Smarter Balanced Resources: Training and Practice Tests

Teacher and Student Resources for Field Test Preparation

Two testing resources have been developed to support teachers and students for the Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced field test: the Smarter Balanced Practice Tests and the Smarter Balanced Training Tests. Each resource is provided in both English language arts (ELA) and math and serves a unique purpose in helping to prepare students for the field test in the spring of 2014.

Practice Tests

The practice tests were released in the spring of 2013 to provide students with a grade-specific testing experience that is similar in format and structure to the Smarter Balanced assessments. The practice tests include a variety of items (approximately 30 items each in ELA and math) as well as an ELA and math performance task at each grade level (3–8 and 11). Since spring 2013, new features have been added to the practice test, such as Spanish glossaries and American Sign Language videos. During the next several months, additional features will continue to be added. More information on these updates will be provided in April 2014.

Training Tests

The Training Tests have been created for the spring 2014 field test and will be released on January 30, 2014. This tool provides a "training opportunity" for students to experience most features, functionality, and items types included on the field test. It is designed to provide students with an opportunity to quickly become familiar with the software and interface features that will be used in the field test. These training tests are available by grade band (3–5, 6–8, high school) and have approximately eight to nine math and six ELA items per grade-band. The training tests also provide students with an opportunity to experience all of the universal tools, designated supports and accommodations that are available on the field test. A complete list of these resources is available at http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_091113.pdf. See the attached Training Test FAQ for additional information.

Smarter Balanced recommends that all students have an opportunity to experience both the practice test and the training test. These tools provide students with a testing situation similar in format and structure to the Smarter Balanced assessments (practice test) and an opportunity to focus on the assessment system's functionality and user interface (training test). See the attached comparison chart for additional information.

Smarter Balanced Resources:
Training and Practice Tests

	Practice Test	Training Test
Purpose	Provide students the opportunity to experience a range of grade-specific item types (as well as performance tasks) similar in format and structure to the Smarter Balanced assessments.	Provide students with an opportunity to quickly become familiar with the software and interface features that will be used in the Smarter Balanced assessments.
Grade level	Individual assessments at each grade • Grades 3–8 and 11	Three assessments by grade band: • Grades 3–5 • Grades 6–8 • high school
Type of Items	Approximately 30 items in ELA and 30 items in math per grade level One ELA and one math performance task per grade level	Approximately 14-15 items per grade band (6 in ELA and 8-9 in math) No performance tasks Includes new item types not currently present in the practice test (matching tables, table fill in, evidence based selected response)
Available Embedded Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations	All universal tools Most designated supports, including: • Color contrast • Masking • Streamlining • Text-to-speech items • Translations (glossary): Spanish Most accommodations, including: • American Sign Language for all math items and ELA listening stims and items • Braille •	All universal tools All designated supports, including: • Color contrast • Masking • Streamlining • Text-to-speech items • Translated test directions: Spanish • Translations (glossary): Spanish, Arabic, Cantonese, Filipino, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese • English Glossary • Full Translation: Spanish All accommodations, including: • American Sign Language for all math items and ELA listening stims and items • Braille • Text-to-speech for reading passages in grades 6–high school
Access	http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/	http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/

Frequently Asked Questions: Training Test

1. **What is the purpose of the Smarter Balanced training test?**
    The purpose of the Smarter Balanced training test is to give students and teachers an opportunity to quickly become familiar with the software and interface features that will be used in the Smarter Balanced assessments.

2. **Do students need to be registered before they can take the training test?**
    No. If student information has not yet been entered into TIDE, a student can still take the training test by logging in as a **guest**.

3. **What are the grades and content areas for the training test?**
    The training test is offered by grade band. There are at least 14-15 items within each grade band (7 in ELA and 8-9 in math). The grade bands are grades 3-5, grades 6-8 and high school

4. **Will the training test include examples of all item types including performance tasks?**
    The training test will *not* include any performance tasks or classroom activities but will include a wide range of item types. The training test also will include three new item types: matching tables, ELA and math; table fill- in for math, and evidence-based selected response items in ELA. These item types currently are not included in the practice test.

5. **Will the training test provide the same user interface as the field test?**
    Yes.

6. **What accommodations will be available on the training test?**
    The training test will offer the all of the universal tools, designated supports and accommodations that the field test offers. For more information about accessibility and accommodations, please visit http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_091113.pdf

7. **Do Test Administrators need to establish a TIDE account before administering the training test?**
    Students can take the training test in a proctored test session set up by a test administrator or as guests outside of a proctored test session. Test administrators (TAs) must have an account in TIDE to set up a proctored test session. TAs will use the same username and password to set up the proctored test session as they use to log into TIDE. We encourage TAs to practice setting up a proctored test session using the training test so they will have experience with how to do this before administering the field tests. The *Test Administrator User Guide*, available at http://sbac.portal.airast.org/field-test/resources/, has directions for setting up a proctored test session.

8. **Are scores available from the training test?**
    The purpose of the training test is to give students and test administrators experience with using the software. Responses are not scored.

9. **Do students need to use the secure browser to take the training test?**
    No. The secure browser does have a link to the training test so that students can use the secure browser. However, students also can use recent versions of the Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome, or Safari browsers to take the training test, or they can use the native browsers built

into iPads and Android tablets. Note that the text-to-speech functionality is available *only* when using the secure browser.

Please click on this link to see the most up-to-date listing of supported browsers for the Practice Test and Training Test. http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/