# Smarter Balanced Assessments English Language Arts/Literacy: Claim 1 Reading

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# Rationale for Assessing Reading

"At the heart of the Common Core State Standards is a focus on literacy instruction that centers on careful examination of the texts- Reading closely and drawing evidence from the text to support inferences and judgments made."





## Claim 1

Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

# Claim 1 and CAT Assessment Targets

Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational text.

Targets 1-7: Literary Text

Targets 8-14: Informational Text

Targets
1 and 8:
KEY DETAILS

Targets
2 and 9:
CENTRAL
IDFAS

Targets
3 and 10:
WORD
MEANINGS

Targets
4 and 11:
REASONING
and
EVIDENCE

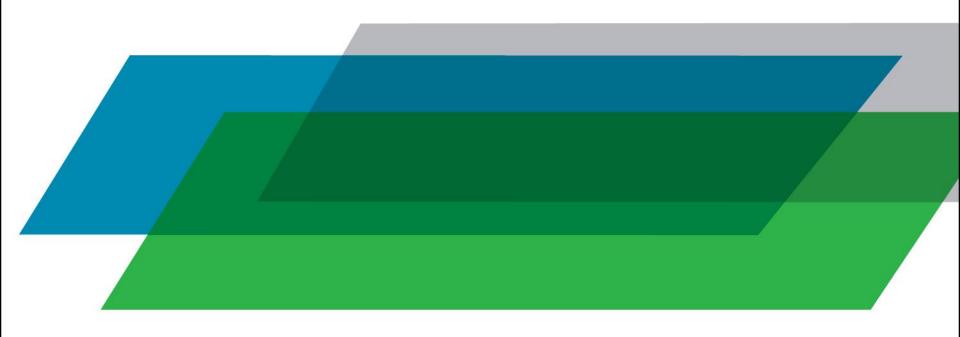
Targets
5 and 12:
ANALYSIS
WITHIN AND
ACROSS
TEXTS

Targets
6 and 13:
TEXT
STRUCTURES
AND
FEATURES

Targets
7 and 14:
LANGUAGE
USE



# **Reading Stimuli Specifications**





# Reading Stimuli Specifications

#### Stimuli must:

- be rich enough to support well-developed questions;
- meet the demands of grade-level interest and appropriateness;
- have an appropriate text complexity level for Claim 1 Reading literary and informational passages on the CCSS grade band;
- adhere to descriptions and the level of quality set forth in the Common Core State Standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Content Specifications for ELA, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium English Language Arts & Literacy Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) Stimulus Specifications for ELA



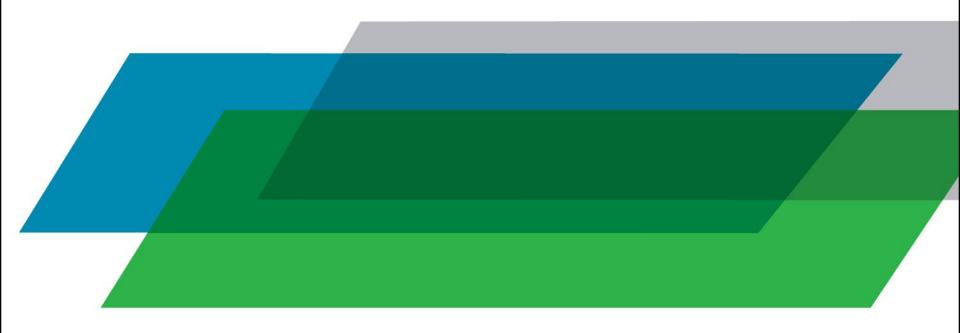
# **Reading Stimuli Specifications**

### Stimuli must:

- Adhere to descriptions and level of quality set forth in the CCSS standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Content Specifications for ELA and the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Stimulus Specifications
- Consider accessibility concerns refer to the SBAC Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines and the SBAC Consortium Bias and Sensitivity Guidelines



# **Quality Criteria for Stimuli**





# Passage Text Length by Grade

GRADE	WORD COUNT RANGE (short text)	WORD COUNT RANGE (long text)
3	200-487	488-650
4	450-562	563-750
5	450-562	563-750
6	650-712	713-950
7	650-712	713-950
8	650-712	713-950
11	800-825	826-1100



# **Literary Texts and Informational Texts**

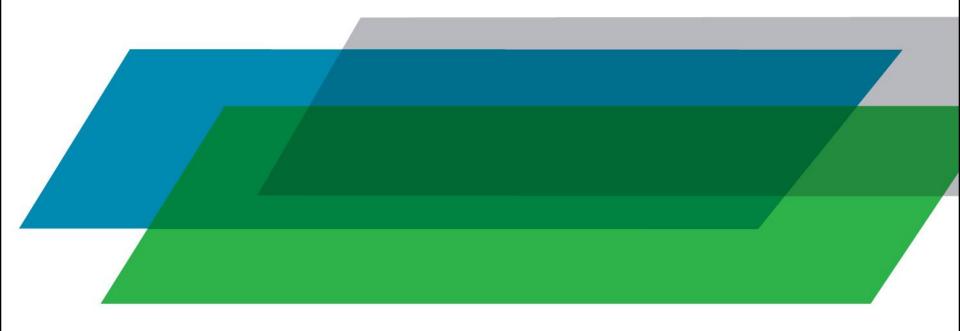
- Literary includes stories, drama, and poetry
- Informational includes literary nonfiction and a broad range of texts and topics.
  - Literary nonfiction conveys factual information
  - may or may not employ a narrative structure or personal perspective
  - literary nonfiction considered informational
  - expert judgment used to evaluate each text in some cases, a literary nonfiction text belongs with literary text
    - story structure and/or employs literary devices



Literary Texts			Informational Texts			
Text Types	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	High School	Text Types	Grades 3-5	Grades 6–8 & High School
Stories	Includes children's adventure stories, folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, realistic fiction, and myth	Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, science fiction, realistic fiction, parodies, and satire	Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories parodies, satire, and graphic novels	Literary Nonfiction	Includes biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in charts or maps; and digital sources on a	Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs,
Dramas	Includes staged dialogue and brief familiar scenes	Includes one-act and multi-act plays	Includes one- act and multi- act plays	and Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts	and his scientif technic econom account (includi	journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including
Poetry	Includes the subgenres of narrative poems and free-verse poems	Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free-verse poems, and ballads	Includes the subgenres of lyrical poems, free-verse poems, sonnets, and odes			digital sources) written for a broad audience



# Measures to Determine Text Complexity





# **Measures to Determine Text Complexity**

- The Common Core State Standards require students to read increasingly complex texts with greater independence and proficiency as they progress toward career college readiness.
- Three-part model for select texts
  - 1. Quantitative Measures
  - Qualitative Measures
  - 3. Considerations for Passage Selection



# **Text Complexity: Three Part Model**

- Quantitative
  - Grade level equivalent
  - Lexile
  - Flesch-Kincaid
- Qualitative
  - Levels of meaning
  - Levels of purpose
  - Structure, organization
  - Language conventionality/clarity
  - Prior knowledge demands
- Reader and Task becomes Considerations for Passage Selection
  - Accessibility
  - Sentence and text structures
  - Archaic language, slang, idioms, or other language challenges
  - Background knowledge
  - Bias and sensitivity issues
  - Word count





## **Quantitative Measures**

#### What are quantitative measures?

 Traditional measures of text complexity (i.e., readability metrics and word count)

#### What are Lexiles?

Offer readabilities for whole texts from which shorter texts may be taken.
 Lexiles may be used as one part of the evidence to determine whether a passage meets appropriate complexity criteria.

#### What is the Flesch-Kincaid index?

Available in Microsoft Word, this index provides counts of a number of passage attributes and the average numbers of sentences per paragraph, words per sentence and characters per word. It provides readability data: the number of passive sentences, Flesch Reading Ease score and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level for the passage (calculated using the number of syllables in the passage). This metric may underestimate the readability levels of informational passages because it does not account for specialized vocabulary.

## **Qualitative Measures: Considerations**

- It is not possible to produce accurate readability estimates for certain types of stimuli (e.g., poems, passages with extensive dialogue, use of nontraditional features/formats)
- Complex narrative fiction can pose a challenge for all readability indices.
  - Consider John Steinbeck's novel The Grapes of Wrath.
    - Steinbeck used simple words to express complex ideas.
    - Flesch-Kincaid and Lexiles rated it appropriate for grades 2-3. Yet, children at this grade-band may not truly understand the complexity of ideas.



# **Quantitative Analysis**

Grade Band	Current Lexile Band	"Stretch" Lexile Band
K-1	N/A	N/A
2-3	450L-725L	420L-820L
4-5	645L-845L	740L-1010L
6-8	860L-1010L	925L-1185L
9-10	960L-1115L	1050L-1335L
11-CCR	1070L-1220L	1185L-1385L



# What Are Considerations for Passage Selection?

## Recognize potential challenges:

- Accessibility
- Sentence and text structures
- Archaic language, slang, idioms, or other language challenges
- Background knowledge
- Bias and sensitivity issues
- Word count



### **Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric Literary Texts**

Ì	Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
	Meaning	Meaning: Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text	Meaning: Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text	Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety	Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.
	Text Structure	Organization:     Organization is     intricate with regard     to elements such as     narrative viewpoint,     time shifts, multiple     characters,     storylines, and     detail	time shifts, and more complex	Organization:     Organization may     have two or more     storylines and is     occasionally difficult     to predict	Organization:     Organization of text     is clear,     chronological, or     easy to predict
		Use of Graphics: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text	Use of Graphics: If used, a few illustrations that support the text	Use of Graphics: If used, a range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text	Use of Graphics: If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text



# Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric Literary Texts, Continued

Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
	Conventionality:     Dense and     complex; contains     abstract, ironic,     and/or figurative     language	Conventionality. Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	Conventionality:     Largely explicit and     easy to understand,     with some     occasions for more     complex meaning	Conventionality:     Explicit, literal,     straightforward,     easy to understand
Language Features	Vocabulary:     Generally     unfamiliar,     archaic, subject-     specific, or overly     academic     language; may be     ambiguous or     purposefully     misleading	Vocabulary:     Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic	Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic	Vocabulary:     Contemporary,     familiar,     conversational     language
	Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts	Sentence Structure:     Many complex     sentences with     several subordinate     phrases or clauses     and transition     words	Simple and compound	Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
Knowledge Demands	Life Experiences:     Explores complex,     sophisticated     themes;     experiences are     distinctly different     from the common     reader	Life Experiences:     Explores themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers	Life Experiences:     Explores a single     theme; experiences     portrayed are     common to many     readers	Life Experiences:     Explores a single     theme; experiences     portrayed are     everyday and     common to most     readers
Demands	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements



# Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric Informational Texts

	TOALS			
Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
Purpose	Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements	Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete	Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source	Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus
	Organization of Main Ideas:     Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate, and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline	Organization of Main Ideas:     Connections between an expanded range ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline		Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict
Text Structure	Text Features: If used, are essential in understanding content     Text Features: If used, greatly enhance the reader's understanding of content     Text Features: If used, enhance the reader's understanding of content     Text Features: If used, enhance the reader's understanding of content	Text Features: If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential		
	Use of Graphics: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc., necessary to make meaning of text; also may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text	Use of Graphics: If used, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc.; may occasionally be essential to understanding the text	supplementaryto	Use of Graphics: If used, simple graphics, unnecessary to understanding the text but directly support and assist in interpreting the written text



# Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric Informational Texts, Continued

F	Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
		Conventionality:     Dense and     complex; contains     abstract, ironic,     and/orfigurative     language	Conventionality:     Complex; contains     some abstract,     ironic, and/or     figurative language	Conventionality:     Largely explicit and     easy to understand     with some     occasions for more     complex meaning	Conventionality:     Explicit, literal,     straightforward,     easy to understand
	Language Features	Vocabulary:     Generally     unfamiliar, archaic,     subject-specific, or     overly academic     language; may be     ambiguous or     purposefully     misleading	Vocabulary:     Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic	Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic	Vocabulary:     Contemporary,     familiar,     conversational     language
		Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts	Sentence Structure:     Many complex     sentences with     several subordinate     phrases or clauses     and transition     words	Sentence Structure:     Simple and     compound     sentences, with     some more     complex     constructions	Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
	Knowledge Demands	Subject Matter     Knowledge:     Extensive, perhaps     specialized or even     theoretical     discipline-specific     content knowledge;     range of     challenging     abstract and     theoretical     concepts	Subject Matter     Knowledge:     Moderate levels of     discipline-specific     content knowledge;     some theoretical     knowledge may     enhance     understanding;     range of     recognizable ideas     and challenging     abstract concepts	Subject Matter     Knowledge:     Everyday practical     knowledge and     some discipline-     specific content     knowledge; both     simple and more     complicated,     abstract ideas	Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas
		Intertextuality:     Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality:     Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality: A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc.



# Grade 11 Reading Paired-Text Sample Item Solar Energy



# Paired-Text: Solar Energy (Stimulus 1)

Energy Digest, June 1980

The Homeowner's Salvation: Solar Power

by Daniella Rayez

In the wake of rising energy costs and depleted resources, President Carter initiated an aggressive program to reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels like oil and coal. Congress passed Carter's Public Utility Policies Act in 1978, giving tax credits to homeowners who install solar energy cells in their home. The Energy Tax Act encouraged homeowners to invest in energy conservation by giving them a tax credit of up to \$2,000 for home solar devices installed after April 20, 1977.

Today, these solar cells are primarily used to heat water in the home. When sensors attached to the water tank detect that water temperatures are too low, the water is circulated in pipes where heat absorbed by solar energy is transferred to the water. This requires an array of solar panels attached to the home's roof. Initial cost of these panels is quite high, but the money saved through tax credits and monthly energy bills make it a plausible option.

Affordable hot water is a herald of progress; it is hoped that solar energy will soon provide all power a homeowner needs. Dennis Hayes, executive director of the Solar Energy Resource Institute, recently said, "Solar power will offer the United States a clean energy future, decrease our dependence on petroleum, and offer a decentralized approach to solving our energy problems." With added advantages, the cost of a residential-use solar system will certainly go down, giving the people of the United States a cost-effective way to power their homes.



# Paired-Text: Solar Energy (Stimulus 2)

Energy Digest, November 2003

#### What Happened to Solar Power for Home Use?

by Richard Mueller

A 1979 poll in *The New York Times* indicated that 42% of Americans believed solar energy would solve all of the country's energy problems by 1984. President Carter set a goal in his Proposed Energy Policy that solar energy would be used in 2.5 million homes by 1985. Carter's Public Utilities Policies Act in 1978 and the enormous tax credits that went along with it fueled these ideas.

At the time, energy costs were skyrocketing due to the oil embargo of 1973. Citizens were looking for alternatives to petroleum for power and fuel, and solar energy became a focal point. It was clean and inexpensive, not to mention safe. The disasters of Three Mile Island and Chernobyl during the 1980s scared people away from nuclear energy, and the influx of solar systems in residences began. However, the popularity of solar power waned by the 1990s. Carter's tax credits ended in 1986 when President Reagan chose to let commerce dictate the direction of renewable energy sources.

Simultaneously, petroleum prices dropped significantly, further crippling the solar power industry. By 2000, the costs of installing and maintaining a set of residential solar cells were too high, and home use dwindled. Neither Carter nor the citizens of the late 1970s were right. Solar power is not used in over two million homes. It has not solved the country's energy problems. Harnessing the sun was a romantic idea that simply was not realistic.

It may be possible that, in the future, we will revisit the idea of using renewable energy sources like the sun to power our homes, businesses, and perhaps even our cars. For now, though, fossil fuels continue to be the cheapest and most efficient energy source.



# Solar Energy Sample Item 62984

#### Preamble

Read the sentences from "What Happened to Solar Power for Home Use?"

Simultaneously, petroleum prices dropped significantly, further crippling the solar power industry. By 2000, the costs of installing and maintaining a set of residential solar cells were too high, and home use dwindled.

#### Question

Based on the sentences, what can a reader conclude about the author's predictions in "The Homeowner's Salvation: Solar Energy"? Support your answer with evidence from that text.



# Solar Energy Sample Item 62984 Rubric

Rubri	Rubric				
Score	Rationale	Exemplar			
2	The response: -Provides the conclusion that the author's predictions were incorrect -Gives sufficient evidence to support the conclusion by citing specific examples Examples may includeCarter's Public Utility Policies Act in 1978 or Energy Tax Act or tax credits making solar a plausible optionthe statement that costs for residential solar systems will decreasethe statement that residential solar systems will become cost-effective	Although Rayez clearly believed that the combination of rising energy costs and the passing of the Public Utility Policy Act would serve to inspire a conversion to solar energy, this information clearly disproved her predictions. Once petroleum prices dropped, a situation Rayez failed to predict, solar energy became more costly to build and maintain than the fuel was to purchase. Ultimately, Rayez fell short in her predictions that solar power would eventually replace fossil fuels, and did not take in to account, not only the cheaper fuel prices, but also the prohibitive costs of maintaining a solar cell system.			
1	The response: -Provides the conclusion that the author's predictions were incorrect -Gives limited evidence to support the conclusion with general reference to examples like those identified in the two-point rubric	The reader can tell that the first writer's predictions were wrong. Solar energy got to be too expensive for the average person. This is because fuel had been costly, but then fuel became cheaper than having all the solar equipment.			
0	A response receives no credit if it does not provide the conclusion that the author's predictions were incorrect.	The author was wrong about changing energy. The prices got cheaper instead of worse.			

# **Solar Energy Sample Item 62988**

#### Question

How does including the quotation in the third paragraph of "The Homeowner's Salvation: Solar Power" help strengthen the author's argument? Select **all** that apply.

Alternative: A

It predicts an end to the use of fossil fuels.

Alternative: B

It lends support to the information previously stated.

Alternative: C

It references a professional in the field of solar energy.

Alternative: D

It illustrates that solar energy has many positive aspects.

Alternative: E

It contradicts what some people have said about solar energy.



# Solar Energy Sample Item 62988: Key

#### Question

How does including the quotation in the third paragraph of "The Homeowner's Salvation: Solar Power" help strengthen the author's argument? Select all that apply.

Alternative: A

It predicts an end to the use of fossil fuels.

Alternative: B 💙



It lends support to the information previously stated.

Alternative: C V



It references a professional in the field of solar energy.

Alternative: D ♥



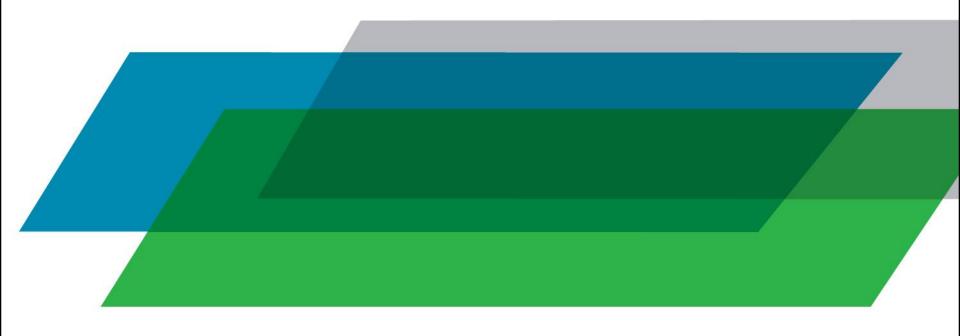
It illustrates that solar energy has many positive aspects.

Alternative: F

It contradicts what some people have said about solar energy.



# Accessibility and Accommodations



# Accessibility and Accommodations Considerations for Claim 1

- Accommodations may need to be considered for students with motor impairments because students may use word processing tools (a mouse and keyboard) when responding to some items for Claim 1.
- Students with visual impairments may need accommodations as well.
- Stimuli will be carefully screened to ensure their appropriateness for each student and every population
- Construct-relevant terminology will be indicated in item specifications.
- Item stems will model simple, clear, grade-appropriate language.
- Task Models will be identified as more appropriate for populations with motor or visual disabilities.



# **Questions**





# **Reflect on Guiding Questions**

- 1. What do educators need to do to support student learning?
- 2. What do educators need to do to ensure that students are prepared for the Smarter Balanced assessments?