

# Exploring the Evidence for ELA

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# Session Objectives

- The assessment implications of the “shifts” related to the adoption of the Common Core for ELA/Literacy
- Further explore how Smarter Balanced developed the ELA/Literacy assessment to measure the knowledge and skills outlined in the Common Core

# Key Shifts in ELA/Literacy

1. Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language.
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

# Smarter Balanced Assessments ELA/Literacy

## The overall claim for grades 3-8:

“Students can demonstrate progress toward college and career readiness in English language arts and literacy.”

## The overall claim for grade 11:

“Students can demonstrate college and career readiness in English language arts and literacy.”

# ELA/Literacy Claims

## **Claim 1 Reading**

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

## **Claim 2 Writing**

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

## **Claim 3 Speaking & Listening**

Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

## **Claim 4 Research**

Students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

# Claims/Strands

## Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Claims

- Reading
  - Writing
- Speaking and Listening
  - Research

## Common Core ELA/Literacy Strands

- Reading (RL and RI)
  - Writing (W)
  - Language (L)\*
- Speaking and Listening (SL)

# Claims, Targets, and Standards



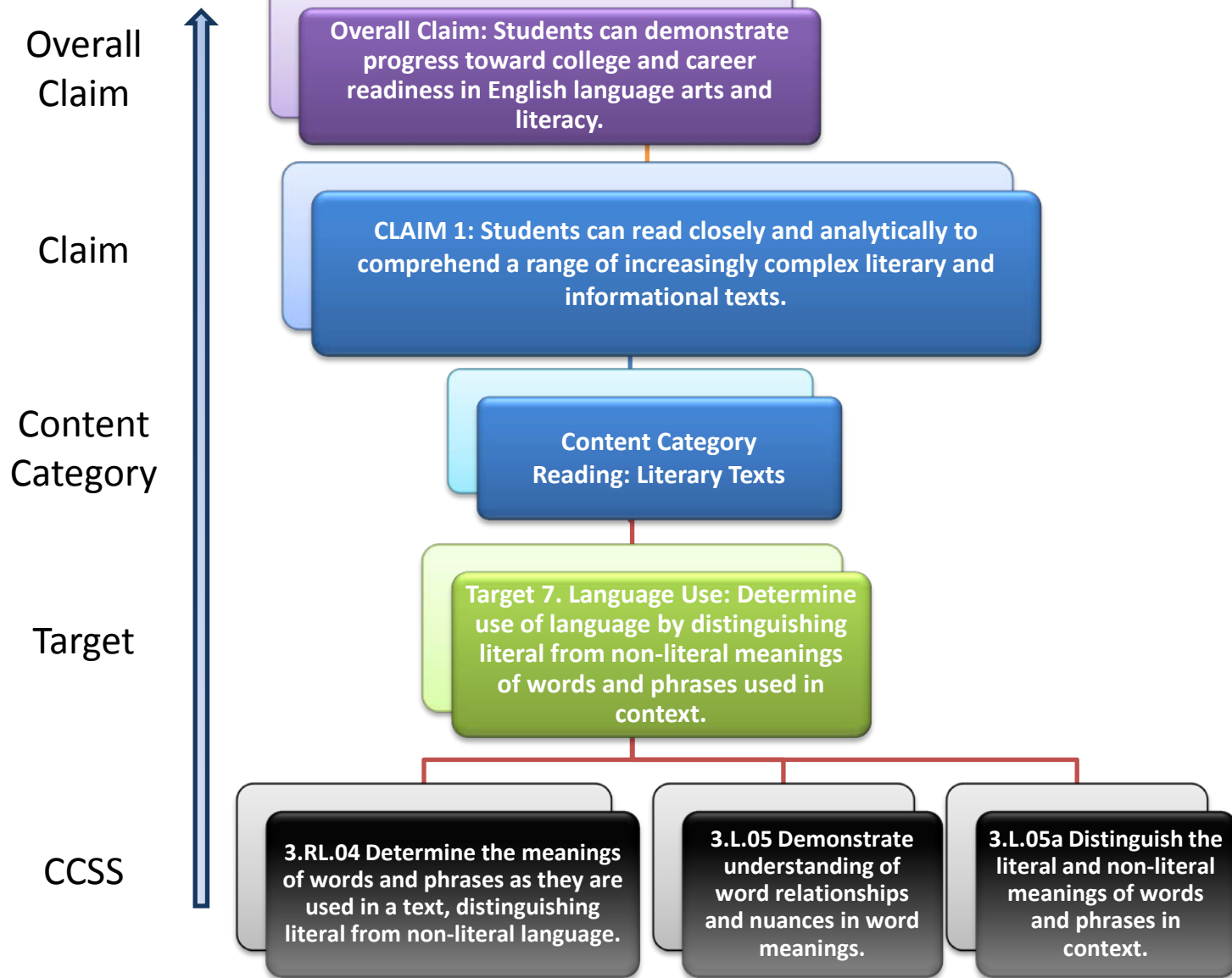
# Claims, Targets, and Models

- For each of the different Claims, Smarter Balanced has developed assessment **Targets** specifying the content of items that will be on the summative assessments.
- Targets are generally associated with a primary CCSS, but most Targets address more than one
- There are multiple models of item types for each Target
- Models are scenarios or descriptions of what an item or activity might look like in order to assess any given Target



# Claims, Targets, and Models

- Each Target has anywhere from two to six potential models; these are identified on the Item Specifications Tables.
- The Models each indicate the assigned item type (SR, CR, or TE) and DOK.
- For each item, item writers choose ONE of the Models and use the description provided to write the type of item that has been identified.
- Generally, there is at least one Model for each Target that addresses SR items and at least one addressing CR items.



# Targets for Claim 1: Reading

Literary Text	Target Heading	Informational Text
Target 1	Key Details	Target 8
Target 2	Central Ideas	Target 9
Target 3	Word Meanings	Target 10
Target 4	Reasoning and Evidence	Target 11
Target 5	Analysis Within or Across Texts	Target 12
Target 6	Text Structures and Features*	Target 13
Target 7	Language Use	Target 14

\*Text Structures or Text Features for Informational Text

# Targets for Claim 2: Writing

Target	Target Heading	Writing Purpose
Target 1a	Write Brief Texts	Narrative
Target 1b	Revise Brief Texts	
Target 2	Compose Full Texts*	
Target 3a	Write Brief Texts	Informational/ Explanatory
Target 3b	Revise Brief Texts	
Target 4	Compose Full Texts	
Target 5	Use Text Features	NA
Target 6a	Write Brief Texts	Opinion/ Argumentative
Target 6b	Revise Brief Texts	
Target 7	Compose Full Texts	
Target 8	Language and Vocabulary Use	All Purposes
Target 9	Edit	
Target 10	Technology	NA

\*Not assessed at Grade 11 in PT

# Targets for Claim 3: Listening

Target	Target Heading	
Target 1	Language and Vocabulary Use	NA
Target 2	Clarify Message	NA
Target 3	Plan/Speak/Present	NA
Target 4	Listen/Interpret	

# Targets for Claim 4: Research

Target	Target Heading	
Target 1	Plan/Research	NA
Target 2	Interpret & Integrate Information	
Target 3	Analyze Information/Sources	
Target 4	Use Evidence	

# Sample Item Spec/Item Map

## Information of Note:

- Grade, Claim, Target, DOK identified
- Standards listed; underlining shows what the target “could assess.”
- Evidence Required
- Allowable Item Types
- Models for each of the Item Types

# Smarter Balanced Item Types

Selected Response

Constructed Response

Performance Tasks



## Selected Response....

- Can assess a broad range of content
- Scoring is objective, fast, and relatively inexpensive
- Less effective in measuring a student's reasoning process and in assessing higher-order thinking skills

# Selected Response Item Types

- Multiple Choice, Single Correct Response
- Multiple Choice, Multiple Correct Response
- Two-part Multiple Choice, with Evidence Responses
- Matching Tables
- Hot Text

# Multiple Choice/Multiple Response

1



Which sentences **best** support the idea that the sea is important to Enzo and his family? Select **two** options.

- ☐ “They would fish for hours, just the two of them, surrounded by the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea.”
- ☐ “The boy’s earliest memories were of being at sea with his father.”
- ☐ “Now Enzo and his family were on a giant ship crossing the Atlantic.”
- ☐ “Gone was the fishing boat.”
- ☐ “Enzo explained that his father had come from a long line of fishermen who had passed down the remedy for seasickness.”
- ☐ “He explained that they were sailing to meet his mother’s brothers.”

# Multiple Choice/Evidence

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

## Man's First Flight

by Kiera Downie

Orville and Wilbur Wright became famous when they flew their airplane, the *Wright Flyer*, into the pages of history. But humans had been flying for many years before that famous event. Hot air balloons were the first way humans flew. The idea for these balloons came from China over a thousand years ago. The Chinese made a lantern to use as a signal. It was a balloon made of paper, using a candle to both light it and carry it upward. It wasn't long before people began to think that if they could make a small balloon fly, they could make a big balloon fly, too—one big enough to hold a person.

Today, the hot air balloon design is the same as the balloons in China although the materials are a little different. We now make the balloons from nylon, a strong and flexible material. They are attached to large baskets that are made of wicker and big

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This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

### Part A

Which sentence **best** describes the author's main idea in paragraph 1?

- ☐ (A) The hot air balloon was invented before the airplane.
- ☐ (B) Human flight was the idea of Orville and Wilbur Wright.
- ☐ (C) Human flight, which is important to history, is over a thousand years old.
- ☒ (D) The hot air balloon, the first way humans flew, was based on ancient Chinese lanterns.

### Part B

Which detail from the passage **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ (A) "...they flew their airplane, the *Wright Flyer*, into the pages of history."
- ☐ (B) "...humans had been flying for many years before that famous event."
- ☐ (C) "Hot air balloons are the first way humans flew."
- ☐ (D) "The idea for these balloons came from China, over a thousand years ago."

# Multiple Choice/Evidence

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

## Coyote Tries to Steal the Honey

At the beginning of the long days of summer, Coyote had seen Bear slowly walk up to a lonely tree that sat in an open field. The branches of this tree remained bare throughout the warm months. When the sun was high it cast shadows in the shapes of strange insects upon the grass. It was here the bees kept their treasure. They kept it buried in the base of this old hollow tree.

Coyote wore a smile as wide as the sky, for he knew what he had to do to have a taste of the bees' sweet honey. He knew that Bear was able to simply take the honey from the base of the tree. The bees made angry noises, but that did not seem to bother Bear one bit. They swarmed around his big dark body as he sat and ate. When he was finished he shook them off, got up, and walked away. Coyote thought about this all summer. If he could just make a suit that looked like Bear's, he would be able to dip his paw

### Part A

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Click on the statement that **best** explains how the characters' actions show their relationship in the passage.

- A. The frightened bear stayed away from the coyote.
- B. The bear and coyote worked together to get honey.
- C. The coyote learned how to get honey by watching the bear.
- D. The bear learned how to get honey by watching the coyote.

### Part B

Click on **all** of the sentences from the passage that **best** support your answer in part A.

Coyote wore a smile as wide as the sky, for he knew what he had to do to have a taste of the bees' sweet honey. He knew that Bear was able to simply take the honey from the base of the tree. The bees made angry noises, but that did not seem to bother Bear one bit. They swarmed around his big dark body as he sat and ate. When he was finished he shook them off, got up, and walked away. Coyote thought about this all summer. If he could just make a suit that looked

# Matching Table

1 2 3

3



Click on the boxes to match each source with the idea or ideas that it supports.  
Some ideas may have more than one source selected.

	Source #1: It's a Cold (Hot, Dry, Dark) Cruel World!	Source #2: Animal Architects	Source #3: Don't Step in that Ecosystem!
Some animals have developed special body features that help them survive in the place where they live.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Animals and plants living together is important for their survival.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Animals create environments where they are protected from the weather and kept safe and comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Hot Text

Read the text. Then, answer the questions.

## Libby's Graduation

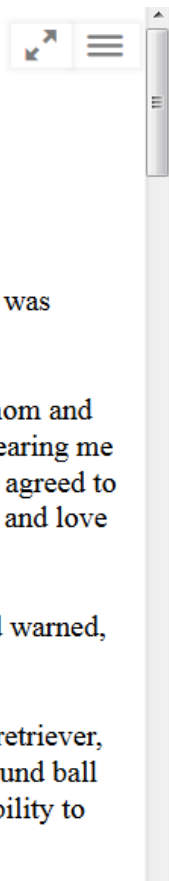
by M. G. Merfeld

It was final exam day—for my dog. And I was nervous.

It all started a few months ago when my mom and dad made a deal with me. After years of hearing me pester them about our need for a dog, they agreed to get one if I promised to care for it, train it, and love it.

“The dog will be your responsibility,” Dad warned, “—and not just when it’s convenient.”

Libby, a four-month-old yellow Labrador retriever, arrived shortly thereafter. She was a 30-pound ball of fur, claws, and teeth with an uncanny ability to jump, dig, and chew.



3

First, read the dictionary definition. Then, complete the task.

(v) **1.** to use for a practical purpose

Click on the word that **most closely** matches the definition provided.

On the first day of dog school, Libby was as excited as I had ever seen her. She howled and whined and stood on her hind legs when she saw the other dogs in the class. Her tail wagged at about 100 miles an hour as she ran and greeted each of her canine classmates.

“If we could harness her tail’s energy,” my dad said, “I think she could generate enough power to light up a small city.”

Despite the distraction of having four potential playmates in the room, Libby breezed through her first class because we had already taught her to sit, lie down, and recognize her name. My homework was to reinforce these ideas throughout the week.

# Constructed Response/Short Answer

- Requires the student to generate a response as opposed to selecting a response
- Called “Brief Write” or “Short Answer” in Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy assessments
- Allows students to show more complex thinking and analytical skills
- Generally, blueprints allow for one SA item for Reading, one for Writing, two for Research



# Constructed Response

- Brief Writes (CAT and PT)
  - Draft introductions, conclusions
  - Add a topic sentence or descriptive detail
  - Provide transitions, dialogue
  - Revise to eliminate errors
- Short Answer (CAT Reading Items)
  - Identify themes, main ideas
  - Analyze structures, characters
  - Compare and contrast

# Constructed Response

## Research Short Answer

- Compare sources to determine the most effective for a particular purpose
- Locate information to support or challenge a particular claim or argument
- Cite specific evidence that can be found within a source
- Summarize information by paraphrasing while avoiding plagiarism

# Constructed Response/Short Answer

## Student Directions

### Robots Narrative Performance Task

#### Task:

Your school's technology club is building a new website. The club sponsor is also your English teacher, and he has encouraged everyone to research a topic related to technology for an upcoming project. Since you saw a movie about robots recently, you want to know more about what real robots can do. During your research, you have found three articles about robots.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully so you will have the information you will need to answer the questions and complete your research. You may click on the Global Notes button to take notes on the

1 2 3

2

Many robots are designed to do normal tasks that improve people's lives or jobs. Provide **two** pieces of evidence from different sources that support this idea and explain how each example supports the idea. Cite evidence for each piece of information and identify the source title or number.

# Table Group Activity

Based on the Packet your table has been provided:

- Identify the claim, item type, target, and depth of knowledge.
- What specific CCSS is being measured? Find the specific wording of the standard.
- What other item types would be possible for this target?
- What discoveries or insights were gained by looking at the item map?

# Setting the Stage: Sample Standards

8.RI.7: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient: recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

## Sample Standard #2

8.RI.9: Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

## Sample Standard #3

8.W.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

## Sample Standard #4

8.W.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.



# Performance Tasks

- Require students to demonstrate ability to think and reason and produce fully developed products
- Reflect a real-world task and allow for reflection and revision
- Measure complex “assessment targets”
- Provide evidence of college and career readiness

# Performance Tasks

## Session 1: Reading Resources and Short Answer

- Read/review/reflect upon multiple resources related to the central topic; sources represent a variety of perspectives and viewpoints
- Students respond to three research questions relating to the resources; typically, two short answer and one matching table.
- If time, students begin planning/drafting of the “full write” essay.

# Performance Tasks

## Session 2: The “Full Write”

- Students review source material; highlighting and notes retained from Session 1.
- Students respond to a real-world task; draft, revise, submit essay (untimed).
- Essays should be multi-paragraph and draw directly from at least two or more of the source materials. Source attributions should be made within the student work.

# Claims and Purposes Assessed

## Grades 3-5

Writing (Narrative, Informational, Opinion)  
+ Research

## Grades 6-8

Writing (Narrative, Explanatory, Argumentative)  
+ Research

## Grade 11

Writing (Explanatory, Argumentative)  
+ Research

# Performance Task Rubrics

PT are scored on three attributes:

- Purpose/Organization (4-point scale)
- Evidence/Elaboration (4-point scale)
- Conventions (2-point scale)

*Individual attribute scores contribute to the writing claim score and ELA/Literacy overall score.*

# Purpose/Organization

## Key Elements/Criteria

- Strong main idea or claim, and focus is maintained appropriate to audience and purpose
- Variety of transitions used to clarify relationships between and among ideas
- Introduction and conclusion are present
- Logical progression with strong connections; “syntactic variety”
- For argumentative mode, opposing arguments are acknowledged or addressed

# Evidence/Elaboration

## Key Elements/Criteria

- Effective use of sources, facts, and details as support
- Effective elaboration of ideas using precise language (elaboration may include the use of personal experiences relevant to the main idea)
- References to sources are relevant and specific and effectively integrated into the essay
- Vocabulary is appropriate for the audience and purpose
- Style enhances content

# Conventions

## Key Elements/Criteria

- Correct sentence formation
- Correct capitalization
- Correct grammar/usage
- Correct spelling



# Conventions

Scoring is affected by:

- Variety or range of errors
- Severity of errors (Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors)
- Density of errors (Proportion of errors to the amount of writing/length of the essay)

# Table Activity: Performance Tasks

- At your table, look at the Smarter Balanced Performance Task packet.
- After individual exploration, discuss as a group what skills a student would need to demonstrate in order to successfully complete a Performance Task.
- Select a recorder to capture the most critical skills identified by your group.
- “Map” those skills back to the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (separate handout).

# End of Session Activity

- What questions do you have relating to the content of this part of today's presentation?
- What additional evidence would you like to see in order to answer those questions?