

ELA Performance Task (PT) Structure Map

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OVERVIEW—The Smarter Balanced assessment for ELA is composed of two parts—the Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) and the Performance Task (PT). The ELA PTs are all scenario-driven in that the task is presented in the form of a simulated real-life situation. Smarter Balanced indicates that an ELA PT should take approximately 120 minutes for a student to complete—although the student may take as much time as needed. ELA PTs are organized into the following five components—Directions/Classroom Activity, Sources (2 to 4), Research, Essay, and Rubrics. The PT further organizes the Sources & Research as Part 1 of the PT and the Essay as Part 2 of the PT. Parts 1 and 2 are scored.

DIRECTIONS/CLASSROOM ACTIVITY—The teacher reads the initial Directions to the tested group and may supervise a Classroom Activity that helps orient the students to the PT’s context/scenario. Subsequent directions are given via the computer.

Part 1

SOURCES—For an ELA PT, “Sources” usually mean a set of 2 to 4 resources. Most of the Sources are articles or documents but other forms of information are possible (e.g., videos, data tables, photos, etc.). Each Source is presented via computer for the student to read and study. The Sources may be re-accessed during the PT as often as necessary. The Sources serve as the basic information for composition of Part 2—the Essay.

RESEARCH (Scored)—For an ELA PT “Research” is information processing of the Sources through the student answering three assessment items—two of the items are Short Text (ST) items and the third is an item type that can be machine scored (either MC, MS, HT, or TM—most of the ones that I’ve seen are TM). The student responses to the items serve to promote analysis of the Sources. Student responses to the items are scored via (0-2) Rubrics for the Short Text items and a (0-1) Key for the machine scored item.

Part II

ESSAY (Scored)—For an ELA PT, the Part II product is a “Full Text” Essay. The Elementary Essay is narrative, informational, or opinion. The Middle School Essay is narrative, informational, or argumentative. The High School Essay is informational or argumentative. The students type the Essay into the computer. Student Essays are scored based on the aggregate of three rubrics (i.e., Organization/Purpose (0-4), Evidence/Elaboration (0-4), and Conventions (0-2)).

RUBRICS—ELA PT “Rubrics” (for both research items and the essay) are available on sample/practice PTs and as separate Rubric documents on the Smarter Balanced website. Rubrics are not available to the student while taking the PT.

NOTES—The best tool for practicing Performance Tasks, that is compliant with Smarter Balanced delivery and format, is the Practice Test (dated 5-19-14). The Interim Assessments to be fielded in late January 2015 will offer other authentic tools.

ELA Performance Task (about 120 min)

Directions/Activity

-Teacher establishes expectations & context

Sources
(Set of 2 to 4)

Articles, Documents,
Video, Audio, Photos, Etc.

Research
(3 Items)

Analyze Sources

2 ST items & 1 mach. scorable item

Rubrics (0-2) for ST items

Key (0-1) mach. scorable Item

Essay

(one of 3 Text Types)

Essay to Prompt
(Full Write)

Rubrics (0-4 & 0-2)