

Suggested Talking Points

- Smarter Balanced is releasing sample items and performance tasks to help teachers, administrators, and policymakers implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and prepare for next-generation assessments.
- While the sample items and performance tasks are not intended to be used as practice tests, teachers can use them to begin planning the shifts in instruction that will be required to help students meet the demands of the new assessments.
- The sample items and performance tasks showcase the variety of item types being developed by Smarter Balanced, including technology-enhanced items that take advantage of computer administration. However, they represent only a small fraction of the more than 10,000 items and tasks currently in development to support the Pilot Test beginning in February 2013.
- The Smarter Balanced assessment system will cover the full range of college- and career-ready knowledge and skills in the Common Core State Standards. To do this, each test item is associated with assessment targets and overall content claims. This information—as well as the scoring rubric for each item—is available through the online interface.
- The sample items and performance tasks are displayed using a simulated test platform. This does not include accessibility tools and accommodations options that will be available when the assessments are administered to students in the 2014-15 school year—such as Braille, translation options, highlighter tools, and the ability to change font size or magnify portions of items.
- Smarter Balanced welcomes comment and feedback on the sample items and performance tasks. Educators and interested stakeholders can submit feedback online at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>.