

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Oregon ELA: Content Standards 2003		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<b>Author's Craft</b> Understand how authors use tone, style and writing devices such as metaphor or symbolism.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.09 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Identify various literary devices, including figurative language, imagery, allegory, and symbolism; evaluate the significance of the devices; and explain their appeal.	EL.CM.LI.09
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.11 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Explain how voice and the choice of a narrator affect characterization and the tone, plot, and credibility of a text.	EL.CM.LI.11
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.12 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Analyze an author's development of time and sequence, including the use of complex literary devices, such as foreshadowing or flashbacks.	EL.CM.LI.12
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.13 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Evaluate the impact of word choice and figurative language on tone, mood, and theme.	EL.CM.LI.13
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.19 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Analyze a work of literature, showing how it reflects the heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs of its author.	EL.CM.LI.19
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.23 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Make reasoned assertions about an author's arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations.	EL.CM.RE.23
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.26 Informational Text: Examine Content and Structure: Draw conclusions about the author's purpose based on evidence in the text.	EL.CM.RE.26
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.31 Informational Text: Examine Content and Structure: Evaluate an author's argument or defense of a claim by evaluating the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent or bias affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., in professional journals, sports journals, editorials, political speeches, primary source material).	EL.CM.RE.31
<b>Determining the Meaning of Words</b> Use vocabulary skills, context, roots, prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of words.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.10 Vocabulary: Determine meanings of words using contextual and structural clues.	EL.CM.RE.10
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.11 Vocabulary: Identify and use the literal and figurative meanings of words and phrases.	EL.CM.RE.11
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.12 Vocabulary: Distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words, and interpret the connotative power of words.	EL.CM.RE.12

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Oregon ELA: Content Standards 2003		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<p><b>Manage Grammatical Structures Used to Modify or Compare</b></p> <p>Understand correct use of adjectives and adverbs, comparative structures (such as <i>neither</i> and <i>nor</i>) and phrases used to modify or compare.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.09 Planning, Evaluation, and Revision: Edit and proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using the writing conventions, and, for example, an editing checklist or list of rules with specific examples of corrections of specific errors.	EL.CM.WR.09
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.16 Conventions: Grammar: Understand and use proper placement of modifiers.	EL.CM.WR.16
<p><b>Manage Order and Relationships of Sentences and Paragraphs</b></p> <p>Identify how to order the elements of a sentence or paragraph to improve clarity, meaning and the progression of ideas.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.08 Planning, Evaluation, and Revision: Revise drafts to improve the logic and coherence of the organization and controlling idea, the precision of word choice, and the tone-by taking into consideration the audience, purpose, and formality of the context.	EL.CM.WR.08
<p><b>Manage Phrases and Clauses in a Sentence</b></p> <p>Use well-formed sentence structures (e.g., parallelism, connectives and relative clauses) to indicate relationships between and among sentence elements.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.09 Planning, Evaluation, and Revision: Edit and proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using the writing conventions, and, for example, an editing checklist or list of rules with specific examples of corrections of specific errors.	EL.CM.WR.09
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.13 Writing: Demonstrate an understanding of sentence construction-including parallel structure and subordination-to achieve clarity of meaning, vary sentence types, and enhance flow and rhythm.	EL.CM.WR.13
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.15 Conventions: Grammar: Show control of clauses, including main and subordinate, and phrases, including gerund, infinitive, and participial.	EL.CM.WR.15
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.18 Conventions: Punctuation: Use conventions of punctuation correctly, including semicolons, colons, ellipses, and hyphens.	EL.CM.WR.18
<p><b>Manage Word Choice and Grammatical Relationships Between Words</b></p> <p>Understand relationships between and among words, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and verb form and tense.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.09 Planning, Evaluation, and Revision: Edit and proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using the writing conventions, and, for example, an editing checklist or list of rules with specific examples of corrections of specific errors.	EL.CM.WR.09
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.17 Conventions: Grammar: Demonstrate an understanding of proper English usage, including the consistent use of verb tenses and forms.	EL.CM.WR.17
<p><b>Organization and Ideas</b></p> <p>Understand the organization of a reading passage and identify the main and supporting ideas.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.03 Literary Text: Demonstrate General Understanding: Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, and supporting details in literary selections.	EL.CM.LI.03

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Oregon ELA: Content Standards 2003		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<b>Organization and Ideas</b> Understand the organization of a reading passage and identify the main and supporting ideas.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.06 Literary Text: Develop an Interpretation: Identify themes in literary works, and provide support for interpretations from the text.	EL.CM.LI.06
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.03 Listen to and Read Informational and Narrative Text: Make connections to text, within text, and among texts across the subject areas.	EL.CM.RE.03
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.19 Informational Text: Demonstrate General Understanding: Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, facts, supporting details, and opinions in informational and practical selections.	EL.CM.RE.19
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.22 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Infer an author's unstated meaning and draw conclusions about an author's stated meaning based on facts, events, images, patterns or symbols found in text.	EL.CM.RE.22
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.23 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Make reasoned assertions about an author's arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations.	EL.CM.RE.23
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.24 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Analyze implicit relationships, such as cause-and-effect, sequence-time relationships, comparisons, classifications, and generalizations.	EL.CM.RE.24
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.29 Informational Text: Examine Content and Structure: Compare and contrast information on the same topic after reading several passages or articles.	EL.CM.RE.29
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.31 Informational Text: Examine Content and Structure: Evaluate an author's argument or defense of a claim by evaluating the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent or bias affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., in professional journals, sports journals, editorials, political speeches, primary source material).	EL.CM.RE.31
<b>Reasoning and Inferencing</b> Understand assumptions, suggestions and implications in reading passages and draw informed conclusions.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.03 Literary Text: Demonstrate General Understanding: Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, and supporting details in literary selections.	EL.CM.LI.03
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.07 Literary Text: Develop an Interpretation: Infer the main idea when it is not explicitly stated, and support with evidence from the text.	EL.CM.LI.07
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.03 Listen to and Read Informational and Narrative Text: Make connections to text, within text, and among texts across the subject areas.	EL.CM.RE.03

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Oregon ELA: Content Standards 2003		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<b>Reasoning and Inferencing</b> Understand assumptions, suggestions and implications in reading passages and draw informed conclusions.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.19 Informational Text: Demonstrate General Understanding: Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, facts, supporting details, and opinions in informational and practical selections.	EL.CM.RE.19
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.22 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Infer an author's unstated meaning and draw conclusions about an author's stated meaning based on facts, events, images, patterns or symbols found in text.	EL.CM.RE.22
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.24 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Analyze implicit relationships, such as cause-and-effect, sequence-time relationships, comparisons, classifications, and generalizations.	EL.CM.RE.24
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.25 Informational Text: Develop an Interpretation: Infer the main idea when it is not explicitly stated, and support with evidence from the text.	EL.CM.RE.25
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.RE.29 Informational Text: Examine Content and Structure: Compare and contrast information on the same topic after reading several passages or articles.	EL.CM.RE.29
<b>Recognize Correctly Formed Sentences</b> Recognize correct sentence structure.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.WR.13 Writing: Demonstrate an understanding of sentence construction-including parallel structure and subordination-to achieve clarity of meaning, vary sentence types, and enhance flow and rhythm.	EL.CM.WR.13
<b>Understanding Literary Elements</b> Understand literary elements such as plot, setting and characterization.	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.03 Literary Text: Demonstrate General Understanding: Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, and supporting details in literary selections.	EL.CM.LI.03
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.05 Literary Text: Develop an Interpretation: Analyze interactions between characters in a literary text (e.g., internal and external conflicts, motivations, relationships, influences) and how these interactions affect the plot.	EL.CM.LI.05
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.06 Literary Text: Develop an Interpretation: Identify themes in literary works, and provide support for interpretations from the text.	EL.CM.LI.06
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.08 Literary Text: Develop an Interpretation: Identify and analyze unstated reasons for actions or beliefs based on explicitly stated information.	EL.CM.LI.08
	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.11 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Explain how voice and the choice of a narrator affect characterization and the tone, plot, and credibility of a text.	EL.CM.LI.11

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT	Oregon ELA: Content Standards 2003		
Skill Category and Description of Skills	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<p><b>Understanding Literary Elements</b></p> <p>Understand literary elements such as plot, setting and characterization.</p>	CIM (High School)	EL.CM.LI.12 Literary Text: Examine Content and Structure: Analyze an author's development of time and sequence, including the use of complex literary devices, such as foreshadowing or flashbacks.	EL.CM.LI.12

# 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](http://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) report<sup>1</sup>. 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://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.