

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Pennsylvania ELA: Academic Standards 2010		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Author's Craft Understand how authors use tone, style and writing devices such as metaphor or symbolism.	10	1.2.10.A. Evaluate text organization and content to determine the author's purpose and effectiveness according to the author's theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic, and reasoning.	1.2.10.A
	10	1.2.10.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions, citing textual support, based on an author's explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.10.D
	10	1.3.10.C. Analyze the use and effectiveness of literary elements (characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, tone, mood, foreshadowing and style) used by authors in a variety of genres.	1.3.10.C
	11	1.1.11.A. Apply appropriate strategies to analyze, interpret, and evaluate author's use of techniques and elements of fiction and non-fiction for rhetorical and aesthetic purposes.	1.1.11.A
	11	1.2.11.A. Evaluate and critique text organization and content to determine the author's purpose and effectiveness according to the author's theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic, and reasoning.	1.2.11.A
	11	1.2.11.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.11.D
	11	1.3.11.A. Examine the impact of diverse cultures and writers on the development and growth of literature. Describe how an author conveys intent and perspective in contemporary and historical writings.	1.3.11.A
Determining the Meaning of Words Use vocabulary skills, context, roots, prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of words.	10	1.1.10.B. Use context clues, knowledge of root words, and word origins as well as reference sources to decode and understand new words.	1.1.10.B
	10	1.1.10.C. Interpret the literal and figurative meanings of words to distinguish between what words mean literally and what they imply as well as word origins to understand both familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary.	1.1.10.C
	11	1.1.11.B. Use context clues, knowledge of root words, and word origins as well as reference sources to decode and understand new words.	1.1.11.B
	11	1.1.11.C. Analyze textual context to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or ambiguous words and to draw conclusions about nuances or connotations of words.	1.1.11.C

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT	Pennsylvania ELA: Academic Standards 2010		
Skill Category and Description of Skills	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Manage Grammatical Structures Used to Modify or Compare 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.	10	1.5.10.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentenceformation.	1.5.10.F.iv
	11	1.5.11.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentence formation.	1.5.11.F.iv
Manage Order and Relationships of Sentences and Paragraphs Identify how to order the elements of a sentence or paragraph to improve clarity, meaning and the progression of ideas.	10	1.5.10.E. Review, evaluate, revise, edit, and proofread writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety, and subtlety of meaning.	1.5.10.E
	11	1.5.11.E. Revise writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety, and subtlety of meaning after rethinking how questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed.	1.5.11.E
Manage Phrases and Clauses in a Sentence Use well-formed sentence structures (e.g., parallelism, connectives and relative clauses) to indicate relationships between and among sentence elements.	10	1.5.10.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Punctuate correctly.	1.5.10.F.iii
	10	1.5.10.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentenceformation.	1.5.10.F.iv
	11	1.5.11.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Punctuate correctly	1.5.11.F.iii
	11	1.5.11.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentence formation.	1.5.11.F.iv
Manage Word Choice and Grammatical Relationships Between Words Understand relationships between and among words, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and verb form and tense.	10	1.5.10.E. Review, evaluate, revise, edit, and proofread writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety, and subtlety of meaning.	1.5.10.E
	10	1.5.10.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentenceformation.	1.5.10.F.iv

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT Skill Category and Description of Skills	Pennsylvania ELA: Academic Standards 2010		
	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
Manage Word Choice and Grammatical Relationships Between Words Understand relationships between and among words, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and verb form and tense.	11	1.5.11.E Revise writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety, and subtlety of meaning after rethinking how questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed.	1.5.11.E
	11	1.5.11.F. Use grade appropriate conventions of language when writing and editing. Use correct grammar and sentence formation.	1.5.11.F.iv
Organization and Ideas Understand the organization of a reading passage and identify the main and supporting ideas.	10	1.2.10.A. Evaluate text organization and content to determine the author’s purpose and effectiveness according to the author’s theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic, and reasoning.	1.2.10.A
	10	1.2.10.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions, citing textual support, based on an author’s explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.10.D
	10	1.2.10.E. Identify and analyze the structure and format of various informational documents and explain how authors use the features to achieve their purposes.	1.2.10.E
	11	1.2.11.A. Evaluate and critique text organization and content to determine the author’s purpose and effectiveness according to the author’s theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic, and reasoning.	1.2.11.A
	11	1.2.11.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions based on and related to an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.11.D
Reasoning and Inferencing Understand assumptions, suggestions and implications in reading passages and draw informed conclusions.	10	1.2.10.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions, citing textual support, based on an author’s explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.10.D
	11	1.2.11.D. Analyze inferences and draw conclusions based on and related to an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.	1.2.11.D
Understanding Literary Elements Understand literary elements such as plot, setting and characterization.	10	1.3.10.C. Analyze the use and effectiveness of literary elements (characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, tone, mood, foreshadowing and style) used by authors in a variety of genres.	1.3.10.C

Alignments of PSAT/NMSQT Skill Categories and State Standards

PSAT/NMSQT	Pennsylvania ELA: Academic Standards 2010		
Skill Category and Description of Skills	Course/ Level	Standard	Standard ID
<p>Understanding Literary Elements</p> <p>Understand literary elements such as plot, setting and characterization.</p>	11	<p>1.3.11.C. Analyze the relationships, use, and effectiveness of literary elements (characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, tone, mood, foreshadowing, irony, and style) used by one or more authors in similar genres.</p>	1.3.11.C

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.