

What Does It All Mean: Key Terms on the Smarter Balanced Score Reports Explained

Below is a list of some terms you will see associated with the Smarter Balanced score report. For more information, visit <http://nh.portal.airast.org/resources/?section=reporting-resources>.

Achievement Levels: The Smarter Balanced Assessments measure how well your child is performing against the new learning standards in English and math. Your child received an overall score, which is reported in one of four levels. These levels help to describe where your child is on track to being ready for the next grade level. Students who score in Achievement Level 3 or above have met the standard of the grade level in that subject. If your child scored at Achievement Level 2, he or she may need additional support or practice. Students scoring at Achievement Level 1 will need substantial support to fully comprehend the skills and concepts in that subject.

- **Were Educators Involved in Setting Achievement Levels?:** Achievement levels were developed with by educators and other key stakeholders. A panel of nearly 500 educators, higher education faculty, parents, and business and community leaders went through assessment questions for each grade and recommended where to set the achievement levels. The panel included teachers of students with disabilities and English language learners to ensure the new levels are fair and appropriate for all students.
- **Using the Achievement Levels:** Your child’s performance is further broken down into categories in each subject to help you better understand where your child excels or needs more practice. You can use the assessment results to guide a discussion with your child’s teacher(s) about additional supports that may be needed in class, as well as other ways to support your child at home.

You can also use this information to locate activities online that were designed specifically for each category at every grade level. To find resources designed specifically for the Smarter Balanced Assessment categories, visit: <http://bealearninghero.org/skill-builder>.

Just remember, the Smarter Balanced Assessment and their achievement levels are only one of several measures that are used to determine your child’s academic performance. Multiple sources of information, including classwork, group projects, and homework, help to determine a child’s academic achievement.

Smarter Balanced Assessments: The new online assessment that replaces the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) in English/language arts and mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and 11.

New Hampshire College- and Career-Ready Standards: A set of clear and high academic learning standards for math and English language arts that focus on the critical-thinking, problem-solving and reasoning skills students need in today’s world.

Claim: Broad statements about what students know and can do based on their overall assessment score.

Performance tasks: A multi-step assignment that asks students to apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world problems. In English, students have to apply their research and writing skills, and in math, they will solve a complex problems and then describe and defend their reasoning.

Computer-adaptive technology: A technology that adjusts the difficulty of questions based on how accurately a student has answered previous questions.

Accessibility resources: A set of tools such as a digital notepad and scratch paper that are available to all students.

Achievement standard: The score that determines which achievement level - from 1 through 4 – a student receives on the assessment.

Informational text: Non-fiction text that provides information. It can come in many different formats, including books, magazines, handouts, and websites.

Complex literary text: Text that tells a story and uses challenging language and different text structures that requires students to determine meaning and draw conclusions.

Pure mathematics: Understanding the fundamental concepts and principles of math.

Applied mathematics: Using math skills and concepts to solve real-world problems.

Mathematical argument: The ability to explain your answer verbally and in writing and apply what you have learned to solve new and unfamiliar problems.