

Education Writers Association

Regional Seminar

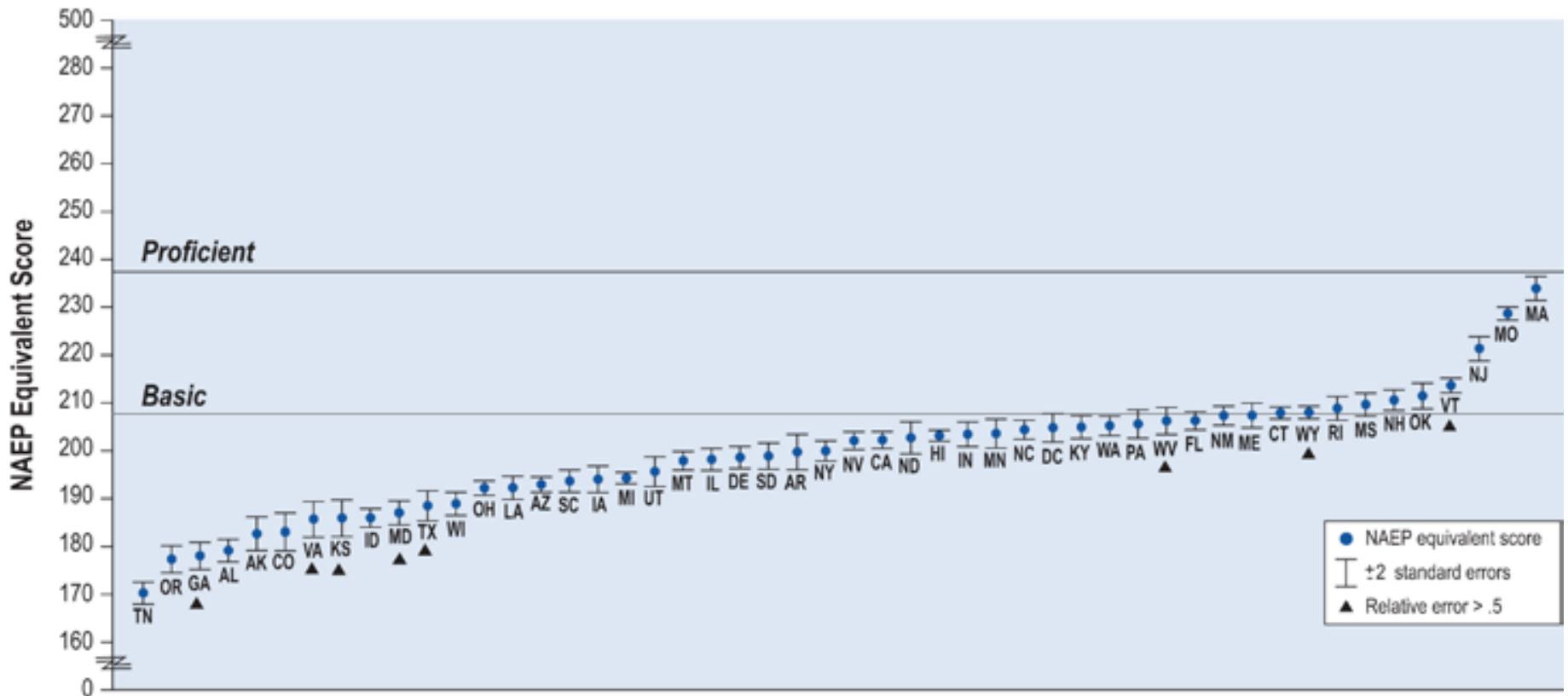
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The Case for Comparability



NAEP scale equivalents of state grade 4 reading standards for proficient performance, by state: 2009

Developing New Tests

- ⌘ States led the development of two consortia:
 - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
- ⌘ CCSSO published *High-Quality Assessment Principles*, a criteria for states to use to ensure that new assessments match the rigor of their college- and career-ready standards.

What Is Different?

- ⌘ CCSSO supports high-quality, summative assessments that meet the following criteria:
 - Aligned with college-and career-ready standards that are internationally benchmarked,
 - Assess higher-order cognitive skills and critical abilities,
 - Instructionally sensitive and educationally valuable,
 - Valid, reliable, and fair.

Sample Test Questions



Assessing knowledge about fractions and decimals

From testing only recall and basic computation...

Sample STAR item (California)

The total length of a vehicle is 205.83 inches. What is the length of the vehicle rounded to the nearest whole number?

- A 200 inches
- B 205 inches
- C 206 inches
- D 210 inches

Correct answer:

23.



...to measuring problem-solving and higher-order thinking

Sample Smarter Balanced item

Jared is testing how much weight a bag can hold. He plans to put juice bottles into three bags. He wants each bag to have a total weight within the given range.

- Drag juice bottles into each bag so that the weight is within the given range.
- Leave the bag empty if the given range is not possible using juice bottles.

Between 6 lb and 7 lb Between 10 lb and 11 lb

Correct answer:

Between 6 lb and 7 lb Between 10 lb and 11 lb Between 14 lb and 15 lb

STANDARD TESTED: “Read, write, and compare decimals to thousandths”

Sample STAR item

The total length of a vehicle is 205.83 inches. What is the length of the vehicle rounded to the nearest whole number?

- A 200 inches
- B 205 inches
- C 206 inches
- D 210 inches

Sample Smarter Balanced item

Five swimmers compete in the 50-meter race. The finish time for each swimmer is shown in the video.



Explain how the results of the race would change if the race used a clock that rounded to the nearest tenth:

[Type response]

What is a summative assessment? A summative is an assessment of learning at the end of a unit, term, or school year. If not created correctly, it can have unintended consequences of “narrowing the curriculum” or teachers “teaching to the test”

ELA/Literacy: Grade 7 Sample Item



SAMPLE ITEM

Below are three claims that one could make based on the article “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found.”

| | |
|--------|---|
| Claims | Earhart and Noonan lived as castaways on Nikumaroro Island. |
| | Earhart and Noonan’s plane crashed into the Pacific Ocean |
| | People don’t really know where Earhart and Noonan died. |

Part A: Highlight the claim that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient facts within “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found.”

Part B: Click on two facts within the article that best provide evidence to support the claim selected in Part A.

ELA/Literacy: Grade 7 Sample Item



SAMPLE ITEM

STUDENT DIRECTIONS

You have read three texts describing Amelia Earhart. All three include the claim that Earhart was a brave, courageous person. The three texts are:

- “Biography of Amelia Earhart”
- “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found”
- “Amelia Earhart’s Life and Disappearance”

Consider the argument each author uses to demonstrate Earhart’s bravery.

Write an essay that analyzes the strength of the arguments about Earhart’s bravery in at least two of the texts. Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.

The Field Test

- ⌘ PARCC and Smarter Balanced both field tested questions in 2014. Results of the field test were more positive than expected.
 - Smarter Balanced: 70% of test coordinators said the field test went as well as or better than expected.
 - PARCC: 90% of students said that they had sufficient time to complete the test and understood the instructions.

Student Reaction

“It’s the first test I’ve ever taken where I actually learned something while taking it.”

- *6th grade student*

“That test was fun!”

- *5th grade student*

Going Forward

- ⌘ Keep first-year scores in perspective.
- ⌘ Give a sample test in your newsroom.
- ⌘ Sit down and ask your state, “What do these scores mean?”
- ⌘ Talk with students about the test and their experience.
- ⌘ Cover the release of scores from a family’s perspective.
- ⌘ Analyze school-level or district-level results and see what differences you can find.