



## A Parent's Guide to the Smarter Balanced Assessments Individual Student Reports

### A new kind of test for students and a new kind of report for parents:

The Smarter Balanced Assessments are designed to help parents and educators determine if students are on track to be ready for college or the workforce by the time they graduate from high school. If that seems premature for students in the elementary grades, keep in mind that students begin learning the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics skills they will need to be successful as adults from the day they start school. Be assured that the purpose of the tests is NOT to sort or label student into those who can and can't go to college. The real purpose is to help identify problems or needs early enough to help students stay on track.

The new ELA and Mathematics Assessments are very different than any Vermont students have taken in the past. The questions and tasks are delivered to students almost entirely by computers using a new technology called Computer Adaptive Testing. They also include performance tasks that challenge students to use critical thinking skills, along with their factual knowledge, to solve authentic and engaging problems. Finally, the assessments provide a variety of embedded accessibility tools that can improve the assessment experience for all students, but that are particularly helpful for students with special assessment needs.

Because the new assessments are different than tests students took in the past, the **Individual Student Reports** are also different and may present parents with interpretation challenges. This **Parent Guide** provides information that may help navigate the parts of the report that are complex and unfamiliar. It's important to note that this is only one measure of a student's achievement, and may not address all the key questions that need to be answered. Parents should consult with teachers for help interpreting the Smarter Balanced results, and to see what other useful information may be available.

### A few important terms and concepts:

- ✓ **Claims** are the broad categories of skills and knowledge the assessment is designed to measure. They are the things we should be able to learn about a student from the test results. On the Smarter Balanced assessments, the claims relate to how well a student is progressing toward being ready for college or a career.
- ✓ **Computer Adaptive Testing** provides each student with an individualized set of test questions that are selected by the computer based on how well the student is doing throughout the test session. If the student gets the first question correct, the next one will be a little harder. If the first answer is incorrect, the next question will be a little easier. The computer continues this process until it arrives at the most accurate ability estimate that can be made from the student's answers.
- ✓ **Performance Tasks** challenge students to use what they have learned to solve authentic "real world" problems. Students need to apply a combination of skills and factual knowledge, and are often required to defend their solutions or describe the approach they used.
- ✓ **Achievement Levels** 1 through 4 indicate how well a student did on the test. Level 4 is the highest. Students who score at Levels 3 and 4 are considered "proficient" and are said to have "met the standard." The test scores that define the four levels were set by panels of teachers and curriculum experts who reviewed test questions and student results to determine what a "proficient" student should know or be able to do. Achievement Levels provide a broad view of a student's knowledge and skills, and work best as a starting point for understanding a student's successes and needs.
- ✓ **Scale Scores** divide the achievement levels into smaller and more meaningful units. Think of this like traveling on an interstate highway: the achievement level is like the distance between two exits and the scale scores are like mile markers. The Smarter Balanced scale uses numbers between 2000 and 3000 to map student results from the lowest possible score for grade 3 to the highest possible score for grade 11.
- ✓ **Confidence Bands**, the tiny gray numbers next to the student's test score, represent the range of scale scores a student might achieve if tested multiple times. They are included because no test is 100% accurate. Each test score is an estimate of the student's true ability based on a limited number of questions, and the precision of the estimate is affected by student factors such as health and motivation on test day. Confidence bands reflect the precision of the estimate, not the skills and knowledge a student may or may not have. The reported score is our best estimate of the student's true ability.

# Understanding your Student's Assessment Scores

- 1 Shows where the student's score falls within the broad achievement level, including the confidence band.
- 2 Compares the student's scale score to the average score for the Supervisory Union/District.
- 3 Describes the student's overall achievement level and how it relates to being on track for career and college readiness.
- 4 Shows the student's strengths and challenges on the component skills that make up ELA or Mathematics.
- 5 Identifies the type of essay the student was asked to write and how the student rated on three basic skill areas.
- 6 Shows the student's Lexile information for ELA or Quantile information for Mathematics and how this information can be helpful.
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VERMONT  
AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Reporting

Individual Student Report

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**Demo, Student**  
 Student ID: 9999900001 | DOB: 05/13/2010 | Enrolled Grade: 5 |  
 Date Taken: 12/10/2020

Grade 5 ELA - Interim (ICA) 2020-2021  
 Demo District  
 Demo School

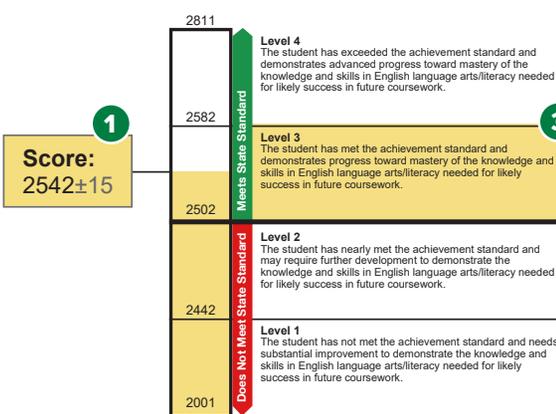
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**Achievement Level:** Level 3    **Scale Score:** 2542±15    **Reported Lexile® Measure:** 985L

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How Did Your Child Do on the Test?



**Score:** 2542±15

How Does Your Child's Score Compare?

Name	Average Scale Score
Idaho	2470
Demo School District	2484
Demo School	2506

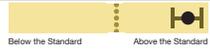
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How Did Your Child Perform on Different Areas of the Test?

Above Standard     At/Near Standard     Below Standard

The table and the graph below indicate student performance on individual claims. The black dot indicates the student's score on each claim. The lines to the left and right of the dot show the range of likely scores your student would receive if he or she took the test multiple times.

Claim	Performance	Performance Category	Performance Category Description
Listening		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Student can employ effective listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.
Reading		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Student can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.
Research/Inquiry		<input type="checkbox"/>	Student may be able to engage in research and inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.
Writing		<input type="checkbox"/>	Student has difficulty producing effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

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How Did Your Child Perform On The Essay?

Essay	Organization/Purpose	Evidence/Elaboration	Conventions
Narrative	The narrative response is adequately sustained and includes a recognizable plot of real or imagined events, an established setting, and developed characters. The events follow an adequate sequence and are linked by some transitions. (3 out of 4 points)	The narrative response provides adequate elaboration to support the development of the narrative including connections to sources; adequate narrative techniques; and sensory, concrete and figurative language that generally advance the story. (3 out of 4 points)	The narrative response shows an adequate understanding of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling. (2 out of 2 points)

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