

## INTRODUCTION

**English/Language Arts Performance Task:** The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium provides this scoring guide to help educators understand the scoring process for the Performance Task Full-Writes. To understand the writing scoring guides, it is helpful to understand the specifications for each Smarter Balanced Performance Task, including the following:

- **Writing Tasks:** Each Performance Task begins by describing a writing situation that motivates students to “find out more about” a given problem/question/circumstance, etc. Students are then presented with relevant source material and a writing task with a clearly stated writing topic, audience, purpose, and form, along with the scoring criteria. On the ELA Writing assessment, each student will respond to one performance task.
- **Source Materials:** Each Performance Task is accompanied by grade-appropriate “source material” (i.e. 2-5 texts depending on grade). Except for narrative tasks, which may be more *text-inspired* than *text-based* (i.e. connections to source materials may contribute to or enhance the narrative), students will use source materials to support ideas
- **Writing Purposes:** The Common Core State Standards prescribe three general rhetorical purposes for writing: **narrative**, **informational/explanatory**, and **opinion/ argumentative**. Each writing purpose has a different purpose-specific scoring rubric. For the assessment, each student will be given one of the purposes designated for his or her grade level. These purposes have subtle differences depending on the grade level of the students:
  - Students in grades 3 to 8 may be expected to write to the **narrative** purpose, using the information in the sources as inspiration to write a story or capture the essence of an experience (students in grade 11 will not receive a narrative PT).
  - Students in grades 3-5 may be expected to write to the **informational** purpose, using source material to “inform” an audience about a topic. Students in grades 6-11 may be expected to write to the **explanatory** purpose, analyzing source material to explain some aspect of a subject.
  - Students in grades 3-5 may be expected to form and defend an **opinion**, supported by information provided in source material. Students in grades 6-11 may be expected to compose an **argument**, using evidence from source materials to form and support claims and (in grades 7 -11) counterclaims.
- **Writing Forms:** Each performance task provides students with a clear expected writing form or product. These forms are grade-appropriate, such as letter or report in the earlier grades, moving to more sophisticated essays in later grades.
- **Audience:** The designated audience will be appropriate for the grade level, purpose, and situation for the task, ranging from familiar audiences (e.g., parents, principal) for younger students to more general audiences (e.g., legislative bodies, Internet audiences) for older students.



**Baseline Anchor Set:**

How is a “Baseline Anchor Set” developed? Professional contractor scorers, trained to use the Smarter Balanced scoring rubrics, preliminarily score a range of student responses, defining top level responses and then identifying samples representing different score points. Educators from Smarter Balanced states then review these selections and agree upon, or validate, sample responses that define the range of each score point and provide a variety of response types.

A Word of Caution: In order to maintain the security of the spring 2014 Field Test items for use in the 2015 Summative and Interim item banks, the student responses included in this guide were selected from the Smarter Balanced 2013 Pilot Test. The writing samples *can* help illustrate the descriptors for each score-point category on the Smarter Balanced writing rubrics; therefore, we see the baseline anchors as a useful educator tool. These first Baseline Anchor Sets are, however, just the beginning of what will become full and rich sets of student writing, that include a wide variety of purposes and writing forms for each grade.