

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Minnesota Math: Academic Standards 2003		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Algebra and Functions Solve problems using algebraic expressions and symbols to represent relationships, patterns and functions of different types.	Grades: 9-11	1. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of linear, step, absolute value and quadratic functions. Graphic properties may include rates of change, intercepts, maxima and minima.	III.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Model exponential growth and decay, numerically, graphically and symbolically, using exponential functions with integer inputs.	III.A.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Analyze the effects of coefficient changes on linear and quadratic functions and their graphs.	III.A.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. Apply basic concepts of linear, quadratic and exponential expressions or equations in real-world problems such as loans, investments and the path of a projectile.	III.A.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Distinguish functions from other relations using graphic and symbolic methods.	III.A.5
	Grades: 9-11	1. Translate among equivalent forms of expressions, such as, simplify algebraic expressions involving nested pairs of parentheses and brackets, simplify rational expressions, factor a common term from an expression and apply associative, commutative and distributive laws.	III.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	10. Create and use recursive formulas to model and solve real-world and mathematical problems.	III.B.10
	Grades: 9-11	11. Solve systems of two linear equations and inequalities with two variables using numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.11
	Grades: 9-11	12. Understand how slopes can be used to determine whether lines are parallel or perpendicular. Given a line and a point not on the line, find the equations for the lines passing through that point and parallel or perpendicular to the given line.	III.B.12
	Grades: 9-11	2. Understand the relationship between absolute value and distance on the number line and graph simple expressions involving absolute value such as, $ x - 3 = 6$ or $ x + 2 < 5$.	III.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Find equations of a line given two points on the line, a point and the slope of the line or the slope and the y-intercept of the line.	III.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. Translate among equivalent forms of linear equations and inequalities.	III.B.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Use a variety of models such as equations, inequalities, algebraic formulas, written statements, tables and graphs or spreadsheets to represent functions and patterns in real-world and mathematical problems.	III.B.5

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Algebra and Functions Solve problems using algebraic expressions and symbols to represent relationships, patterns and functions of different types.	Grades: 9-11	6. Apply the laws of exponents to perform operations on expressions with integer exponents.	III.B.6
	Grades: 9-11	7. Solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable with numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.7
	Grades: 9-11	8. Find real solutions to quadratic equations in one variable with numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.8
	Grades: 9-11	9. Use appropriate terminology and mathematical notation to define and represent recursion.	III.B.9
	Grades: 11-12	1. Solve systems of two, three or more simultaneous linear equations or inequalities, in particular, deciding whether a given system of equations has one solution, no solution or infinitely many solutions and, in this latter case, describing them parametrically.	2.1
	Grades: 11-12	10. Factor polynomials representing the difference of squares, perfect square trinomials and quadratics with rational factors.	2.10
	Grades: 11-12	11. Make sketches including axes, centers, asymptotes, vertices of parabola, ellipses (including circles) and hyperbolas with axes parallel to the coordinate axes, given their equations, and completing the square if necessary.	2.11
	Grades: 11-12	12. Find equations of parabolas, ellipses and hyperbolas when presented with their graphs having axes parallel to the coordinate axes.	2.12
	Grades: 11-12	14. Know and use the Factor and Remainder Theorems.	2.14
	Grades: 11-12	15. Find the inverse of a function and the composition of functions by numeric and symbolic methods. Know the relationship between the graphs of a function and its inverse.	2.15
	Grades: 11-12	16. Know and use formal notation for sequences and series to solve related problems.	2.16
	Grades: 11-12	2. Solve problems with quadratic functions and equations, where some of the coefficients may be expressed in terms of parameters.	2.2
	Grades: 11-12	3. Perform the four arithmetic operations with polynomials, except that division is restricted to division by monomials and linear binomials.	2.3
	Grades: 11-12	4. Simplify a wide variety of algebraic expressions, including those in which numerator or denominator needs to be rationalized.	2.4

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Algebra and Functions Solve problems using algebraic expressions and symbols to represent relationships, patterns and functions of different types.	Grades: 11-12	5. Apply the laws of exponents to perform operations on expressions with fractional exponents.	2.5
	Grades: 11-12	6. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of power, logarithmic and exponential functions.	2.6
	Grades: 11-12	7. Solve a wide variety of mathematical and real-world problems involving power, exponential and logarithmic functions and equations, discard extraneous solutions and present results graphically.	2.7
	Grades: 11-12	8. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of rational functions.	2.8
	Grades: 11-12	9. Solve a wide variety of mathematical and real-world problems involving rational functions, discard extraneous solutions and present results graphically.	2.9
Communication Express mathematical ideas precisely and communicate them coherently and clearly in the language and notation of mathematics.	Grades: 9-11	4. Support mathematical results by explaining why the steps in a solution are valid and why a particular solution method is appropriate.	I.A.4
	Grades: 9-11	1. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of linear, step, absolute value and quadratic functions. Graphic properties may include rates of change, intercepts, maxima and minima.	III.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	5. Distinguish functions from other relations using graphic and symbolic methods.	III.A.5
	Grades: 9-11	9. Use appropriate terminology and mathematical notation to define and represent recursion.	III.B.9
	Grades: 9-11	2. Use measures of central tendency and variability, such as, mean, median, maximum, minimum, range, standard deviation, quartile and percentile, to describe, compare and draw conclusions about sets of data.	IV.A.2
	Grades: 9-11	7. Compare outcomes of voting methods such as majority, plurality, ranked by preference, run-off and pair-wise comparison.	IV.A.7
Connections Connect ideas from different areas of mathematics (particularly geometry and algebra) to state or solve abstract or applied problems.	Grades: 9-11	Use the interconnectedness of geometry, algebra and measurement to explore real-world and mathematical problems.	0
	Grades: 9-11	3. Recognize the impact of units such as degrees and radians on calculations.	II.B.3

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Connections Connect ideas from different areas of mathematics (particularly geometry and algebra) to state or solve abstract or applied problems.	Grades: 9-11	4. Recognize that applying an inverse function with a calculator may lead to extraneous or incomplete solutions.	II.B.4
	Grades: 9-11	4. Apply basic concepts of linear, quadratic and exponential expressions or equations in real-world problems such as loans, investments and the path of a projectile.	III.A.4
	Grades: 11-12	11. Make sketches including axes, centers, asymptotes, vertices of parabola, ellipses (including circles) and hyperbolas with axes parallel to the coordinate axes, given their equations, and completing the square if necessary.	2.11
	Grades: 11-12	12. Find equations of parabolas, ellipses and hyperbolas when presented with their graphs having axes parallel to the coordinate axes.	2.12
Data, Statistics, and Probability Analyze data, understand descriptive statistics, make inferences and determine the likelihood that certain events will occur.	Grades: 9-11	1. Construct and analyze circle graphs, bar graphs, histograms, box-and-whisker plots, scatter plots and tables, and demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of each format by choosing appropriately among them for a given situation.	IV.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Use measures of central tendency and variability, such as, mean, median, maximum, minimum, range, standard deviation, quartile and percentile, to describe, compare and draw conclusions about sets of data.	IV.A.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Determine an approximate best-fit line from a given scatter plot and use the line to draw conclusions.	IV.A.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. Know the influence of outliers on various measures and representations of data about real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.A.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Understand the relationship between correlation and causation.	IV.A.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Interpret data credibility in the context of measurement error and display distortion.	IV.A.6
	Grades: 9-11	7. Compare outcomes of voting methods such as majority, plurality, ranked by preference, run-off and pair-wise comparison.	IV.A.7
	Grades: 9-11	1. Select and apply appropriate counting procedures to solve real-world and mathematical problems, including probability problems.	IV.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Use area, trees, unions and intersections to calculate probabilities and relate the results to mutual exclusiveness, independence and conditional probabilities, in real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.B.2

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Data, Statistics, and Probability Analyze data, understand descriptive statistics, make inferences and determine the likelihood that certain events will occur.	Grades: 9-11	3. Use probability models, including area and binomial models, in real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. For simple probability models, determine the expected values of random variables.	IV.B.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Know the effect of sample size on experimental and simulation probabilities.	IV.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Use a variety of experimental, simulation and theoretical methods to calculate probabilities.	IV.B.6
	Grades: 11-12	3. Understand the importance of appropriate sampling methods. For instance, the time of day of a survey could lead to inaccuracies in the outcome.	1.3
Geometry and Measurement Solve problems based on understanding the properties of shapes, such as triangles and circles, and the spatial relationships between angles and lines.	Grades: 9-11	Use the interconnectedness of geometry, algebra and measurement to explore real-world and mathematical problems.	0
	Grades: 9-11	1. Use models and visualization to understand and represent three-dimensional objects and their cross sections from different perspectives.	V.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	1. Know and use theorems about triangles and parallel lines in elementary geometry to justify facts about various geometrical figures and solve real-world and mathematical problems. These theorems include criteria for two triangles to be congruent or similar and facts about parallel lines cut by a transversal.	V.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Know and use theorems about circles to justify geometrical facts and solve real-world and mathematical problems. These theorems include the relationships involving tangent lines and radii, the relationship between inscribed and central angles and the relationship between the measure of a central angle and arc length.	V.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Know and use properties of two- and three-dimensional figures to solve real-world and mathematical problems such as: finding area, perimeter, volume and surface area; applying direct or indirect methods of measurement; the Pythagorean theorem and its converse; and properties of 45°-45°-90° and 30°-60°-90° triangles.	V.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	5. Use coordinate geometry to represent and examine geometric concepts such as the distance between two points, the midpoint of a line segment, the slope of a line and the slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines.	V.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Use numeric, graphic and symbolic representations of transformations such as reflections, translations and change of scale in one, two and three dimensions to solve real-world and mathematical problems.	V.B.6

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Geometry and Measurement Solve problems based on understanding the properties of shapes, such as triangles and circles, and the spatial relationships between angles and lines.	Grades: 9-11	7. Perform basic constructions with a straightedge and compass.	V.B.7
	Grades: 9-11	8. Draw accurate representations of planar figures using a variety of tools.	V.B.8
Number and Operations Understand types of numbers (integers, fractions, decimals), their properties and the correct order of operations. Perform computations correctly.	Grades: 9-11	1. Represent and compare rational and irrational numbers symbolically and on a number line.	II.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	1. Apply the correct order of operations and grouping symbols when using calculators and other technologies.	II.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Know, use and translate calculator notational conventions to mathematical notation.	II.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	5. Understand the limitations of calculators such as missing or additional features on graphs due to viewing parameters or misleading representations of zero or very large numbers.	II.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Understand that use of a calculator requires appropriate mathematical reasoning and does not replace the need for mental computation.	II.B.6
Problem Solving Solve abstract and practical problems, applying and adapting a variety of strategies. Monitor progress and evaluate answers in terms of questions asked.	Grades: 9-11	3. Translate a problem described verbally or by tables, diagrams or graphs, into suitable mathematical language, solve the problem mathematically and interpret the result in the original context.	I.A.3
	Grades: 9-11	1. Apply the correct order of operations and grouping symbols when using calculators and other technologies.	II.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Model exponential growth and decay, numerically, graphically and symbolically, using exponential functions with integer inputs.	III.A.2
	Grades: 9-11	11. Solve systems of two linear equations and inequalities with two variables using numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.11
	Grades: 9-11	3. Find equations of a line given two points on the line, a point and the slope of the line or the slope and the y-intercept of the line.	III.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	6. Apply the laws of exponents to perform operations on expressions with integer exponents.	III.B.6
	Grades: 9-11	7. Solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable with numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.7

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Problem Solving Solve abstract and practical problems, applying and adapting a variety of strategies. Monitor progress and evaluate answers in terms of questions asked.	Grades: 9-11	8. Find real solutions to quadratic equations in one variable with numeric, graphic and symbolic methods.	III.B.8
	Grades: 9-11	3. Determine an approximate best-fit line from a given scatter plot and use the line to draw conclusions.	IV.A.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. Know the influence of outliers on various measures and representations of data about real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.A.4
	Grades: 9-11	1. Select and apply appropriate counting procedures to solve real-world and mathematical problems, including probability problems.	IV.B.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Use area, trees, unions and intersections to calculate probabilities and relate the results to mutual exclusiveness, independence and conditional probabilities, in real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Use probability models, including area and binomial models, in real-world and mathematical problems.	IV.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	4. For simple probability models, determine the expected values of random variables.	IV.B.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Know the effect of sample size on experimental and simulation probabilities.	IV.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Use a variety of experimental, simulation and theoretical methods to calculate probabilities.	IV.B.6
	Grades: 9-11	2. Know and use theorems about circles to justify geometrical facts and solve real-world and mathematical problems. These theorems include the relationships involving tangent lines and radii, the relationship between inscribed and central angles and the relationship between the measure of a central angle and arc length.	V.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	3. Know and use properties of two- and three-dimensional figures to solve real-world and mathematical problems such as: finding area, perimeter, volume and surface area; applying direct or indirect methods of measurement; the Pythagorean theorem and its converse; and properties of 45°-45°-90° and 30°-60°-90° triangles.	V.B.3
	Grades: 9-11	6. Use numeric, graphic and symbolic representations of transformations such as reflections, translations and change of scale in one, two and three dimensions to solve real-world and mathematical problems.	V.B.6
	Grades: 9-11	7. Perform basic constructions with a straightedge and compass.	V.B.7

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Problem Solving Solve abstract and practical problems, applying and adapting a variety of strategies. Monitor progress and evaluate answers in terms of questions asked.	Grades: 11-12	1. Solve systems of two, three or more simultaneous linear equations or inequalities, in particular, deciding whether a given system of equations has one solution, no solution or infinitely many solutions and, in this latter case, describing them parametrically.	2.1
	Grades: 11-12	10. Factor polynomials representing the difference of squares, perfect square trinomials and quadratics with rational factors.	2.10
	Grades: 11-12	14. Know and use the Factor and Remainder Theorems.	2.14
	Grades: 11-12	15. Find the inverse of a function and the composition of functions by numeric and symbolic methods. Know the relationship between the graphs of a function and its inverse.	2.15
	Grades: 11-12	16. Know and use formal notation for sequences and series to solve related problems.	2.16
	Grades: 11-12	2. Solve problems with quadratic functions and equations, where some of the coefficients may be expressed in terms of parameters.	2.2
	Grades: 11-12	3. Perform the four arithmetic operations with polynomials, except that division is restricted to division by monomials and linear binomials.	2.3
	Grades: 11-12	4. Simplify a wide variety of algebraic expressions, including those in which numerator or denominator needs to be rationalized.	2.4
	Grades: 11-12	5. Apply the laws of exponents to perform operations on expressions with fractional exponents.	2.5
	Grades: 11-12	7. Solve a wide variety of mathematical and real-world problems involving power, exponential and logarithmic functions and equations, discard extraneous solutions and present results graphically.	2.7
Grades: 11-12	9. Solve a wide variety of mathematical and real-world problems involving rational functions, discard extraneous solutions and present results graphically.	2.9	
Reasoning Develop and use mathematical arguments and proofs to explore the truth of conjectures and justify conclusions.	Grades: 9-11	1. Assess the reasonableness of a solution by comparing the solution to appropriate graphical or numerical estimates or by recognizing the feasibility of solutions in a given context and rejecting extraneous solutions.	I.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Appropriately use examples and counterexamples to make and test conjectures, justify solutions, and explain results.	I.A.2

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	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Reasoning Develop and use mathematical arguments and proofs to explore the truth of conjectures and justify conclusions.	Grades: 9-11	5. Determine whether or not relevant information is missing from a problem and if so, decide how to best express the results that can be obtained without that information.	I.A.5
	Grades: 9-11	5. Understand the limitations of calculators such as missing or additional features on graphs due to viewing parameters or misleading representations of zero or very large numbers.	II.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Understand that use of a calculator requires appropriate mathematical reasoning and does not replace the need for mental computation.	II.B.6
	Grades: 9-11	3. Analyze the effects of coefficient changes on linear and quadratic functions and their graphs.	III.A.3
	Grades: 9-11	12. Understand how slopes can be used to determine whether lines are parallel or perpendicular. Given a line and a point not on the line, find the equations for the lines passing through that point and parallel or perpendicular to the given line.	III.B.12
	Grades: 9-11	2. Understand the relationship between absolute value and distance on the number line and graph simple expressions involving absolute value such as, $ x - 3 = 6$ or $ x + 2 < 5$.	III.B.2
	Grades: 9-11	5. Understand the relationship between correlation and causation.	IV.A.5
	Grades: 9-11	6. Interpret data credibility in the context of measurement error and display distortion.	IV.A.6
	Grades: 9-11	1. Know and use theorems about triangles and parallel lines in elementary geometry to justify facts about various geometrical figures and solve real-world and mathematical problems. These theorems include criteria for two triangles to be congruent or similar and facts about parallel lines cut by a transversal.	V.B.1
Representation Use and translate among representations including verbal, numerical, symbolic and graphical to communicate mathematical ideas and solve problems.	Grades: 11-12	3. Understand the importance of appropriate sampling methods. For instance, the time of day of a survey could lead to inaccuracies in the outcome.	1.3
	Grades: 9-11	1. Represent and compare rational and irrational numbers symbolically and on a number line.	II.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	2. Know, use and translate calculator notational conventions to mathematical notation.	II.B.2
Grades: 9-11	1. Translate among equivalent forms of expressions, such as, simplify algebraic expressions involving nested pairs of parentheses and brackets, simplify rational expressions, factor a common term from an expression and apply associative, commutative and distributive laws.	III.B.1	

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Skill Category and Description of Skills	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Representation Use and translate among representations including verbal, numerical, symbolic and graphical to communicate mathematical ideas and solve problems.	Grades: 9-11	10. Create and use recursive formulas to model and solve real-world and mathematical problems.	III.B.10
	Grades: 9-11	4. Translate among equivalent forms of linear equations and inequalities.	III.B.4
	Grades: 9-11	5. Use a variety of models such as equations, inequalities, algebraic formulas, written statements, tables and graphs or spreadsheets to represent functions and patterns in real-world and mathematical problems.	III.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	1. Construct and analyze circle graphs, bar graphs, histograms, box-and-whisker plots, scatter plots and tables, and demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of each format by choosing appropriately among them for a given situation.	IV.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	1. Use models and visualization to understand and represent three-dimensional objects and their cross sections from different perspectives.	V.A.1
	Grades: 9-11	5. Use coordinate geometry to represent and examine geometric concepts such as the distance between two points, the midpoint of a line segment, the slope of a line and the slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines.	V.B.5
	Grades: 9-11	8. Draw accurate representations of planar figures using a variety of tools.	V.B.8
	Grades: 11-12	6. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of power, logarithmic and exponential functions.	2.6
	Grades: 11-12	8. Know the numeric, graphic and symbolic properties of rational functions.	2.8

PSAT/NMSQT Skills Insight™ Alignment to State Standards

Executive Summary, July 2010

Purpose

PSAT/NMSQT *Skills Insight*™ is a free online tool designed to help students and educators gain a better understanding of how PSAT/NMSQT® scores relate to specific academic skills. It provides a description of the academic skills that are typical of students scoring at each score band, suggestions for improvement, and practice test questions. Learn more by visiting www.collegeboard.com/psatskills.

The information provided by PSAT/NMSQT *Skills Insight* is organized by skill category. There are five skill categories for the critical reading section, nine for the mathematics section (4 content skill categories; 5 process skill categories), and 5 for the writing skills section. This report shows the alignment between state standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics and the content and skills measured by the PSAT/NMSQT.

Using Alignment Results with PSAT/NMSQT Reports

Schools and districts that administer the PSAT/NMSQT have access to the *Summary of Answers and Skills* (SOAS) report¹. SOAS reports summarize performance on test sections, skill categories, and individual test questions, and compare local results to the state or nation. Using SOAS and the alignment information provided in this report, schools and districts can develop remediation strategies to help students improve their college readiness skills, future SAT scores, and performance on state assessments.

Mathematics: Alignment Approach and Findings

- There are nine Skills Categories in Mathematics, representing both content and process skills: *Number and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Geometry and Measurement; Data, Statistics and Probability; Problem Solving; Representation; Reasoning; Connections and Communication*.
- Only standards for grades 9-12 were considered for these alignments. Within grades 9-12, the areas with the greatest concentration of alignments are the Number and Operations, Algebra and Geometry strands of the state standards. In most cases, Precalculus and Trigonometry were excluded from the alignment study.
- The organization and hierarchy of standards varies on a state-by-state basis. During the alignment process, the College Board aligned the PSAT/NMSQT skills to the most specific level of the state's standards.
- States often integrate process and content standards. In such cases, the state standard received an alignment to both a process skill category and a content skill category.
- Generally, there is strong correspondence between the PSAT/NMSQT Skills Categories in Mathematics and state standards. Coverage of the Skills Categories across a state standards document is dependent upon the specific state standards and on the degree of specificity of language employed within the standards.
- The PSAT/NMSQT is administered to students in grades 10 and 11; consequently, the strongest areas of alignment are in the content categories of *Number and Operations, Algebra and Functions* and *Geometry and Measurement* and in the process categories of *Problem Solving, Reasoning* and *Representations*. Considering the design and purpose of the PSAT/NMSQT, extensive alignments in upper levels of high school mathematics standards, including Trigonometry, are not intended or expected.

¹ Using the access code printed on the PSAT/NMSQT *Roster of Student Scores and Plans*, SOAS reports can be downloaded from www.collegeboard.com/reports beginning in the first week of January.

- The College Board content specialists who conducted the alignments have a deep understanding of the PSAT/NMSQT test specifications. Therefore, although multiple Skills Categories might link to a particular standard, these alignments display only the strongest and most appropriate matches.

English Language Arts: Alignment Approach and Findings

- Reading and Writing each have five PSAT/NMSQT Skills Categories. In Reading, the categories are *Determining the Meaning of Words*, *Author’s Craft*, *Reasoning and Inferencing*, *Organization and Ideas* and *Understanding Literary Elements*. In Writing, the categories are *Manage Word Choice and Grammatical Relationships Between Words*, *Manage Grammatical Structures Used to Modify or Compare*, *Manage Phrases and Clauses in a Sentence*; *Recognize Correctly Formed Sentences* and *Manage Order and Relationships of Sentences and Paragraphs*.
- The PSAT/NMSQT is administered to students in grades 10 and 11, and the College Board targeted the English Language Arts alignments at these specific grade levels. In states where the standards are organized by grade band (grades 9-10, 11-12) or by one high school band (grades 9-12), the College Board aligned to all high school grade levels.
- Given the purpose and design of the PSAT/NMSQT, the English Language Arts alignment is focused on the areas of reading and writing and does not include state standards in speaking, listening, or media literacy. Additionally, these alignments excluded genre-specific state standards (such as those related to American, British, or World literature), although the essential PSAT/NMSQT skills in Reading can be used to support instruction in literature.
- The organization and hierarchy of standards varies on a state-by-state basis. During the alignment process, the College Board aligned the PSAT/NMSQT skills to the most specific level of the state’s standards. Coverage of the Skills Categories across a state standards document is dependent upon the specific state standards and on the degree of specificity of language employed within the standards.
- In Writing, generally there is strong correspondence between the PSAT/NMSQT Skills Categories and state standards that focus on grammar, usage, language conventions, and the role of editing and revising in writing.
- In Reading, there is strong correspondence between the PSAT/NMSQT Skills Categories and state standards in the essential areas of vocabulary development (determine the meaning of unfamiliar words or of words with multiple meanings by understanding context and by analyzing roots, prefixes, and suffixes) and reading comprehension (determine the main idea and supporting details; understand the organization of passages; analyze the various elements of an author’s craft, including purpose, perspective, word choice, and use of rhetorical and literary devices and understand literary elements such as plot, characterization, and setting).

Summary

In summary, the PSAT/NMSQT Skills Categories correspond well to state standards. Educators can use these alignments to connect the PSAT/NMSQT to their local curricula and state standards to monitor student learning and to build a coherent instructional plan for their students.