue when describing an event or to advance action).
Target 2	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	The CCSS places low instructional emphasis (20%) on narrative writing at high school. Developing full narrative compositions will not be required in the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment; however, the use of narrative strategies may be included as a scoring criterion when evaluating writing for other purposes in high school.
Target 3a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when writing one or more paragraphs of informational/explanatory text: organizing ideas by stating and maintaining a focus/tone; providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence; developing a complex topic and subtopics, including relevant supporting evidence/vocabulary and elaboration; or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of a topic).
Target 3b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when revising one or more paragraphs of informational texts: organizing ideas by stating a thesis and maintaining a focus, developing a complex topic/subtopics, including relevant supporting evidence (from texts when appropriate) and elaboration, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (i.e., articulating implications or the significance of a topic).
Target 4	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full informational/explanatory texts, attending to purpose and audience: organizing ideas by stating a thesis and maintaining a focus/tone; developing a complex topic and subtopics, including citing relevant supporting evidence (from sources when appropriate) and elaboration, with appropriate transitional strategies for coherence; and developing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of a topic).

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #2 (Writing): Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Each year, students will be assessed using at least one extended performance task (one of the assessment targets: [#4 or #7]). Other assessment targets may be assessed using a mix of CAT writing items or items reported under Claim #4 (Research).

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 ELA)*
Target 5	USE TEXT FEATURES	[Not assessed in CAT summative assessment] Employ text features and visual components appropriate to purpose and style.
Target 6a	WRITE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when writing one or more paragraphs of text that express arguments about topics or sources: establishing and supporting a precise claim, organizing and citing supporting evidence and counterclaims using credible sources, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, using appropriate vocabulary, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the argument(s) presented.
Target 6b	REVISE BRIEF TEXTS	Apply a variety of strategies when revising one or more paragraphs of text that express arguments about topics or sources: establishing and supporting a precise claim, organizing and citing supporting evidence and counterclaims using credible sources, providing appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, using appropriate vocabulary, or providing a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the argument(s) presented.
Target 7	COMPOSE FULL TEXTS	Write full arguments about topics or sources, attending to purpose and audience: establish and support a claim, organize and cite supporting evidence from credible sources, provide appropriate transitional strategies for coherence, and develop a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows from and supports the argument(s) presented.
Target 8	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	Strategically use precise language and vocabulary (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary and figurative language) and style appropriate to the purpose and audience when revising or composing texts.
Target 9	EDIT	Apply or edit grade-appropriate grammar usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to clarify a message and edit narrative, explanatory/informational, and argumentative texts.
Target 10	TECHNOLOGY	[Not assessed in summative assessment] Use tools of technology to gather information, make revisions, or produce texts.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #3 (Speaking and Listening): Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 ELA)*
Speaking		
Target 1	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Strategically use precise language (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary), figurative language, syntax, grammar, and discourse appropriate to the intent, purpose, and audience when speaking.
Target 2	CLARIFY MESSAGE	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating grade-level formal English when appropriate.
Target 3	PLAN / SPEAK /PRESENT	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Gather and organize information, compose, and orally deliver short (e.g., summaries) and longer presentations for different purposes and audiences, drawing from a range of digital media to enhance the message or intent.
Target 4	LISTEN /INTERPRET	Analyze, interpret, and use information delivered orally.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications

ELA/Literacy Claim #4 (Research/Inquiry): Students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

Target #	Target Title	Full Text of Target (Grade 11 Grade ELA)*
Target 1	PLAN/RESEARCH	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Devise an approach and conduct short, focused research projects to explore a topic, issue, or problem, analyzing interrelationships among concepts or perspectives.
Target 2	ANALYZE / INTEGRATE INFORMATION	Gather, analyze, and integrate multiple sources of information/evidence to support a presentation on a topic.
Target 3	EVALUATE INFORMATION / SOURCES	Use reasoning, evaluation, and evidence to assess the credibility and accuracy of each source in order to gather and select information to support analysis, reflection, and research. Evaluate relevance, accuracy, and completeness of information from multiple sources.
Target 4	USE EVIDENCE	Cite evidence to support arguments or conjectures.
Target 5	LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY USE	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Strategically use precise language and vocabulary (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary), figurative language, and syntax appropriate to the purpose and audience.
Target 6	EDIT	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Apply grade-appropriate grammar usage and mechanics to clarify a message (narrative, informational, and opinion/argumentative texts).
Target 7	TECHNOLOGY	[Not assessed on the summative assessment] Use tools of technology to gather information, make revisions, or produce texts/presentations.

*The actual text of each target is grade-level-/grade-band-specific.

Source: Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications