

Grade 10 Mathematics and ELA Testing and Content

Background

ESHB 2224 changed the high school English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics tests to 10th grade, starting in spring 2018. From 2015 to 2017, the Smarter Balanced high school tests were administered to 11th graders and a proficient score was a College and Career Ready indicator. The 10th grade test will be a measure of “on track” to College and Career Ready, as it is in grades 3–8.

Process

During fall 2017, OSPI worked with groups of Washington educators to evaluate the content that would be included in 10th grade testing. As the high school tests previously were based on the expectations for students after three years of high school, the question posed to educators was what would be appropriate content to include for a test to be administered in 10th grade? The educators reviewed the high school learning standards to evaluate the content for the new grade of testing.

ELA Approach

For the 10th grade ELA test, educators compared the expectations outlined in the ELA K–12 Learning Standards for grades 9–10 and 11–12. After concluding that the minor differences were primarily related to text complexity, educators reviewed the Smarter Balanced Stimulus Specifications and determined that the adaptive nature of the test allowed for adequate differentiation of text complexity appropriate for 10th graders. Based on recommendations from educators, no changes were made to the content of the test.

Mathematics Approach

For the 10th grade test, educators identified and recommended excluding high school Mathematics K–12 Learning Standards content that is usually first introduced in a third-year mathematics course such as Algebra 2, Integrated III, or a CTE equivalent. Educators also identified content usually introduced in subsequent courses after a third-year mathematics course and recommended excluding this content as well. Based on the educators’ recommendations, OSPI worked with the test vendor to modify the content of the Smarter Balanced high school mathematics test bank for spring 2018.



Additional Mathematics Information

It is important to remember that students should receive instruction toward the entirety of the high school Mathematics K–12 Learning Standards throughout their high school experience. This includes the Standards for Mathematical Practice and Content Standards. This generally requires three or four years of instruction.

Two additional documents with information about the mathematics content are available. The first is Grade 10 Mathematics Testing: Further Focus that provides additional guidance on testing specific standards included for 10th grade testing. The other is Common Core State Standards: Grade 10 Mathematics Testing in Washington, a version of the high school standards that highlights practices and content included for 10th grade testing.

Test Blueprint

The test blueprint for the 10th grade ELA test will be the same as the previously-used 11th grade test blueprint. Based on educators' recommendations that changes to the content of the test bank are not necessary, there was no need to change the test blueprint.

We are also able to continue to use the previously-used 11th grade test blueprint for the 10th grade mathematics test. This is possible for three reasons:

1. The very large number of items in the high school bank allowed removing specific content without eliminating entire sections of the test bank;
2. The adaptive nature of the test allows selecting items based on student performance throughout the test; and
3. The sampling nature of the test blueprint allows selecting a variety of content within broad categories of the standards.

Cut Scores

On January 11, 2018 the State Board of Education adopted 10th grade achievement level cut scores (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4) in both ELA and mathematics. Level 3 and above is considered "on track" to College and Career Ready. The graduation cut scores for both content areas, adopted by the State Board in August 2015, did not change.

Cut Scores	ELA (10th Grade)	Mathematics (10th Grade)
Level 2 cut score	2491	2533
Graduation cut score	2548	2595
Level 3 cut score	2577	2614
Level 4 cut score	2678	2697



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