

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium:

Style Guide

Last Revised: April 22, 2015



Note: The presentation of the sample items and selections in this document approximates but does not exactly reflect the appearance of the test content that students will view on the computer screen. The final presentation of content will depend on the user interface (UI) of the online delivery system.

Table 1. Abbreviations used in Smarter Balanced Style Guide.

Style Guide Abbreviations	
Abbreviation	Spelled-Out Term
CBT	computer-based testing
CMOS	<i>Chicago Manual of Style</i>
CMYK	cyan-magenta-yellow-black (a four-color model used in printing)
CR item	constructed-response item
dpi	dots per inch
ELA	English Language Arts
JPEG	Joint Photographic Experts Group (a format for compressing images used for print or screen presentation)
PBT	print-based testing
PNG	portable network graphics (a format using lossless compression for images used for screen presentation)
PSS	purpose-setting statement
PT	performance task
RGB	red-green-blue (a three-color model used in screen presentation)
SR item	selected-response item
TEI	technology-enhanced item
TIFF	tagged image file format (a format for compressing images used for print presentation)
UI	user interface



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Part I:

Global Style Conventions

A. Computer-Based Testing

Computer-based testing (CBT) differs from traditional print-based testing (PBT). As such, traditional style conventions applied to printed test forms must be modified for computer-based test forms because not all print-based style conventions are appropriate for display on a computer screen.

For example, the Verdana font has been chosen because it was specifically designed to be used in place of Times New Roman and other serif fonts that often appear in printed test forms. Verdana characters are slightly larger than characters in other fonts, and the ample space between the characters makes them easy to distinguish at low screen resolutions.

Layout Considerations

The presentation of content in computer-based test forms depends on the user interface (UI) in the online delivery system. The guidelines in this section should be applied to the extent possible once the online delivery system is identified.

Content panes.

Students should have the option of viewing content in one pane that is the full size of the computer screen or in subpanes that divide the screen horizontally or vertically. For example, students should be able to view a selection on the screen by itself or on the screen with an item.

The sizes of content panes depend on the amount of space allotted in the UI for viewing content. For example, content panes will be larger in a UI in which 80% of the viewing area is used for content and 20% is reserved for headers, navigation tools, and other noncontent elements than in a UI in which 70% of the viewing area is used for content and 30% is reserved for noncontent elements.

Scrolling.

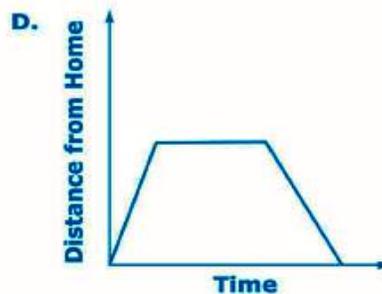
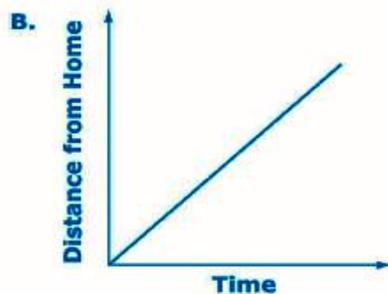
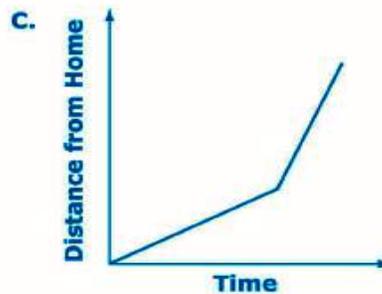
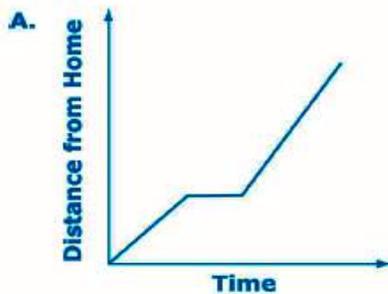
Students should not have to use horizontal or vertical scrolling to view test content in its entirety. The following guidelines are designed to minimize the need for scrolling:

- Lay out content across the computer screen rather than in columns.
- Display each item on the screen by itself.
- Allow students to view a selection on the screen by itself or on the screen with an item. This eliminates the electronic equivalent of turning a page to flip between the selection and the items.
- Similar options should be provided for viewing a cluster (a group of items associated with the same graphic). Students should be able to view the graphic on the screen by itself or on the screen with an item in the cluster.

- Whenever possible, arrange graphic options in a two-over-two box layout.

Which graph shows that Noel walked home from school at a constant rate?

Which graph shows that Noel walked home from school at a constant rate?



Line breaks.

The locations of line breaks depend on the operating system on the computer as well as the size of the monitor being used to view test content. Because lines of text do not necessarily break at the same locations from computer to computer, hard line breaks should not be inserted unless absolutely necessary.

B. General Font and Alignment Specifications

Table 2 shows general font and alignment specifications for different text elements. See “Selected-Response Items” in this section for information about option alignment; see Parts III and IV for content-specific font and alignment specifications.

Note: All text should be displayed on a white background.

Table 2. General font and alignment specifications for text elements in test forms.

Font and Alignment Specifications		
Content	Font	Alignment
Items	14 pt. Verdana	Left aligned
Part headings in items	14 pt. Verdana Bold Italic	Left aligned
Boxed text	14 pt. Verdana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Box: left aligned • 1 em margin
Emphasis terms	14 pt. Verdana Bold	n/a
Directions	14 pt. Verdana Bold	Left aligned
Purpose-setting statements (PSSs)	14 pt. Verdana	Left aligned

C. Test Items

Assessments consist of various types of items, including selected-response (SR) items, constructed-response (CR) items, technology-enhanced items (TEIs), and performance tasks (PTs). In test forms, items are numbered sequentially within each content area, beginning with number 1.

This section provides general global style conventions and specifications for items. See Parts III and IV for content-specific conventions and Part VI for information about TEIs.

Selected-Response Items

All SR items consist of a stem and options. The format of the stem and options varies among items based on content. (See “Options” in this section for formats of options.)

Stems

stem the part of an SR item that precedes the options

closed stem a stem that is a complete sentence and ends with a period or question mark

open stem a stem that consists of a sentence fragment and becomes a complete sentence when combined with each option

Closed stems.

When the item stem is closed, the options are either complete sentences or sentence fragments. Options that are complete sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a punctuation mark.

Select all of the sentences that describe properties of a parallelogram.

- A. Opposite angles are equal.
- B. Its diagonals bisect one another.
- C. Opposite sides are perpendicular.
- D. Its area is equal to twice its width.

Options that are fragments begin with a lowercase letter (unless the first word is a proper noun or adjective) and do not end with a punctuation mark.

Which cube has the greatest volume?

- A. the red cube
- B. the blue cube
- C. the green cube
- D. the yellow cube

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The treatment of options that are imperative statements depends on whether the implied subject of the statement is “you.” If it is, the options are treated as complete sentences. If it is not, the options are treated as fragments.

Subject is implied “you”:

What is the rule for the pattern?

- A. Add 3.
- B. Subtract 3.
- C. Divide by 3.
- D. Multiply by 3.

Subject is not implied “you”:

What does Fiona do in the paragraph?

- A. ask Michael to help
- B. tell Michael the secret
- C. show Michael the map
- D. give Michael the treasure

Open stems.

When the item stem is open, both the stem and the options are fragments that, when combined, form complete sentences. The fragment in the stem does not end with a punctuation mark. Regardless of whether the options are complete sentences or fragments, they begin with a lowercase letter (unless the first word is a proper noun or adjective) and end with a punctuation mark.

The message of the poem is that

- A. knowledge is power.
- B. the future is uncertain.
- C. actions speak louder than words.
- D. the challenges of life can be overcome.

In open-stem items, the options should not repeat large quantities of text. The stem must be long enough to provide context for the options.

Why do Darren and his friends go to the toy store?

- A. to get Nick a job
- B. to find Nick a home
- C. to buy a present for Nick
- D. to talk to the owner about Nick

Options.

Although all SR items have options, the number and format of these options vary from item to item based on content. The number of correct answers among the options also varies.

- In some cases, options are identified with consecutive, uppercase letters.

What is the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. Bees live in colonies.
- B. The queen bee is female.
- C. Bees collect nectar and pollen.
- D. The worker bees clean the hive.

- Options that are not identified with letters are presented in an alternative format that still requires students to choose the correct answer(s). For example, options may be preceded by radio buttons or open boxes, which students can click to choose the correct answer(s).

Select all the numbers that are less than 5.

- 2
- 4
- 6
- 8
- 9

Option alignment and order.

Table 3 provides general guidelines for the alignment and order of options in SR items in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

Note: Options derived from a stimulus, such as a selection or graphic, are ALWAYS arranged in the same order they appear in the stimulus. This guideline supersedes all other guidelines listed in Table 3.

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Table 3. Guidelines for the alignment and order of options in SR items.

Option Alignment and Order			
Option Type	Alignment	Order	Example
Graphic options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graphic: left aligned Option letter: top aligned or vertically centered on graphic (use best judgment) 	Arranged for best visual presentation (use best judgment)	n/a
Numeric options	Decimal aligned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stand-alone numbers decimal values numbers that precede or follow symbols: 40°, \$20.00 numbers that precede labels: 6 ties, 12 bananas numbers that precede units of measure: 15 inches, 30 cm 	Arranged in ascending or descending order	<p>What percentage of students prefer strawberry yogurt to blueberry yogurt?</p> <p>A. 25%</p> <p>B. 50%</p> <p>How long, in inches, is each necklace?</p> <p>A. 9 in</p> <p>B. 12 in</p>
	Currency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dollar signs: left aligned dollar amounts: decimal aligned 	Arranged in ascending or descending order	<p>How much money did Chip spend altogether?</p> <p>A. \$ 80</p> <p>B. \$120</p>
	Fractions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fraction: left aligned Option letter: vertically centered on fraction 	Arranged in ascending or descending order	<p>How many cups of sugar does Janet need to make two cakes?</p> <p>A. $\frac{1}{2}$</p> <p>B. $1\frac{1}{4}$</p>
	Times of day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decimal aligned on colon 	Arranged in ascending or descending order	<p>At what time does Kody eat lunch?</p> <p>A. 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>B. 1:00 p.m.</p>

Option Alignment and Order			
Option Type	Alignment	Order	Example
Text options	Left aligned	Words: arranged in alphabetical order	What does the word <u>pacify</u> mean in the sentence in the passage? A. greet B. soothe
	Left aligned	Phrases and sentences: arranged by length, longest to shortest or vice versa; if more than one line of text is used as separate paragraphs (such as a title followed by a description), the length of the first line of text is considered (e.g., the title)	Which statement is true about a triangular prism? A. It has six vertices. B. It has four triangular faces.

Note: Options are not arranged in the prescribed order when doing so clues the answer to the item.

Constructed-Response Items

CR items consist only of item stems. The stems are complete sentences written as either questions or imperative commands.

How does the narrator change in the passage? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

Write a paragraph that explains how meteorologists predict the weather. Choose information from the graphic organizer to include in your paragraph.

Parts in Items

Some items are divided into parts labeled with consecutive, lettered headings. In headings, the word *part* and the part letter are capitalized and bold—they are also italic in Math only. In item text, the word *part* is lowercase and the part letter is capitalized. Parts may comprise a mix of SR and CR items or two of one type.

[ELA]

Part A

Maddox has 12 toy cars: 2 red cars, 4 blue cars, and some silver cars. Write an equation that could be used to find the number of silver cars he has.

[Math]

Part B: Solve the equation you wrote in part A to find the number of silver cars Maddox has.

D. Performance Tasks

ELA PTs consist of a collection of selections (two or more) followed by four items, the last of which is a writing assignment. The selections and items are interwoven together as a single task by directions to the student and administering teacher. Unscored classroom activities may also be given to prepare the class for the performance task, which consist of a script read out loud to the class by the teacher and possibly ancillary materials.

Math PTs consist of a stimulus followed by six associated items. Some of the items may be broken into parts (part A and part B—see “Parts in Items” above).

All content in performance tasks follows the guidelines in this document.

- For items, follow the general guidelines in “Test Items” in this section as well as the content-specific guidelines in Parts III and IV. For TEIs, follow the additional guidelines in Part VI.
- For selections, follow the font and alignment specifications in “Selections” in Part III.
- For graphics, follow the specifications in Part V.

Some exceptions are as follows.

ELA PT style exceptions.

The purpose-setting statements (PSSs) of the selections provide students with information about the selections. A performance task PSS should

- refer to the selection using a descriptive term such as *passage*, *article*, or *Web page*.
- include the publication name and date; author’s expertise or position in relation to the topic; type of publication (if relevant); and topic, purpose, audience, or other context information that will allow students to evaluate the source.

A performance task PSS should not

- refer to the selection as a *selection*.
- include information that clues the answers to items.
- refer to a specific item number (e.g., questions 1 through 4).
- ask a question. (Students might think they are expected to provide an answer.)

Acknowledgment lines of the selections follow APA style: Only the first word of titles (and subtitles after a colon) are capitalized, except for domain names which are title case and italic. Quote marks are not used for titles. URLs are not underscored.

Mikel, T. (2013, June 4). Bluebirds in spring. *Feathers of a Season*. Retrieved from http://www.feathersofaseason.com/bluebirds_in_spring

Wings in transition: Backyard birds. (2014). *Flight anthology*. New York, NY: Kimbly Publishing.

Math PT style exceptions.

- Table titles use bold and use title case. They must be numbered using a period after the number. E.g., **Table 1. Fitness Activities.**
- In items, table titles in text are bold and title case, but they do not have a period after the number. E.g., **Table 1 Fitness Activities.**
- Text entries and mixed numbers (i.e., whole numbers with fractions) in tables should be left aligned with the widest entry centered. Numbers are decimal aligned with the widest entry centered.
- When an item refers to a previous item, use an initial capital for “Question” followed by the item number. In generic references, use lowercase for “question.” E.g.: Use your answer from Question 3 to find the total money spent.; Use the table to answer the question.

E. Graphics and Other Stimuli in Items

Note: Graphics and other stimuli are left aligned in items.

Introductory Statements

Descriptive terms.

A graphic in an item should not be referred to as a *graphic*; instead, use a more descriptive term, such as *graph*, *table*, or *diagram*. The same descriptive term should be used throughout the item.

Correct:

Ms. Bridges made this *drawing* of her classroom. In her *drawing*, she used the scale 1 centimeter = 1 meter.

Incorrect:

Ms. Bridges made this *drawing* of her classroom. In her *picture*, she used the scale 1 centimeter = 1 meter.

If a graphic represents a three-dimensional object, use the name of the object to describe the graphic. The term selected should be used throughout the item.

Correct:

Tom made this *graph* to show the number of markers he has in each color. Based on the *graph*, how many blue markers does Tom have?

Incorrect:

Tom made this *graph* to show the number of markers he has in each color. Based on the *diagram*, how many blue markers does Tom have?

Above and below.

Do not use the terms *above* and *below* to refer to the location of a graphic; instead, use terms such as *this*, *that*, and *the*.

Use the numbers to make the equations true. Each number can be used only once. To use a number, drag it to one of the boxes in the equations.

9 15 16 23 29 30

$$\square + \square = 38$$

$$\square + \square = 45$$

However, the term *below* can be used to refer to the location of text not considered graphics.

Introductory statements in item stems.

Graphics positioned within items are introduced as part of the item stem. Introductory statements in stems are not italicized.

This map shows three hiking trails around a lake.

Kaylie asked her classmates about their favorite games. She recorded their answers in the tally chart.

An introductory statement that is part of an item stem should be as descriptive as possible; however, a sentence such as “Look at this [graphic]” is acceptable when a more descriptive introduction is not available or appropriate.

Acceptable:

Look at this flyer.

Preferred:

This flyer shows discounts available for students at the school store.

Note: In SR items, graphics are not positioned between the stem and options; stem text appears between the graphic and the options.

Boxed text.

Like graphics, boxed text must be introduced with an introductory statement in the item stem. The statement should instruct students to read, rather than to use or look at, the text.

Read this sentence and answer the question that follows.

Claire was so captivated by the sunset that she didn't even hear her mother's question.

What does the underlined word mean as it is used in the sentence?

Referring to Text from Graphics in Items

Items sometimes refer to titles, headings, labels, and other text in graphics. Use the guidelines that follow to determine the appropriate treatment of text from graphics that is referred to in items. Note that these guidelines apply only to the treatment of graphic text in items, not to the text in the graphic itself. (See Part V for information about the treatment of text in graphics.)

- Text from graphics is not enclosed in quotation marks.
- Titles and headings appear in regular type and follow the same capitalization used in the graphic.

Which unit should be used for the measures in the column titled **Volume of Water**?

- Labels and other text appear in regular type but do not necessarily follow the same capitalization used in the graphic. Use the guidelines that follow to determine whether to capitalize labels and other text from graphics.
 - Capitalize labels that precede letters or numerals if the label is capitalized in the graphic.

This table shows the populations of four towns.

Town	Population
1	926
2	552
3	733
4	618

Capitalize labels that precede letters or numerals if the label is capitalized in the graphic.

How much **greater** is the population in **Town 1** than in Town 4?

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- Capitalize labels that are proper nouns.
- Lowercase labels that are common nouns (but see previous example for exception).

Jesse walks three dogs in his neighborhood. This tally chart shows the number of times he walked each dog last week.

Dog	Number of Times Walked
Schnauzer	
Beagle	
Labrador retriever	

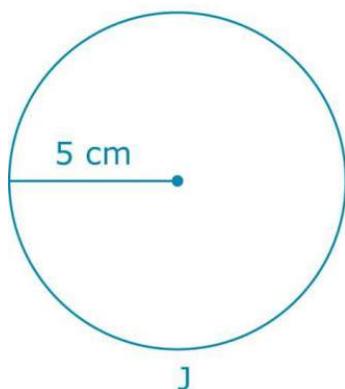
Capitalize proper nouns.

How many more times did Jesse walk the Labrador retriever than he walked the schnauzer?

Lowercase common nouns.

- Lowercase labels that are lowercase or not shown in the graphic.

The radius of circle J is 5 centimeters.



Lowercase labels that are not shown in graphics.

The radius of circle K is twice as long as the radius of circle J. What is the **diameter**, in centimeters, of circle K?

Note: See “Naming Conventions for Geometric Objects” in Part IV for information about naming conventions for geometric objects, such as shapes, angles, and lines.

Graphics Embedded in Text

When an object shown in a graphic is embedded in running text, it should be the same size in both the graphic and the text. Multiple graphics embedded in running text should be the same size as each other.

F. Preferred Editorial Styles

Spelling and Plurals

Common nouns.

The plurals of most nouns are formed by adding *s*: boys, trees. Exceptions to this rule include the following:

- The plurals of words that end in *ch, j, s, sh, ss, x, or z* are formed by adding *es*: churches, biases, wishes, classes, foxes, waltzes.
- The plurals of words that end in a consonant and *y* are formed by changing *y* to *i* and adding *es*: babies, realities.
- The plurals of words that end in *o* are formed by adding *es* or *s*: heroes, potatoes, egos, cellos.
- The plurals of words that end in *f* or *fe* are usually formed by changing *f* to *v* and adding *es*: hooves, lives, but dwarfs, roofs.

Note: Many nouns have irregular plural forms (child/children, deer/deer, die/dice). When in doubt about the form or spelling of a plural, consult a dictionary.

Compound nouns.

The plural of a hyphenated compound noun is usually formed by adding *s* to the main noun in the compound: brothers-in-law, courts-martial.

For solid, or closed, compound nouns, plurals are formed the regular way: classrooms, cupfuls, stopwatches.

The plurals of open compound nouns are formed by pluralizing the main noun: attorneys general, centers of industry.

Proper nouns.

The plurals of proper nouns are usually formed by adding *s* or *es*. The plural of a proper noun ending in *y* takes an *s*.

the Smith family; the Smiths

the Jones family; the Joneses

Monday; Mondays

Canadian; Canadians

Letters, numbers, and abbreviations.

The plurals of capital letters used as words, numerals used as nouns, and abbreviations are usually formed by adding s. To avoid confusion, the plurals of lowercase letters are formed by adding an apostrophe and an s.

Juan received all Bs on his report card.

the 1880s

DVDs

x's and y's

Possessives

Singular nouns.

The possessive of most singular nouns, both common and proper, is formed by adding an apostrophe and an s. This includes words that end with an unpronounced s and names with an ending pronounced eez.

a rock's weight

the witness's testimony

Dylan Thomas's poetry

Ms. Martinez's classroom

Indianapolis's skyline

the marquis's quarters

Albert Camus's novels

Euripides's works

However, a noun that is singular in meaning but plural in form takes an apostrophe only.

this species' characteristics

Hocking Hills' nicest campground

the United States' role as peacekeeper

the Academy of Sciences' publication

Plural nouns.

The possessive of most plural nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

puppies' tails

the Joneses' house

the Martinezes' son

but

children's literature

women's rights

Letters and numbers.

The possessive of letters and numbers is formed by adding an apostrophe and an s.

LBJ's diary

1980's worst flood

Joint vs. separate possession.

When closely linked nouns are considered a single unit and “possess” the same thing, only the second noun takes an apostrophe and an s.

my mom and dad's house

Amelia and Brienne's teacher

When the things being possessed are not the same, both nouns take an apostrophe and an s.

my mom's and dad's birth certificates

Cleveland's and Chicago's rail systems

Compound Terms

compound noun two or more nouns combined to form a single noun

compound modifier a modifier that consists of two or more words

- An *open compound* is written as two words: real estate, sand dollar.
- In a *hyphenated compound*, the words are joined by a hyphen: self-esteem, half-baked.
- A *solid compound* is written as one word: playground, textbook.

Compound modifiers.

Compound modifiers are usually hyphenated before a noun and open after a noun.

an open-ended question; a question that is open ended
a well-read student; a student who is well read
a 250-page book; a book that is 250 pages long
a sixteen-ounce bottle; a bottle that holds sixteen ounces

There are a few exceptions to this rule:

- When the compound modifier is a common open compound noun, it should be hyphenated only to prevent ambiguity.
high school teacher
real estate listing
but
short-story writer
real-number theory
- When the first modifier in the compound is an adverb that ends with *-ly*, the compound is open.
highly paid assistant
hotly contested campaign
- When the compound is made up of a number and an abbreviated unit of measurement, the compound is open.
a 5 km race
a 3 ft wall
- When a phrase is used as a modifier, it is usually hyphenated before a noun and open after a noun.
over-the-counter medicine; medicine sold over the counter
an up-to-date form; a form that is up to date
- When the second part of a compound modifier is omitted, a space follows the hyphen.
fifteen- and twenty-year mortgages
micro- and macro-evolution
but
third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students

Prefixes and suffixes.

Words that are formed with common prefixes and suffixes (*anti-*, *bi-*, *mid-*, *multi-*, *non-*, *over-*, *post-*, *pre-*, *re-*, *sub-*, *un-*, *under-*, *-fold*, *-less*, and *-like*) are usually closed.

bivalve

catlike

multipurpose

noninvasive

However, a hyphen should be used

- before a numeral or a capitalized word: post-1800, mid-September.
- before a compound term: non-self-sufficient.
- to separate combinations of letters that might be hard to read: anti-intellectual, de-ice, lava-like.

Use an en dash instead of a hyphen in a compound adjective when one of its elements consists of an open compound: post–World War II.

Capitalization

Proper nouns and adjectives are always capitalized.

Personal names and titles.

All personal names (first, middle, last) are capitalized, as are initials, nicknames, and the suffixes *Jr.* and *Sr.* Do not set off a suffix with commas. Include a space between the initials in a personal name except when the initials are used alone.

Susan B. Anthony

Ivan the Terrible

E. B. White

Martin Luther King Jr.

LBJ

A person's title or office is capitalized only when it directly precedes a personal name and is part of the name.

President Lincoln; the president

Professor Johnson; the professor

Reverend Jackson; the reverend

General Grant; the general

When a title is used in apposition to a personal name (meaning it is used as a description rather than as part of the name), it is lowercase.

American president Lincoln
former president Bush
the Southern-born reverend Jackson

Kinship names.

Kinship names are lowercase unless they directly precede or replace a personal name. When kinship names are used in apposition to personal names, they are lowercase.

My mom and dad have been married for 30 years.
Did you write to Aunt Kelly?
Can I have a cookie, Mom?
My kids love their aunt Kelly.

Racial and ethnic names.

Names of ethnic and racial groups are capitalized, as are adjectives derived from them. Do not hyphenate compound terms.

African Americans; African American poetry
Asians; Asian influence; an Asian American
Caucasians; Caucasian population
Inuits; Inuit art
Native Americans; Native American lore
but
white; black
people of color

Geographic names.

Proper names and nicknames are capitalized.

New York City
the Big Apple

Directional nouns are lowercase when they are used to indicate direction but capitalized when they refer to a distinct region.

a north wind; North African countries; in northern African
a southern climate; southern Ohio; the South; South America
eastern Illinois; the East Coast

Trademarks and brand names.

Use generic terms whenever possible. When using a brand name that is trademarked, capitalize the name but do not include the trademark symbol.

Post-it Notes; sticky notes
Kleenex; tissue

Titles of Works

Capitalization.

Use headline style capitalization for titles of works. Capitalize the first and last words of the title and all interior words except

- articles (*a, an, the*).
- coordinate conjunctions (*and, but, for, or, nor*).
- prepositions, regardless of length, unless they are functioning as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.
- the word *as*.
- scientific terms/names that begin with a lowercase letter (*pH*) or are lowercase in running text (*E. coli*).

“A Little Knowledge Is a Dangerous Thing”

Driving through Vermont

“The Ins and Outs of Trail Running”

“Reading for Fun”

Turn Up the Volume

A Primer on Soil pH

Hyphenated compounds in titles.

Use the following guidelines for capitalizing a hyphenated compound in a title:

- Capitalize the first element of the hyphenated compound.
- Capitalize any subsequent elements unless they are articles, coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, or, nor*), or prepositions.

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- If the first element is a prefix or combining form that could not stand by itself as a word (*anti*, *pre*), do not capitalize the second element unless it is a proper noun or proper adjective.
- Capitalize the second number in a hyphenated number or fraction that is spelled out.

Heights of Sixth-Grade Students

Teacher-to-Teacher Initiatives

E-learning for Students

The Animals of Sub-Saharan Africa

Twenty-First-Century Skills

The Two-Thirds Majority

Typographical treatment.

In running text, the titles of books, magazines, newspapers, journals, movies, and works of art are set in italics. The titles of poems, essays, short stories, articles, and songs are set in regular type and enclosed in quotation marks. When the titles of newspapers and periodicals appear in running text, the initial *the* is lowercase and set in regular type, even if it is part of the title.

War and Peace

the *New York Times*

E.T.

“The Lake Isle of Innisfree”

“The Lottery”

“Sloop John B”

Treatment of Terms

Note: See “Treatment of Numbers” in Part IV for information about the preferred treatment of numbers.

Emphasis terms.

In items, emphasis terms are boldface at all grade levels.

What is the **most likely** reason the author wrote the passage?

Which is the **best** estimate of the number of beans in the jar?

Letters as letters.

Letters referred to as letters in text are italicized.

Liam has 2 cards labeled with the letter *E*, 6 cards labeled with the letter *F*, and 4 cards labeled with the letter *G*. What fraction of Liam’s cards are labeled with the letter *G*?

Words as words.

Words and phrases referred to as words in text are enclosed in quotation marks. (This does not apply to vocabulary terms in ELA items.)

Why does the author repeat the word “heart” in the passage?

What does the metaphor “sea of trouble” suggest in the poem?

Contractions.

Contractions can be used in selections and other material from outside sources (e.g., stimuli in performance tasks). However, contractions are not used in items **except** when

- the contraction is part of a direct quotation from a selection.

Why does the narrator claim that his father “doesn’t understand”?

- the item addresses contractions.

Which two words form the contraction can’t?

Options.

- For ELA lower grades, use *choices*. For ELA upper grades, use *options*. (Content decides what is considered lower grades versus upper grades.)
- The verb used in ELA is *choose*. However, when *choose* is used with *choices*, change *choose* to *pick*. Also, if there is more than one correct answer, *select* may be used instead of *choose* or *pick*.

choose an option

pick a choice (**not** choose a choice)

select the options

Abbreviations

Note: Except for abbreviated units of measure and forms of address, abbreviations are rarely used in items. Abbreviations are used in graphics when space is an issue.

Acronyms and initialisms.

- acronym** an abbreviation based on the initial letters of a term and pronounced as a word (NASA, OPEC)
- initialism** an abbreviation based on the initial letters of a term and pronounced by spelling out each letter (AARP, DNA)

Acronyms and initialisms are usually set in all capital letters without periods. When an acronym or initialism is preceded by an indefinite article, the choice of *a* or *an* is based on the pronunciation of the abbreviation.

- an HMO
- an AARP newsletter
- a DNA sample
- a NASA initiative
- an OPEC worker

Unless an acronym or initialism is extremely well known (e.g., IRS, PTA, NATO), spell it out the first time it is used and enclose the abbreviated form in parentheses after the spelled-out term.

- The grade-level expectations (GLEs) for mathematics are listed below.
- The GLEs for English Language Arts (ELA) are listed in the next section.

Latin abbreviations.

Use Latin abbreviations only in parenthetical text. The abbreviations most commonly used are *e.g.* (for example), *etc.* (and so on), and *i.e.* (that is). In text, these abbreviations are set in regular type.

- Unapproved resource materials (e.g., cell phones, dictionaries) are not allowed during test sessions.
- Unapproved resource materials (cell phones, dictionaries, etc.) are not allowed during test sessions.
- Reference books (i.e., dictionaries, thesauri) are not allowed during test sessions.

Geographic abbreviations.

The names of states are spelled out in running text. Abbreviations are used where a zip code follows or in other contexts in which abbreviations are appropriate (e.g., acknowledgments, graphics, tables, lists). In these cases, use the two-letter postal abbreviations without periods.

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Spell out *United States* when it is used as a noun; either abbreviation *U.S.* or *US* may be used as an adjective.

The campus is in Westerville, Ohio.

Please mail the documents to PO Box 121, Cloverdale, VT, 00111.

the president of the United States (*not* the president of the US)

the U.S. Treasury Department

Time.

Eras.

Use capital letters without periods to indicate eras. (Note that BC and BCE follow the date, while AD and CE precede the date.)

55 BC

AD 1066

Months.

Months are spelled out in running text but may be abbreviated in graphics. Use the following abbreviations:

Jan. May Sept.

Feb. June Oct.

Mar. July Nov.

Apr. Aug. Dec.

Days of the week.

Days of the week are spelled out in running text but may be abbreviated in graphics. Use the following abbreviations:

Sun. Thurs.

Mon. Fri.

Tues. Sat.

Wed.

Times of day.

Lowercase letters followed by periods are used for a.m. and p.m.

Part II: Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation

A. Grammar and Usage

The grammar and usage guidelines in this section are based on the reference materials listed in Appendix B. Refer to those sources for additional information.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Singular subjects require singular verbs, and plural subjects require plural verbs. However, identifying a subject as singular or plural is not always easy. Following are some of the usages that frequently cause confusion.

- *And*. Use a plural verb if a sentence has two subjects joined by *and*, unless the nouns joined by *and* form a collective idea.

Amy and Bruce have arrived.

The horse and carriage has arrived.

- *Along with, as well as, coupled with, together with*, etc. These phrases do not change the number of the subject. Use a singular verb when such phrases are used to connect nouns.

The principal, along with the teachers, has developed a mentoring program.

- *Collecting noun phrase*. When a sentence has a collecting noun phrase (e.g., a bunch of) in front of a plural noun (e.g., girls), the verb is usually plural, unless the collecting noun is the main idea.

A fraction of the students are causing trouble.

A string of burglaries have (or has) rattled the neighbors.

A set of keys is on the table.

- *Collective ideas*. When a plural noun refers to a single, unified idea or concept, the noun takes a singular verb.

Eight hundred words is the maximum length for the essay.

The editor's primary objective and mission is to do no harm.

Three months is enough time to complete the assignment.

- *Collective nouns*. A collective noun refers to two or more people or things (e.g., committee, pair, team, staff). Use a singular verb when the members of the collective are acting as a group and a plural verb when the members of the collective are acting individually.

The class is taking a field trip to a museum.

The couple disagree about how to discipline their child.

- Recast sentences when the plural is awkward.

Awkward: The class are handing in their book reports.

Preferred: The students in the class are handing in their book reports.

Awkward: The school board are debating a new dress code.

Preferred: The school board members are debating a new dress code.

Note: Collective nouns and ideas should be consistently treated as either singular or plural within an item.

- Or.* Use a singular verb if a sentence has two or more singular subjects joined by *or*. If a subject consists of both a singular noun and a plural noun joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb usually agrees with the closer noun.

The chief or the lieutenant is available to attend the conference.

Neither the coach nor the players want the season to end.

- There, here.* In constructions that begin with *there* or *here*, the verb agrees with the anticipated subject.

There is no way out.

There are many ways to go.

Here are the books.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

pronoun a word used as a substitute for a noun or, in some cases, another pronoun (e.g., he, they, it)

antecedent the word to which a pronoun refers; for example, in the sentence “Linda walked to her friend’s house after school,” the pronoun *her* refers to the antecedent *Linda*.

Singular vs. plural pronouns.

Pronouns and antecedents must agree in number.

Use singular pronouns for

- singular antecedents.
- singular collective nouns and collective ideas.
The team is playing its first game next week.
- two or more singular antecedents connected by *or*, *nor*, *either-or*, or *neither-nor*.
Either Kristen or Barbara will bring her notes to the study group.
- two or more singular antecedents preceded by *each*, *every*, or *no* and connected by *and*.
Every dog and every cat has its day.

Use plural pronouns for

- plural antecedents.

Students will receive their report cards at the end of the week.

- plural collective nouns.

The audience rushed back to their seats.

- two or more antecedents connected by *and*.

Because Lexi and Curt are both sick, they are unable to attend the lecture.

When a singular antecedent and a plural antecedent are connected by *or*, the pronoun agrees with the nearer antecedent. To avoid awkwardness, cast the sentence so that the plural antecedent comes second (nearer to the pronoun).

The principal or the vice principals will bring their recommendations to the board.

Ambiguous pronouns.

Pronouns should clearly refer to a single nearby antecedent. Avoid ambiguous pronouns, which lack an antecedent or refer to multiple antecedents. When necessary, recast sentences to improve clarity.

Ambiguous: Derek and Brandon will discuss his trip to Paris.

Preferred: Derek will discuss his trip to Paris with Brandon.

Ambiguous: Robbie and his friends have 6 apples. He puts them into a basket.

Preferred: Robbie and his friends have 6 apples. Robbie puts the apples into a basket.

Antecedents should be either nouns or other pronouns. However, a pronoun may refer back to a possessive if the intended meaning is clear.

Emily's pencil is on her desk.

Will's classmates sent him a get well card.

Modifiers

modifier a word or phrase that qualifies the meaning of another word or phrase

Misplaced modifiers.

The placement of a modifier in a sentence can affect the meaning of the sentence. When a modifier is misplaced, it modifies a word that the author did not intend to modify. The example that follows shows how the placement of the modifier *only* affects the meaning of a sentence.

1) Only Aubree is running in the race tomorrow.

2) Aubree is only running in the race tomorrow.

3) Aubree is running only in the race tomorrow.

Sentence 1 indicates that Aubree is the only person participating in the race tomorrow. Sentence 2 implies that Aubree is running in the race tomorrow but not doing anything else (e.g., jumping hurdles). Sentence 3 suggests that Aubree is running in tomorrow's race and no others. To ensure the meaning is clear, a modifier should be placed as close as possible to the word it modifies.

Dangling modifiers.

dangling modifier

a modifying phrase or clause that is not directly followed by the subject it modifies

A dangling modifier has no connection to the word it modifies. As a result, it often unintentionally modifies another word in the sentence.

1) Running across the field, the Sun felt warm on the student's back.

2) Running across the field, the student felt the warm Sun on his back.

Because the student, and not the Sun, is running across the field, sentence 2 shows the subject correctly positioned directly after the modifying phrase.

Adjectival and Adverbial Degrees

Adjectives and adverbs have three degrees: the absolute or positive (e.g., small), the comparative (e.g., smaller), and the superlative (e.g., smallest).

absolute or positive

an adjective or adverb that describes a person or thing without comparing it with another person or thing

comparative an adjective or adverb that compares two people or things

superlative an adjective or adverb that compares three or more people or things

Absolute: The red marble is shiny.

Comparative: The red marble is shinier than the blue marble.

Superlative: The red marble is the shiniest of all the marbles.

Incomplete comparisons.

To be complete, a comparison must include both items that are being compared. An incomplete comparison often involves a comparative adjective or adverb with no point of reference for comparison.

Incomplete: The red marble will roll more quickly.

Complete: The red marble will roll more quickly than the blue marble.

The first sentence indicates that a comparison is being made, but the comparison is incomplete because the reader doesn't know what is being compared. (The red marble will roll more quickly than what?) The second sentence completes the comparison.

Illogical comparisons.

Illogical comparisons occur when the items being compared do not belong to the same category.

Illogical: The interest on a money market account is usually higher than a savings account.

Logical: The interest on a money market account is usually higher than the interest on a savings account.

Logical: The interest on a money market account is usually higher than that on a savings account.

The first sentence compares two items that are not in the same category: interest and a savings account. The second and third sentences show different ways to revise the sentence so that the comparison is logical.

Preferred Word Usage

a; an use *a* before a word that begins with a consonant sound (a historical document); use *an* before a word that begins with a vowel sound (an hour long)

a; an; the use *a* or *an* to refer to a nonspecific person or thing (a store); use *the* to refer to a specific person or thing (the owner of the store)

according to; based on
use *according to* when the answer is directly stated in the stimulus; use *based on* when the answer must be inferred from the stimulus

According to the passage, what is the first step in the project?

Based on the paragraph, what does the word vanity mean?

already; all ready
use *already* to refer to time (a class that already started); use *all ready* to refer to preparation (all ready for the class to start)

altogether; all together
use *altogether* to mean “entirely” (the sum of the numbers altogether); use *all together* to mean “unity” (all together on the playground)

among; between
use *among* to refer to a relationship shared by three or more people or things (among the students); use *between* to refer to a relationship shared by two people or things (between the teacher and the student)

amount; number
use *amount* to refer to something uncountable (the amount of snow); use *number* to refer to something countable (the number of snowflakes)

antennae; antennas
use *antennae* to refer to the plural sensory appendages of insects (locusts with short antennae); use *antennas* to refer to plural electronic transmitters (TV antennas)

anyone; any one

use *anyone* as an indefinite pronoun (anyone could win); use *any one* to refer to a single person or thing in a group (any one of us could win)

biannual; biennial

use *biannual* to refer to something that occurs twice a year; use *biennial* to refer to something that occurs once every two years

A biannual pant sale is held in spring and fall.

A biennial plant does not bloom until the second year.

can; may; might

use *can* to indicate physical or mental ability; use *may* to indicate possibility or permission; use *might* to express a stronger sense of doubt

The student can recite the poem from memory.

The student may be asked to recite the poem in front of the class.

You may be excused from the table.

The student might be asked to recite the poem in front of the entire school.

common; mutual

use *common* to refer to something shared by two or more people (two girls with a common friend); use *mutual* to refer to something reciprocal or directly exchanged (mutual respect)

compare to; compare with

use *compare to* when comparing the similarities of people and things; use *compare with* when comparing the similarities and differences of people and things

complement; compliment

use *complement* to refer to something that completes or supplements something else (afterschool programs that complement the school day); use *compliment* to refer to praise (a compliment on the student's skill)

compose; comprise

use *compose* to indicate "to make up, or form the substance"; use *comprise* to indicate "to be made up of, to include"

There are many student groups that compose the school.

The school comprises many student groups.

continual; continuous

use *continual* to refer to something that occurs intermittently or frequently (a continual stream of interruptions); use *continuous* to refer to something that never stops (a continuous flow of water from the river to the gulf)

each other; one another

use *each other* to refer to a relationship shared by two people or things (two girls who like each other); use *one another* to refer to a relationship shared by three or more people or things (four girls who like one another)

farther; further

use *farther* to indicate physical distance (a ball that rolled farther); use *further* to indicate figurative distance (an idea that was further explored)

fewer; less

use *fewer* to refer to something countable (fewer pennies); use *less* to refer to an amount or to something uncountable (less money)

forego; forgo

use *forego* to mean “to go before” (a foregone conclusion); use *forgo* to mean “to go without” (teachers who will forgo coffee)

if; whether; whether or not

use *if* to introduce conditions; use *whether* to introduce alternatives; use *whether or not* only when the intended meaning is “regardless of whether”

If it rains, the game will be canceled.

Ask the coach whether the game is canceled.

The coach said the game will take place whether or not it rains.

like; such as

use *like* to refer to something that is similar to the example that follows but is not necessarily the example itself; use *such as* to refer to a specific example that follows

We need more teachers like Mrs. Jordan.

We value dedicated teachers, such as Mrs. Jordan.

percent; percentage; %

use *percent* after a number word (five percent of voters); use *percentage* as a stand-alone term (a percentage of voters); use the percent symbol after a numeral (5% of voters)

sight; site

use *sight* to indicate something worth seeing (the sights of Paris); use *site* to indicate a place or location (the site where the Eiffel Tower was built)

B. Punctuation

Commas

Series of elements.

- Commas are usually used to separate the elements in a series of three or more elements. Include a serial comma before the conjunction (e.g., and, or, but) joining the last two elements in the series.

Tammy bought eggs, milk, and sugar at the grocery store.

Zach will have pizza, spaghetti, or chicken for dinner.

- Do not use commas between elements in a series of three or more if all the elements are joined by conjunctions.

I read and Brennan listened to music and Cameron watched TV.

- Do not include a serial comma before an ampersand.

The graph is titled *Weather, Temperature & Wind Speed in Three Cities*.

Introductory phrases.

- In **grades 3–5**, use a comma after both short and long introductory phrases.

In 1980, the average cost of a new house was \$68,700.

At the third traffic light after the library, the car turned right.

- In **grades 6 and above**, use a comma only after long introductory phrases. Do not use a comma after short introductory phrases unless a comma is necessary to prevent misreading (as in the last example).

In 1980 the average cost of a new house was \$68,700.

At the third traffic light after the library, the car turned right.

To Kevin, Tricia seemed mysterious.

Note: The distinction between long and short introductory phrases is a matter of editorial discretion.

Independent and dependent clauses.

clause a group of words that contains a subject and a verb

independent clause a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence

dependent clause a clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence

restrictive provides information that is essential to meaning

nonrestrictive provides information that is not essential to meaning

- In general, use a comma between two independent clauses joined by a conjunction (e.g., and, or, but). However, when the clauses are short, the comma can be omitted.

Alan went to the mall to buy a sweater, but he bought a jacket instead.

Glenda bought a blouse and then she bought a skirt.

This guideline also applies to two independent clauses that are imperative statements (i.e., statements in which the subject is an implied “you”).

Please stop by Ben’s house to get the books, and then return them to the library. Get the books and return them to the library.

- Use a comma after a dependent clause that comes before an independent clause.

When Eliza awoke, she ran to the window to see whether it was snowing.

If it was snowing, school would be canceled for the day.

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- When a dependent clause comes after an independent clause, do not separate the clauses with a comma if the dependent clause is restrictive, or essential to the meaning of the sentence. Separate the clauses with a comma if the dependent clause is nonrestrictive, or not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

Restrictive: School will be canceled if it snows.

Nonrestrictive: The superintendent must follow the snow day policy, even though the district has already used 10 snow days this month.

Compound predicates.

compound predicate two or more verbs that have the same subject

Do not include a comma between the parts of a compound predicate unless a comma is needed to prevent misreading (as in the last example).

Amanda listened to the radio and surfed on the Internet.

Elliot called the store manager to complain but was told that the manager had left for the day.

He bumped into the woman as she stepped off the elevator, and gasped.

Relative clauses and phrases.

relative clause a clause that begins with a relative pronoun, adjective, or adverb (that, which, whose, when)

Relative clauses can be restrictive or nonrestrictive. A restrictive clause provides information that is essential to the meaning of a sentence and should not be set off by commas. Use commas to set off a nonrestrictive clause, which can be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence.

In the examples that follow, the clause in the first sentence is restrictive and essential to the meaning of the sentence: Only students who have finished may read. (All other students should continue working on the test.) In the second sentence, the clause is nonrestrictive. The fact that the students represent several different schools could be omitted from the sentence without changing its essential meaning.

Restrictive: Students who have finished their tests may read quietly.

Nonrestrictive: The mayor honored the students, who represent 20 different schools, for their volunteer work.

Which vs. that.

The word *which* is used to introduce a nonrestrictive clause. The word *that* is used to introduce a restrictive clause. In other words, use commas with the word *which*, but do not use commas with the word *that*.

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In the examples that follow, the *that* clause in the first sentence is restrictive and essential to the meaning of the sentence: Only the cookies baked this afternoon will go into the jar. (The cookies baked this morning will go into tins instead.) The *which* clause in the second sentence is nonrestrictive. All the cookies should go into the jar; the fact that they were baked this afternoon could be omitted from the sentence without changing its meaning.

Restrictive: The cookies that we baked this afternoon should be put into the cookie jar.

Nonrestrictive: The cookies, which we baked this afternoon, should be put into the cookie jar.

Appositives.

appositive a word, phrase, or clause appearing next to a noun or pronoun that explains or identifies it

Like relative clauses, appositives are either restrictive or nonrestrictive. A restrictive appositive provides information that is essential to the meaning of the sentence and should not be set off by commas. Use commas to set off a nonrestrictive appositive, which could be omitted without changing the essential meaning of the sentence.

Restrictive: Joanne's brother Ricky works at the post office.

Nonrestrictive: Lee's husband, Ricky, works at the post office.

In both sentences, *Ricky* is an appositive that describes the nouns *brother* and *husband*. In the first sentence, the appositive is essential to the meaning of the sentence: Joanne has more than one brother but only the brother named Ricky works at the post office. The appositive is nonrestrictive in the second sentence: Lee has only one husband and he works at the post office.

Phrases that begin with *such as*, *including*, and *because*.

Phrases that begin with *such as* or *because* are either restrictive or nonrestrictive. Restrictive phrases should not be set off by commas. Use commas to set off a nonrestrictive phrase.

Restrictive: Foods such as fish and beans are high in protein.

Nonrestrictive: Nuts, such as almonds and pecans, are high in protein.

The *such as* phrase in the first sentence is restrictive; the meaning of the sentence depends on it. The *such as* phrase in the second sentence is nonrestrictive; the phrase could be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Phrases that begin with *including* are nearly always nonrestrictive. In the example that follows, the *including* phrase in each sentence is nonrestrictive.

The proposal was sent to several states, including New York and California.

Several senators, including Senator Rose Gagnon, oppose the proposal.

Coordinate and repeated adjectives.

coordinate adjectives two or more adjectives that equally and independently modify the same noun

repeated adjective an adjective that is repeated before a noun

When a noun is preceded by coordinate adjectives, the adjectives are usually separated by a comma. There are two ways to test whether adjectives are coordinate: (1) if you can insert *and* between the adjectives and (2) if you can reverse the order of the adjectives and the sentence still makes sense.

1) The students are looking forward to a long, relaxing summer.

2) The students are looking forward to a long summer vacation.

In sentence 1, the adjectives *long* and *relaxing* can be joined by *and* (long and relaxing summer) or reversed (relaxing, long summer), and the sentence still makes sense. The reverse is true in sentence 2; a “long and summer vacation” does not make sense, nor does “a summer long vacation.” In this sentence, the unit formed by the adjective *summer* and the noun *vacation* is modified by *long*. Because *long* and *summer* are not equally and independently modifying the noun, they should not be separated by a comma.

Use a comma between an adjective that is repeated before a noun.

Felicia has many, many friends.

She is very, very lucky to have them.

Semicolons

A semicolon marks a stronger break in a sentence than a comma does. A semicolon is used

- to separate closely related independent clauses not joined by a conjunction.

Happiness isn't something you experience; it's something you remember.

- to separate independent clauses joined by a conjunctive adverb, such as *however*, *besides*, *indeed*, and *therefore*.

The roads are icy; therefore, the start of school will be delayed.

- to separate elements in a series when the elements themselves contain commas or when the elements are long and complex.

The company opened stores in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a quaint seaside town; Manchester, New Hampshire, also known as the Queen City; and Portland, Maine, known for its restaurants and shopping.

- before *i.e.*, *e.g.*, *for example*, or *etc.*, when the next part of the sentence is a complete clause.

Chris enjoys video games; e.g., he likes to play *Guitar Hero* and *Backyard Baseball*.

Colons

Colons are rarely used in items. However, a colon can be used

- to introduce a list preceded by an independent clause, especially one that contains *as follows*, *the following*, or similar expressions.

The skirt was available in three colors: black, red, and blue.

Students are asked to bring the following materials: pencils, markers, and glue.

Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation

- to join independent clauses when the second clause amplifies or illustrates the first.
Minds are like parachutes: they function only when open.
- to introduce a series of related sentences.
Marla faced a dilemma: Now that she knew the secret, should she tell? Or was she obligated to keep her friend's confidence?

Only one space is used after a colon. As the previous examples illustrate, when a colon is used within a sentence, the first word following it is lowercase unless it is a proper noun or adjective. When a colon is used to introduce two or more sentences, the first word following it is capitalized.

A colon should not be used to introduce a list that immediately follows a verb or preposition.

Incorrect: Students are asked to bring: pencils, markers, and glue.

Correct: Students are asked to bring pencils, markers, and glue.

Incorrect: Kathy is going to the beach with: Albert, Megan, and Kenny.

Correct: Kathy is going to the beach with Albert, Megan, and Kenny.

Hyphens and Dashes

Hyphens.

Use a hyphen

- in compound terms. See “Compound Terms” in Part I for additional information.
- in telephone numbers, social security numbers, and the like.

The telephone number for customer service is 1-800-555-4321.

Hyphens can also appear in URLs and e-mail addresses.

Note: In test forms, line breaks do not occur in the middle of words. Hyphens are not used to divide words, except compound terms, at the end of a line.

En dashes.

Use an en dash

- in place of the word *to* and in ranges of three or more numbers.
Mary Lou is expecting 15–20 people to attend her birthday party on Saturday.
- in a range of numbers that is ongoing.

*Joyce Carol Oates (1938–) is the author of the novel *We Were the Mulvaneys*.*

In some cases, en dashes are also used in compound terms. See “Compound Terms” in Part I for additional information.

Do not use an en dash in ranges that consist of two numbers or in ranges preceded by the words *between* or *from*. Instead, use the word *and* to join the numbers.

The students were assigned to read the information on pages 50 and 51.

Erik and Peter will arrive between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Em dashes.

An em dash can be used

- in place of commas, parentheses, and colons.

Peyton—who had never betrayed Brooke before—now faced a dilemma.

- to emphasize or set off part of a sentence.

Haley studied for hours—a strategy she hoped would help her pass the test.

- to indicate an abrupt break in thought.

Nathan—he was determined to intimidate his opponent—glared at Lucas.

Ellipsis Points

ellipsis points three spaced periods used to replace an omitted word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from quoted text

Note: See “Reading Items” in Part III for specific information about using ellipsis points in quotations from reading and writing selections.

In general, use ellipsis points only when intervening words in quoted text have been omitted.

Do not use ellipsis points

- before the first word of a quotation, even if the beginning of the original sentence has been omitted.
- after the last word of a quotation, even if the end of the original sentence has been omitted.

Original:

I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray
I hear it in the heart’s deep core.

Quotations:

The speaker hears “lake water lapping . . . by the shore.”
What is “the heart’s deep core”?

Multiple Punctuation Marks

The treatment of multiple punctuation marks at one location depends on the types of punctuation marks involved and where the punctuation marks are located in the sentence. Use the guidelines that follow to determine whether to retain or omit multiple punctuation marks.

- When a sentence ends with a punctuated abbreviation (e.g., a.m., Co.), use only one period at the end of the sentence.

The movie starts at 6:00 p.m.

- When the punctuation mark at the end of the sentence is a question mark or exclamation point, retain both the period that follows the abbreviation and the end punctuation mark.

Does Bill like his new position at Huffman & Welch, Inc.?

- A sentence that does not end with a punctuated abbreviation cannot end with multiple punctuation marks. In general, the stronger, or more important, punctuation mark is retained. Both question marks and exclamation points are stronger than periods. Whenever possible, recast sentences to avoid awkward punctuation.

*Acceptable: Mary's son loves the book series *Where's Waldo?**

*Preferred: Mary's son loves the *Where's Waldo?* book series.*

- In selected-response (SR) items, the question mark at the end of a closed stem is always the strongest punctuation mark. Whenever possible, recast questions to avoid awkward punctuation.

Acceptable: At the end of the story, why does the mouse shout "Hooray!"?

Preferred: Why does the mouse shout "Hooray!" at the end of the story?

- A comma should appear with a question mark or exclamation point in the middle of the sentence if the grammar of the sentence requires a comma. Whenever possible, recast questions to avoid awkward punctuation.

Acceptable: When Marlon shouted, "No!" the crowd of people became silent.

Preferred: The crowd of people became silent when Marlon shouted, "No!"

- When a title or quotation that ends with question mark or exclamation point appears in the middle of a sentence, the punctuation mark is retained.

Oklahoma! is playing at the theater tonight.

Kerri shouted, "Surprise!" when Eddie walked into the room.

- When a title or quotation that ends with a question mark or exclamation point ends a sentence, follow the guidelines at the beginning of this section.

*Acceptable: Have you read Dr. Seuss's book *Oh, the Places You'll Go?**

*Preferred: Have you read the book *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss?*

URLs and E-mail Addresses

In printed text, uniform resource locators (URLs) and e-mail addresses sometimes need to be broken at the end of a line. For URLs, break the line after a colon or a double slash; before or after an equal sign or an ampersand; or before a single slash, a period, or any other punctuation or symbols. To avoid confusion, do not insert an end-of-line hyphen or break the URL after a hyphen that is part of the URL.

[http://
www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf)

or

[http://www.corestandards.org/assets
/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf)

For e-mail addresses, break the line before the at sign (@) or a dot.

[For assistance, please contact janedoe
@wilco.com.](mailto:janedoe@wilco.com)

URLs and e-mail addresses should be underscored in text but should not be active as actual hyperlinks.

Lists

- In items, lists can be designated by bullets or numbers. (See “Text Elements” in Part III for information about lists in selections.)
 - Use bullets for lists that provide students with information.
 - Use numbers for lists only when there is a need to indicate the order of the list items, suggest relative importance among the items, or clearly separate the items.
 - To avoid confusion with option and part letters, do not use letters for lists.
- All items in a list should be parallel in construction.

Not parallel: The teacher told the students that they should review the material, get plenty of sleep, and to eat a healthy breakfast before the test.

Parallel: The teacher told the students to review the material, get plenty of sleep, and eat a healthy breakfast before the test.

- Lists may be run in to the text or set vertically. In vertical lists, bullets/numbers should be indented 0.25 inch. Text should be indented 0.25 inch from the bullet/number with a 0.25 inch hanging indent.

Run-in lists.

Lists that are short and simple or that form a grammatically complete sentence should be run in. If numbers are used to separate the items of a run-in list, they should be enclosed in parentheses.

If the list is preceded by a grammatically complete sentence, the sentence should end with a colon. The items are separated by commas unless any of the items themselves contain commas, in which case semicolons should be used.

[Be sure to proofread your essay for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.](#)

Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation

The job requirements include the following: experience in educational methodology and instructional design; ability to write content that meets standards of accuracy, style, and grade level; and demonstrated ability to create and deliver content for different formats.

This tutorial will review the following topics: (1) creating and editing PDFs, (2) merging multiple PDFs into one file, (3) adding Web pages to PDFs, and (4) adding images to PDFs.

Vertical lists.

Note: Vertical lists in items should not be “forced” to fit the guidelines in this section. In items, vertical lists are often used to emphasize content or aid readability.

Lists that have very long components or that need to be visually prominent should be set vertically. The nature of the items in a list (fragments vs. complete sentences) determines how the list should be punctuated.

Whenever possible, a vertical list should be introduced by a complete sentence followed by a colon or a period. A colon should be used when the introduction ends with *as follows* or *the following*. The items that follow this type of introduction should not be punctuated unless they are complete sentences, in which case they will also be capitalized. Fragments can begin with a capital or lowercase letter, but the items in a given list should be consistent in this regard.

Consider the following information when preparing to distribute test materials:

- DTCs are responsible for contacting the help desk to order additional materials or report problems with shipments.
- STCs are responsible for receiving test materials at the school level.
- TAs are responsible for the test materials during the actual test administration.

Each page of the typed response must contain the following information:

- Student’s first and last name
- Student’s state student ID number
- District name
- School name

A vertical list can also be introduced by the beginning of a sentence. In this case, the items in the list complete the sentence and require punctuation.

It is a violation of test security for any person to

- give assistance of any kind that could influence students’ responses to test items.
- change a student’s response to a test item.
- fail to return all used and unused test materials.
- discuss the test with students during or after the test administration.



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation

You must apply in person if

- you are under age 16;
- your previous US passport was lost, stolen, or damaged; or
- your previous US passport was issued when you were under age 16.

Part III:

English Language Arts Style Conventions

A. ELA Selections

This section provides specifications for selections used in Reading and Listening.

Text Elements

In general, text in selections is Verdana. However, exceptions are made for selections that require a special appearance (e.g., brochures, Web pages). Exceptions are also made to preserve elements of the original source at the content specialist’s discretion.

Table 4 shows the preferred font and alignment specifications for different text elements in selections. See the diagrams and lists in the next section for additional specifications.

Table 4. General font and alignment specifications for text elements in reading and writing selections.

Font and Alignment Specifications		
Element	Font	Alignment
Purpose-setting statements (PSSs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned
Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 pt. Verdana Bold • Title case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Above body text
Subtitle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana Bold • Title case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below title
Byline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana • Lowercase (except proper nouns) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prose: below title/subtitle • Poetry: left aligned below poem
Body text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana 	Prose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned • Lists: bullets/numbers indented approximately 0.25 inch; text indented approximately 0.25 inch from bullets/numbers with a 0.25-inch hanging indent Poetry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned
Graphics	Headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana Bold • Title case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centered above graphic
	Captions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 pt. Verdana Bold • Fragments: lowercase • Sentences: sentence case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned below graphic

Font and Alignment Specifications		
Element	Font	Alignment
Subheadings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 pt. Verdana Bold • Title case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned
Footnotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 pt. Verdana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned below body text • Definition follows footnoted term on the same line • Multiple footnotes are stacked
	Superscript asterisk/number: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaled to 70% of text size • Title: 16 pt. = 11.2 pt. • Body text: 14 pt. = 9.8 pt. • Footnote: 10 pt. = 7 pt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In body text: positioned after footnoted term (positioned after punctuation when punctuation follows footnoted term) • In footnote: positioned before footnoted term; do not insert space between asterisk/number and footnoted term
Acknowledgments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 pt. Verdana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left aligned below body text (or below footnote when footnote is included)

Reading and Listening Selections

These diagrams show numbered elements of prose selections and poems for Reading and presentations for Listening.

Figure 1. Reading prose selection.

- 1 This is the purpose-setting statement (PSS). Read the text. Then answer the questions.
- 2 **Title of Passage**
- 2 **Subtitle of Passage**
- 3 by Author’s Name
- 4 This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage.
- 5 This is a ***text feature***.

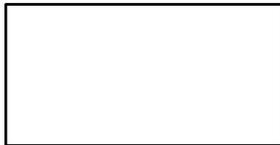
Figure 1

6

7

Subheading

This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage.

Figure 2

6

8

This is the body text of the passage. This is the body text of the passage. This is a footnoted term.*
This is the body text of the passage.

8

*footnoted term: footnote definition

9

[“Passage Title”] by [Author], from [*Source Title*]. Copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher].

Figure 2. Reading poem.

1 This is the purpose-setting statement (PSS). Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

2 **Title of Poem**

3 by Author's Name



6 **This is a caption.**

4 This is the body text of the poem
This is the body text of the poem,
This is the body text of the poem
This is the body text of the poem:

5 *This is a text feature.*

This is the body text of the poem
This is the body text of the poem,
This is the body text of the poem
This is the body text of the poem.

- 9 ["Poem Title"] by [Author], from [*Source Title*]. Text copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher]. Photograph copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Photographer or Stock Photo Company].

Figure 3. Listening presentation.

- 2 **Title of Presentation**
- 1 This is the purpose-setting statement (PSS). Listen to the presentation. Then answer the questions.
- 10 
- 11 Click to hear the meaning of the term below.
- footnoted term
- 
- 9 Excerpt from [*Source Title*] by [Author]. Copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reused by permission of [Author or Publisher].

The numbers in the diagrams correspond with the numbers in the list that follows.

- 1 **Purpose-setting statement (PSS)**

All selections are introduced with a PSS. PSSs follow standardized wording, as shown.

Reading, grades 3–5:

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Reading, grades 6–11:

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

5 Text Features

The content specialist determines whether to preserve text features that appear in the original source. Text features include text styles such as boldface, italics, and underscores as well as formatting features such as lists. Note that text features, such as an underscore, are not added to the selection.

Note: Avoid unusual text features, such as drop caps and text boxes, that could be misread by a screen reader.

6 Graphics

Photographs, drawings, and other graphics are included in selections at the content specialist's discretion. When included, a graphic should be positioned as close as possible to the text with which it is associated. (The exact position of graphics in selections will ultimately be determined by the capabilities of the online delivery system; for example, it might not be possible to wrap text around a graphic.)

Graphic elements such as headings and captions are not required.

- Sequential headings (e.g., Figure 1, 2, 3; Picture A, B, C) should be used when multiple graphics appear in a selection and at least one graphic is referenced in an item.
- Captions should be used when needed to help students understand the purpose or content of a graphic.

7 Subheadings

Subheadings are text features that title sections of text and are included at the content specialist's discretion.

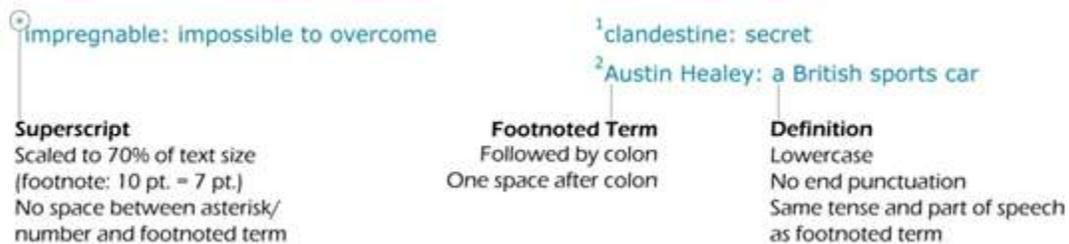
8 Reading Footnotes

Footnotes are included in selections to define words and explain information students might not otherwise understand. The content specialist determines whether to preserve footnotes that appear in the original source and whether to add other footnotes.

Either asterisks or numbers can be used to mark footnotes in a selection.

- When a footnote appears in the original source, use the same mark used in the original.
- When a footnote is not part of the original source (i.e., is added by the content specialist), use the following guidelines to determine the appropriate mark:
 - Use an asterisk when only one footnote appears in the selection.
 - Use asterisks or numerals when two footnotes appear in the selection (content specialist determines). When asterisks are used, the first footnote is marked with one asterisk (placate^{*}) and the second is marked with two asterisks (envelop^{**}).
 - When numerals are used, the first footnote is marked with number 1 (placate¹) and the second is marked with number 2 (envelop²).
 - Use numerals when three or more footnotes appear in the selection. Number the footnotes sequentially in the order the words appear in the selection.

The examples that follow show the correct format of footnotes in a selection.



9 Acknowledgments

An acknowledgment must be included for all selections, including both selections that are copyrighted and selections that are in the public domain. The acknowledgment must credit the text and any images included in the selection. (See “Credit Lines” in Part V for information about credit lines for images that do not appear in selections.)

Unless the acknowledgment lines must follow the style given by the rights holder, the examples that follow show appropriate formats for acknowledgments. For acknowledgments of Listening selections, replace “Reprinted by” with “Reused by.”

- *Excerpts, short stories, poems, and articles.*

Excerpt from [Source Title] by [Author]. Copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher].

[“Selection Title”] by [Author], from [Source Title]. Copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher].

- *Web pages and other electronic sources.*

[“Title”] by [Author], from [www.webaddress.com]. Copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher].

- *Selections in the public domain.*

Excerpt from [Source Title] by [Author]. In the public domain.

[“Selection Title”] by [Author], from [Source Title]. In the public domain.

- *Selections with graphics.*

When a selection includes a graphic, credit for the graphic is included at the end of the acknowledgment.

[“Selection Title”] by [Author], from [Source Title]. Text copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Author or Publisher]. Photograph copyright © [YEAR] by [Copyright Holder]. Reprinted by permission of [Photographer or Stock Photo Company].

10 Presentations

A link below the PSS is clicked to hear the presentation. Alternatively, a slideshow may be presented.

11 Audio Footnotes

Footnotes are included in Listening selections to define words and explain information students might not otherwise understand. The content specialist determines whether to preserve footnotes from the original source and whether to add other footnotes.

All footnotes are introduced with a variation of these directions:

[Click to hear the meaning of the \[word\(s\)/term\(s\)/phrase\(s\)\] below.](#)

The footnoted term follows. Both the directions and footnoted term are in regular body text font.

Below the term is a link. When clicked, the audio of the footnoted term is presented. The audio begins with the term followed by the definition.

Additional footnoted terms may follow, each accompanied by its own link.

Other Types of Selections

Not all Reading selections are prose and poetry. Some selections take different forms, such as Web pages, posters, flyers, and brochures. These selections are based on graphic representations, so the original source should be mimicked as much as possible. (But avoid unusual text features, such as drop caps and text boxes, that could be misread by a screen reader.) Otherwise, these selections follow the same specifications as prose selections and poems.

B. Reading Items

Selection-Based Items

In test forms, selection-based items are arranged in the order the content is addressed in the selection. In other words, an item about an event in paragraph 3 comes before an item about an event in paragraph 5; items that do not address a specific part of the selection (e.g., “What is the theme of the folktale?”) come last.

Table 5 provides general guidelines for the treatment of selection-based items.

Table 5. General guidelines for the treatment of items based on reading and writing selections.

Guidelines for Selection-Based Items		
Element	Style Conventions	Example
Author, narrator, and speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use <i>author</i> in items about memoirs and items about something external to the selection (e.g., items about the writing, the purpose of the selection). Use <i>most likely</i> in items about the author's intentions or opinions. 	Based on the text, what is the author's most likely opinion about Internet search engines?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use <i>narrator</i> with prose selections. Use <i>speaker</i> with poems and audio selections. Use <i>narrator/speaker</i> in items about something internal to the selection (e.g., the plot, the characters). 	Who is the narrator in the passage? What does the speaker say is her favorite color?
Capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalize words in items if the words are capitalized in the selection. 	According to the speaker, how are the Sun and the Moon similar?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowercase words in items if the words are lowercase in the selection. 	According to the speaker, how are the sun and the moon similar?
Ellipsis points	In the stem, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use ellipsis points to indicate text omitted in the middle of a quotation. do not ellipsis points to indicate text omitted at the beginning or end of a sentence. 	In the text, what does Shaun think will "never . . . be the same again"?
	In options, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use ellipsis points to indicate text omitted at the beginning or end of a quotation. do not use ellipsis points in options that are identified as phrases. 	Which phrase best summarizes the theme of the text? A. "a universal desire for happiness"
Graphic headings	In the stem and options, graphic headings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should match how they are formatted in the selection to the extent possible (capitalized and bold). should not be enclosed in quotation marks. should not be next to emphasis terms. 	What is the main purpose of Figure 1 ?
Narrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See "Author, narrator, and speaker" in this table. 	n/a

Guidelines for Selection-Based Items		
Element	Style Conventions	Example
Quotations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the stem and options, enclose quoted text in quotation marks. (Though see “Vocabulary Items” for exceptions.) In boxed text, do not enclose quoted text (except dialogue) in quotation marks. In general, quotations should be capitalized the same as in the selection. But when a partial sentence is quoted, the first word is lowercase (unless it is a proper noun or adjective). 	Why does Jackson say that he “could never quite muster Lori’s level of determination”?
References to the selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the textual selection as “the passage” in grades 3–5 and “the text” in grades 6–11. Refer to the audio selection as “the presentation” in all grades. 	<p>What is the narrator’s main problem in the passage?</p> <p>In the text, what does the speaker compare with “trembling leaves”?</p>
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See “Author, narrator, and speaker” in this table. 	n/a
Subheadings	<p>In the stem and options, subheadings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should match how they are formatted in the selection to the extent possible (title capitalization and bold). should not be enclosed in quotation marks. should not be next to emphasis terms. 	What is the first step in the section called What to Do ?
Subtitles	<p>In the stem and options, subtitles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> should be enclosed in quotation marks and capitalized the same as in the selection. should not be boldface. 	Why is the subtitle “The Adventure of a Lifetime” appropriate for the passage?
Titles	<p>In the stem and options,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> selection titles should be enclosed in quotation marks and capitalized the same as in the selection. book titles should be italicized and capitalized the same as in the selection. neither selection titles nor book titles should be boldface. 	Explain one common theme of the texts “The Moth” and “The Wasp.” Use details from both texts to support your answer.

Guidelines for Selection-Based Items		
Element	Style Conventions	Example
Verb tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For fiction, use present tense whenever possible. 	Why does Dog bury his bone in the garden instead of in the park?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For nonfiction, use present or past tense as appropriate. 	Why did the farmers dislike the new pesticide at first?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For fiction and nonfiction, use past tense for items about something the author has done. (Use <i>most likely</i> in items about the author's intentions or opinions.) 	What is the most likely reason the author wrote the passage?
Vocabulary terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See "Vocabulary Items" in this section. 	n/a

Vocabulary Items

Table 6 provides general guidelines for the treatment of different types of vocabulary items.

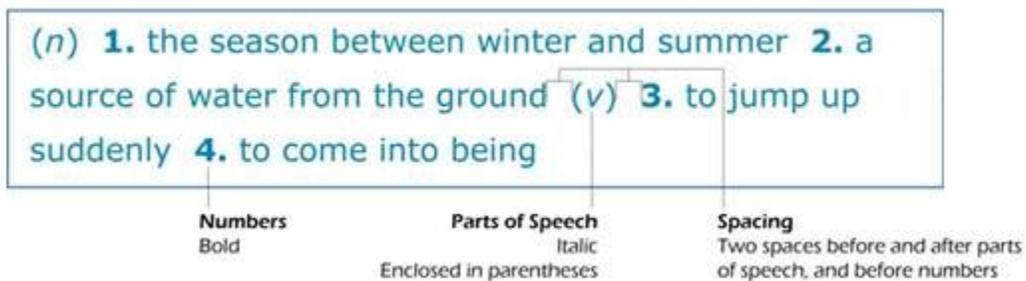
Table 6. General guidelines for the treatment of vocabulary items.

Guidelines for Vocabulary Items		
Element	Style Conventions	Example
Antonyms	Grades 3 and 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the word <i>opposite</i> instead of <i>antonym</i>. Boldface the word <i>opposite</i>. 	Which word means the opposite of <u>cold</u> ?
	Grades 5 and above: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the word <i>antonym</i>. Boldface the word <i>antonym</i>. 	Which word is an antonym for the word <u>soothe</u> ?
Boxed text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underscore vocabulary words and phrases. 	The students did not understand the <u>point</u> of the assignment.
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words: Arrange in alphabetical order. Phrases and sentences: Arrange by length, longest to shortest or vice versa. Words in options should be the same tense as the vocabulary term. 	Which word is a synonym for the word <u>sustain</u> ? A. impress B. operate C. suggest D. support
Prefixes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italicize prefixes. Include a hyphen after a prefix: <i>non-</i>, <i>un-</i>. 	What does the prefix <i>dis-</i> mean in the words <u>disapprove</u> and <u>discourage</u> ?

Guidelines for Vocabulary Items		
Element	Style Conventions	Example
Root words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italicize root words. Do not include a hyphen before or after root words: <i>flect</i>, <i>para</i>. 	What does the root <i>nov</i> mean in the words <u>innovate</u> and <u>novice</u> ?
Stems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underscore the vocabulary term if it is a single word. If the vocabulary term is a phrase, use quotation marks instead. 	What does the word <u>charged</u> mean as it is used in the sentence in the text? What does the phrase “run of the mill” mean as it is used in the sentence?
Suffixes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italicize suffixes. Include a hyphen before a suffix: <i>-er</i>, <i>-less</i>. 	What does the suffix <i>-en</i> mean in the words <u>moisten</u> and <u>soften</u> ?
Synonyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the word <i>same</i> or <i>synonym</i>. Boldface the word <i>same</i> or <i>synonym</i>. 	Which word means the same as <u>tiny</u> ? Which word is a synonym for the word <u>fatigued</u> ?

Dictionary Entries

The dictionary entry that follows for the definition of *spring* shows guidelines for formatting dictionary entries.



Above the boxed entry is the introductory statement “Read the dictionary entry.” The stem below the dictionary entry asks the student to identify the word being defined.

Which word in the paragraph **best** matches the definition?

Which sentence from the text contains a word that **best** matches the dictionary entry?

C. Writing

Editing Items

Items may include a stimulus with the error or errors underscored. There should be no other errors present in the stimulus.

When the options are of underlined words from the stimulus, do not use quote marks or add formatting, though do use the same formatting (other than the underscore) found in the stimulus. The options are ordered the same way the words are found in the stimulus.

Read the paragraph and answer the question that follows.

Edgar Allan Poe was a famous poet, short story writer, and literary critic. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on january 19, 1809. His poems made him one of the most famous figures in american literature.

Which underlined words in the sentence should be capitalized?

- A. writer
- B. january
- C. figures
- D. american

Read the sentence and answer the question that follows.

I have never flown on an airplain before.

What is the correct spelling of the underlined word?

- A. aerplain
- B. aerplayne
- C. airplane
- D. airplayne

Read the sentence and answer the question that follows.

Some of his most popular poems include “The Raven” which made him famous in 1845, and “Annabel Lee.”

Which underlined word in the sentence should be followed by a comma?

- A. Some
- B. poems
- C. include
- D. Raven

Read the sentence and answer the question that follows.

My teacher said it takes five hours to fly from Massachusetts to California that’s a long time!

Which of these is the **best** way to correct the error in the sentence?

- A. My teacher said it takes five hours to fly from Massachusetts to California, that’s a long time!
- B. My teacher said it takes five hours to fly from Massachusetts to California: that’s a long time!
- C. My teacher said it takes five hours to fly from Massachusetts to California; that’s a long time!
- D. My teacher said it takes five hours to fly from Massachusetts to California? that’s a long time!

Part IV:

Mathematics Style Conventions

A. Treatment of Numbers

Note: This section provides GENERAL guidelines for the treatment of numbers. These guidelines are applicable to ALL content areas.

Words vs. Numerals

Use words for

- numbers zero through nine, with the exceptions in this section.
- numbers that appear as the first word in a sentence (content specialist determines exceptions).

Acceptable:

10 ribbons are blue.

Preferred:

Ten ribbons are blue.

or

There are 10 blue ribbons.

Use **numerals** for

- numbers 10 and above.
- numbers that precede abbreviated units of measure.
- numbers that precede or follow symbols: 10%, \$20.00.
- numbers that appear in equations/expressions.
- numbers used to solve mathematical problems.
- division results with remainders: 18 R3. Note that there is no space between the *R* and the number that follows.
- numbers included in parts of published works: volume 2, chapter 4.
- dates and years: 1000 BC; December 1, 1975.
- times of day that precede the abbreviations a.m. and p.m.: 11 a.m., 3:00 p.m.
- telephone numbers.

In lists and series of numbers, use either words or numerals consistently.

Pat has the following coins: 10 pennies, 5 dimes, and 2 nickels.

A spinner is divided into five sections labeled 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

Note: The content specialist determines whether to use words or numerals when guidelines for the treatment of numbers contradict one another.

Ordinals

- Spell out ordinals first through ninth.
- Use numerals for ordinals 10th and above; when numerals are used, suffixes are set on the baseline, not in superscript.
- In lists and series of ordinals, use either words or numerals consistently.

Kim finished the race in second place.

The 25th customer to enter the store today will win a prize.

Commas in Numbers

Use a comma in

- numbers with five or more digits: 50,000.
- numbers with four digits only if other numbers in the item have five or more digits.

Rylan has driven his car a total of 28,000 miles in three years. He drove 9,000 miles the first year.

- numbers written as words: one million, eighty-seven thousand, three hundred twenty-two.

Do **not** use a comma in

- numbers with four digits, unless other numbers in the item have five or more digits.

Lillie drove her car 836 miles in August, 1027 miles in September, and 914 miles in October.

- compound measures, such as height measurements: 5 feet 9 inches tall, not 5 feet, 9 inches tall.

Values Less than One

- Use singular units of measure with values less than one: 0.25 gram, not 0.25 grams.
- Include a zero before the decimal point in decimal values less than one: 0.15, not .15.

Negative Numbers

- Use a mid-point en dash to indicate negative numbers.

Which point has the coordinates (2, -5)?

Fractions

The content specialist determines whether fractions are spelled out or expressed as numerals.

- As words, fractions are hyphenated as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

Two-thirds of the students in the class ride the bus.

- As numerals, fractions are stacked vertically and appear at 90% of the base text size: 14 pt. = 12.6 pt.

Terry gave $\frac{1}{2}$ of her sandwich to her friend.

Percentages

- Use the word *percent* after a number word.

Five percent of the dogs have spots.

- Use the word *percentage*, not *percent*, as a stand-alone term.

What percentage of the cats are white?

- Use the percent symbol after a numeral: 5%. (See “Symbols and Special Characters” in Part V for the preferred styles for symbols and special characters.)

Of the marbles in the jar, 40% are red and 60% are blue.

Exponents

Exponents and other superscripted characters are scaled to 70% of the base text size: 14 pt. = 9.8 pt.

$s^2 \times 7 = 28$

Ratios

Use a colon in ratios. Insert a hairspace before and after the colon.

The ratio of blue crayons to red crayons is 3:4.

Coordinates and Ordered Pairs

- Enclose coordinates and ordered pairs in parentheses.
- Include a comma, followed by a space, after the first number.

Point A has the coordinates (3, 4).

- Include a space after the name of a point that precedes coordinates or ordered pairs.

Line *m* begins at point A (2, 5) and ends at point B (–1, –3).

Dates

- *Abbreviated years.* Avoid abbreviating years whenever possible. When a year is abbreviated, the first two numbers are replaced by an apostrophe (not an opening single quotation mark): the blizzard of '76.
- *Months and days.* In running text, dates are written in the following form: February 10, 2012.
- *Centuries.* Centuries are spelled out and lowercase: the twenty-first century, nineteenth-century literature.
- *Decades.* Decades can be spelled out or expressed as numerals; if spelled out, they are lowercase: the nineties, the 1990s. (Note that no apostrophe is used in the plural form of decades.)
- *Eras.* Eras are expressed as numerals: 55 BC, AD 1066. (Note that BC and BCE follow the date, while AD and CE precede the date. All four abbreviations are uppercase with no periods.)

Times of Day

The content specialist determines how to present times of day in individual test items. The following conventions should be applied based on the presentation selected:

- Use numerals with the abbreviations a.m. and p.m. (Note that the abbreviations are lowercase with periods.) It is redundant to include phrases such as “in the morning,” “in the afternoon,” or “at night” after a.m. or p.m.

Dave wants to see a movie that starts at 4:10 p.m.

- Spell out numbers used with the term *o'clock*: 10 o'clock.

Tori leaves for school at eight o'clock.

- To avoid confusion, spell out the terms noon and midnight (in place of 12 a.m. or 12 p.m.).

Matthew works from 6:30 p.m. to midnight.

B. Equations/Expressions and Patterns

General Guidelines

- In general, equations and patterns are 14 pt. Verdana; however, the font sometimes varies for equations and patterns that include symbols.
- In introductory statements,
 - use the term *equation* or *expression* to refer to an equation or expression. Do not use the term *number sentence*.
 - use the term *pattern* to refer to patterns of numbers and patterns of symbols.
 - use the term *step* to refer to the position of a term in a pattern: the fifth step in the pattern.
- In items, equations and patterns are left aligned.
- See “Graphics and Other Stimuli in Items” in Part I for additional guidelines.

Variables and Symbols

- In general, variables are lowercase and italicized. (However, variables in provided formulas can be uppercase or lowercase, as tradition and context dictate.)

Solve for x .

formula for area: $A = lw$

- In **grades 3–5**, use boxes to indicate missing/unknown values in equations.

$$6 + \square = 12$$

- In **grades 6 and above**, use variables or boxes to indicate missing/unknown values in equations.

$$6 + n = 12$$

$$6 + \square = 12$$

- In **all grades**, use a question mark or underscored blank space to indicate missing terms in patterns. (The content specialist determines whether to underscore the question mark.)

2, 4, ?, 8, 10 or 2, 4, ____, 8, 10

Operational Symbols

See “Symbols and Special Characters” in Part V for a complete list of operational symbols used in Mathematics as well as the preferred styles for symbols and special characters used in item text and graphics. See “Words vs. Symbols” in this section for information about using words and symbols to identify geometric objects in running text.

Multiplication symbols.

- In **grades 3–5**, use the multiplication symbol.

$$8 \times 7$$

- In **grades 6 and above**, use the product dot or do not include a symbol. (Do not use the \times symbol, except in scientific notation, to avoid confusing with the variable x .)

$$8 \cdot 7$$

$$(10 - 2)(7)$$

- In **all grades**, use the multiplication symbol in scientific notation.

$$5.0^2 \times 10^6$$

Pattern Rules

- Pattern rules (e.g., “Add 4”) are styled as complete sentences in both the stem and options.
- When a rule is provided in running text, it is enclosed in quotation marks.

Mandy used the rule “Add 6” to make a pattern.

- When a rule is provided as a stand-alone sentence in an option, it is not enclosed in quotation marks.

What is the rule for the pattern?

- A. Multiply by 3.
- B. Multiply by 6.
- C. Multiply by 3 and then add 1.
- D. Multiply by 6 and then add 1.

Punctuation in Patterns and Lists of Numbers

- In patterns and lists of numbers, include a comma between numbers. In TEI items, numbers students must drag into tables, boxes, etc., do not need to be separated by commas.

3, 9, 12, 15, 18

- In patterns of symbols, shapes, or figures, do not include a comma between objects.



- In **grades 6 and above**, include ellipsis points after the last term in the pattern to indicate that the pattern continues. In patterns of numbers, include a comma between the last term in the pattern and the ellipsis points. (Do not include ellipsis points in patterns in grades 3–5.)

5, 10, 15, 20, 25, ...

C. Naming Conventions for Geometric Objects

Words vs. Symbols

The content specialist determines whether to use words or symbols in the names of geometric objects when the names appear in running text.

- When words are used, the name of the object begins with a descriptive term such as *angle*, *line*, or *shape*.
- If the name is not derived from a graphic, the term is lowercase.

The sum of two angles in triangle *JKL* is 140° . What is the measure of the third angle in triangle *JKL*?

- If the name is derived from a graphic, follow the guidelines in “Referring to Text from Graphics in Items” in Part I.
- Symbols should not be used at the beginning of a sentence (content specialist determines exceptions).

Acceptable:

$\angle QRS$ is 90° .

Preferred:

Angle QRS is 90° .

or

The measure of $\angle QRS$ is 90° .

- Use either words or symbols consistently within individual items. (Note that it is acceptable to use words at the beginning of sentences and symbols throughout the rest of the item.)

Triangle MNO is similar to $\triangle TUV$ ($\triangle MNO \sim \triangle TUV$). What is the area of $\triangle MNO$?

- Do not use the delta symbol (Δ) to identify triangles.

Incorrect:

Connor drew ΔABC on this coordinate grid.

Correct:

Connor drew $\triangle ABC$ on this coordinate grid.

Points

- Points are identified by uppercase, italicized letters.
- Names of stand-alone points begin with the term *point*.
- Names of geometric objects based on points begin with the term that describes the object.

What are the coordinates of point Q ?

Quadrilateral $EFGH$ has one pair of parallel sides.

Lines RS and TU intersect at point V .

Shapes and Figures

- Names of shapes begin with an appropriate descriptive term (e.g., *shape*, *figure*, *circle*, or *trapezoid*) or symbol.
- Shapes and figures can be identified by uppercase letters or numbers.

What is the circumference of circle N ?

What is the area of figure 1?

- Shapes with points can also be identified by points.

What is the perimeter of rectangle $PQRS$?

Lines and Line Segments

- Lines can be identified with lowercase, italicized letters or by points.
- When identified with a letter, the letter is preceded by the term *line* or *line segment*.

Line p is perpendicular to line q .

- When identified by points, either a descriptive term (*line* or *line segment*) or a symbol can be used.

In this diagram, line DE is parallel to line FG .

or

In this diagram, \overline{DE} is parallel to \overline{FG} .

Angles

- Names of angles begin with the term *angle* or the angle symbol.
- Angles can be identified with uppercase letters or by points. Avoid identifying angles with numbers, which can be misinterpreted as angle measures.

Angle U is congruent to angle V .

The measure of $\angle ABC$ is 90° .

- When the letter m is used in place of the phrase “the measure of,” the m is italicized.

What is $m\angle XYZ$?

D. Units of Measure

When to Abbreviate

- Spell out units in item stems.
- Abbreviate units in options.

Stephanie has 15 pieces of string. Each piece is 5 feet long. How many feet of string does Stephanie have altogether?

- A. 25 ft
- B. 50 ft
- C. 75 ft
- D. 100 ft

Adam's room is 3 meters wide and 4 meters long. What is the area, in square meters, of his room?

- A. 7 m²
- B. 10 m²
- C. 12 m²
- D. 14 m²

- Abbreviate units in graphics. (See “Units of Measure” in Part V for additional information.)

Abbreviations

Note: Do not include periods in abbreviated units of measure.

Standard units.

Table 7 shows the correct abbreviations for standard units of measure.

Table 7. Abbreviations for standard units of measure.

Unit	Abbreviation
Cup	cup (do not use c)
Foot	ft
Gallon	gal
Inch	in
Mile	mi
Ounce	oz

Unit	Abbreviation
Pint	pt
Pound	lb
Quart	qt
Tablespoon	tbsp
Teaspoon	tsp
Yard	yd

Metric units.

Table 8 shows the correct abbreviations for metric units of measure.

Table 8. Abbreviations for metric units of measure.

Unit	Abbreviation
Centimeter	cm
Gram	g
Kilogram	kg
Kilometer	km
Liter	L

Unit	Abbreviation
Meter	m
Milligram	mg
Milliliter	mL
Millimeter	mm

Temperature units.

Table 9 shows the correct abbreviations for units of temperature.

Table 9. Abbreviations for units that measure temperature.

Unit	Abbreviation
degrees Celsius	°C
Kelvin	K

Unit	Abbreviation
degrees Fahrenheit	°F

Time units.

Table 10 shows the correct abbreviations for units of time.

Table 10. Abbreviations for units that measure time.

Unit	Abbreviation
Day	day
Minute	min
Second	s

Unit	Abbreviation
Hour	hr
Month	mo
Year	yr

Plural Units

- Do not add an s for plurals of abbreviated units.

Melissa is making 10 pies. She needs 6 ounces of crackers to make 1 pie crust.

How many **pounds** of crackers does she need to make 10 pie crusts?

[16 ounces = 1 pound]

- A. 1.75 lb
- B. 2.5 lb
- C. 3.75 lb
- D. 4.5 lb

- Use a singular verb with physical quantities.

How many grams of silver is produced?

Punctuation and Spacing

- Do not include periods in abbreviated units.
- Do not include commas in compound measures, such as height measurements: 5 feet 9 inches tall, not 5 feet, 9 inches tall.
- Do not use quotation marks to represent inches and feet: 15 inches, not 15".
- Include a space between numerals and abbreviated units, except in temperatures: 30 in, but 90° F.
- In temperatures, do not
 - include a space between the numeral and degree symbol, or between the degree symbol and the unit: 0°C.
 - use a degree symbol with the abbreviation for kelvin: 223K, not 223° K.

Square and Cubic Units

- When units are spelled out, spell out the terms *square* and *cubic*.
- When metric units are abbreviated, use superscript to show square and cubic units.

Chase drew a rectangle with a width of 6 centimeters and a length of 9 centimeters. What is the area, in square centimeters, of Chase's rectangle?

- A. 15 cm²
- B. 30 cm²
- C. 48 cm²
- D. 54 cm²

- When customary units are abbreviated, use *sq* and *cu* for units.

83 sq ft

Conversions

The content specialist determines whether to include conversions in items.

- When included, conversions are enclosed in brackets after the punctuation mark at the end of the stem. The conversion itself includes no punctuation.

What is the volume of the rectangular prism? [1000 milliliters = 1 liter]

- Use an equal sign in conversions that involve units of measure; always position the value with the smallest unit on the left side of the equal sign.

What is the area, in square feet? [12 inches = 1 foot]

- Use the term *represents* in conversions that involve scales or that assign a value to a graphic.

What is the total area of the grid? [□ represents 1 unit]

Pi.

If an approximation for pi is desired to be given in a particular item, the value of pi should also be enclosed in brackets at the end of the item stem. However, the value is stated as a sentence that ends with a period.

What is the height of the cylinder? [Use 3.14 for π .]

E. Preferred Language

Conditional (“if”) Clauses

Recast conditional clauses (e.g., “If this happens, . . . ?”) when possible. If a conditional clause cannot be avoided, position it at the end of the sentence.

Let $x = 7$. What is the value of y ?

not

If $x = 7$, what is the value of y ?

The pattern continues. Which shape will be in step 25?

not

If the pattern continues, which shape will be in step 25?

Table vs. Chart

- Use *table* when data are organized and related in some way.

This table shows the prices Stella charges for x hours of babysitting.

- Use *chart* when data are not organized to emphasize comparison among discrete items or related in any way (e.g., data that are listed).

This chart lists the types and colors of pens Kelly can buy.

Percent vs. Percentage vs. %

- Use the word *percent* after a number word.
- Use the word *percentage* as a stand-alone term: a percentage of students.
- Use the percent symbol after a numeral.

Aaron has 20 folders. Each folder is either red, green, or yellow. Twenty percent of the folders are red. Forty percent of the folders are green. What percentage of the folders are yellow?

- A. 20%
- B. 30%
- C. 40%
- D. 50%

Coordinate Grids

In **grades 8 and above**, use the terms *translate*, *reflect*, and *rotate*. (Do not use the terms *slide*, *flip*, and *turn*.)

Carla will reflect point *B* across the *x*-axis.

Triangle *RST* is translated so that the image of point *S* is (3, 1).

The quadrilateral is then rotated 90° clockwise about the origin.

Probability

Use future tense in probability items.

Jen will randomly select three cards from the pile without looking.

What is the probability that Joe will select a blue marble?

Spinners

- A person “spins the arrow on the spinner”; a person does not “spin the spinner.”

Kerri will spin the arrow on the spinner five times.

- The arrow “stops”; it does not “land.”

The arrow will **most likely** stop in which section?

- The arrow “stops in a red section” or “stops in the section labeled 1”; it does not “stop on red” or “stop on 1.”

What is the probability that the arrow will stop in a green section?

Mark will get **1** point if the arrow stops in a section labeled with a star.

Constructed-Response Items

- Include units of measure in the stem so that students are not penalized for omitting units from their responses.

What is the area, in square feet, of the garden?

- In sentences that refer to item parts, the word *part* is lowercase and the part letter is capitalized. The heading is bold and italic with a colon followed by the item text.

Part B: Write an inequality to represent the graph you drew in part A.

- The content specialist determines the language of statements that ask students to justify their answers.

Show your work.

Explain your reasoning.

Show or explain how you got your answer.

Show or explain how you know your answer is correct.

Part V:

Graphic Specifications



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

A. Text Elements

Fonts



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Special Characters



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

B. Maximum Dimensions, Conventional Item Graphics

Scaled Graphics

C. Color



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

D. Common Graphic Elements

Default Specifications

Units of Measure



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Arrows

Keys and Scales



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Key vs. Scale

E. Raster Images (Photographs)

Border

Acknowledgement Text

Print Resolution



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

F. Graphs

Bar Graphs



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Multibar Graph



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Histogram

Circle Graph



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Line Graphs



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Scatter Plot



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

G. Tables and Charts

Text Alignment in Tables



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Tables



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Pictograph

Tally Chart



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

H. Coordinate Grids

Plotted Points, Shape, and Line



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

I. Geometric Shapes

Two-Dimensional Shapes



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Three-Dimensional Shapes

J. Other Types of Graphics

Number Lines

Box-and-Whisker Plot



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Line Plot

Stem-and-Leaf Plot



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Spinner



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Maps



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Graphic Specifications

Graphic Organizer

Part VI: Technology-Enhanced Items

Note: Follow the specifications in Part V for graphics that appear in Technology-Enhanced Items (TEIs).

A. User Interface Elements

Items considered technology-enhanced items (TEIs or TE items) include elements that are interactive other than the typical selected-response item's ordered options and the typical constructed-response item's space for typing responses. The ability to interface with the item is key to answering the item correctly. They are also known as *Innovative Response Types*.

Response types, innovative and otherwise, for **ELA** include *Multiple Choice* (MC) (SRs with one correct response), *Multiple Select* (MS) (SRs with more than one correct response), *Matching Table* (MA), *Evidence-Based Selected Response* (EBSR), *Hot Text* (HT) (also known as *Select Text* (ST)), *Reorder* (RE), *Short Answer* (SA), and *Written Response* (WR).

Response types, innovative and otherwise, for **Math** include *Multiple Choice* (MC) (SRs with one correct response), *Multiple Select* (MS) (SRs with more than one correct response), *Matching Table* (MA), *Fill-In Table* (TI), *Graphing* such as *Drag-and-Drop* and *Hot Spot* (GI), *Equation/Numeric* (EQ), and *Short Answer* (SA).

TE items follow the rules of typical items as well as the following as applicable. The following rules supersede any previous rules if there is a conflict.

functional elements

page elements that require student action (e.g., buttons, check boxes)

static page elements

page elements that do not require student action (e.g., Answer Spaces, Word Banks)

Capitalization

Note: Capitalize the names of buttons and other user interface (UI) elements consistently throughout an item.

Functional elements.

- Use title case for button labels.
[Clear All](#)
[Reset](#)
- Use sentence case for text next to a check box or button.
 [First-person point of view](#)
 [Isosceles triangle](#)

Static page elements.

- Use title case for page elements that do not require student action.

Answer Box

Answer Space

Word Bank

Items in menus and word lists.

- Use sentence case for items in a menu or a word list.
- Use sentence case for messages or alerts that appear in dialog boxes.

Dialog Boxes

Are you sure you want to clear your answers and begin again?

Click only the required number.

Options.

- Binary options are both capitalized.
- When referring to options, use the same capitalization (no quotation marks), but use lowercase when generically referring to the responses.

True/False

Yes/No

Click on True or False.

Decide whether they are true or false.

Referring to User Interface Elements in Text

Functional elements.

- Write the names of functional elements as they appear onscreen.
- In general, refer to a button by its label. Use the term *button* if needed for clarity (e.g., if the button is an image without a label), but do not capitalize generic terms such as *button*, *icon*, *key*, *menu*, or *tool*.

Click Clear All.

Click the Stop button.

- When answering an item using a hotspot keyboard (*EQ tool*—i.e., the characters used for the response are selected on the screen), do not reference the buttons of the keyboard. This is because the Braille forms will not include the hotspot keyboard and will have a text box instead.

Create an equation. (**not** Use the buttons to create an equation.)

- If it is necessary to refer to elements that appear onscreen in sentence case, such as text next to a check box, enclose the elements in quotation marks.

[Click to select the check box next to “First-person point of view.”](#)

- Use title case for names of Math tools, except when lowercase in background usage.

[Point](#)

[Line](#)

[Graphing tools](#)

Static page elements.

- Write the names of static page elements as they appear onscreen, without quotation marks.

[Drag the words from the Word Bank to the correct locations on the diagram.](#)

Keyboard key names.

- When referring to keyboard keys, match the case of the text on the actual keyboard key or use lowercase. Do not use quotation marks or abbreviate the key name.

[Press the Backspace key.](#)

[Press the right arrow key.](#)

- It is not always necessary to use an article (*the, a, an*) before the key name or to use the word *key*.

[Press Enter.](#)

- When referring to more than one key, use the full name of each key.

[the up arrow or down arrow keys \(*not* the up or down arrow keys\)](#)

- Do not capitalize general references to keys.

[Use the arrow keys to scroll through the passage.](#)

Excerpts from a Selection

When an excerpt is interactive (text can be selected or reordered), the excerpt is not boxed and is not put in quotation marks (unless dialogue is used or other cases where the quotation marks match the source).

B. Referring to Students

- In general, address the student directly by using second person singular.

[You must place all the words in the chart.](#)

- Always use second person, imperative mood for procedural steps. (The subject “you” is implied.)

[Use the calculator to find the results.](#)

[Click the appropriate unit of measure from the menu.](#)

C. Preferred Usage of Technical Terms

This section provides guidelines for the preferred usage of technical terms. See “Preferred Word Usage” in Part II and the word list in Appendix A for the preferred usage of more general terms.

activate; deactivate

Avoid; instead, use *turn on*, *turn off*. Do not use *activate* as a synonym for *open*, *start*, or *switch to*.

arrow pointer Use *pointer* in general references to performing actions with objects rather than text. (Use *cursor* in references to performing actions with text.) Use *arrow* or *arrow pointer* when comparing the two different types of pointers. Do not use *arrow cursor*, *mouse cursor*, or *mouse pointer*, because other input devices can also control the cursor or pointer.

arrow keys Use *arrow keys* to refer to the keys that are labeled only with an arrow. To make special mention of the similar keys on the keypad, refer to the *arrow keys on the keypad*. Do not use *direction keys*, *directional keys*, or *movement keys*.

bottom left; bottom right

Avoid; use *lower left* and *lower right* instead, which are hyphenated as adjectives: lower- left part of the screen.

button Buttons always initiate an action when clicked, tapped, or pressed. Students *click* or *tap* an onscreen button; they *press* a mechanical button.

buttons vs. icons

If an element in the UI looks like a button (appears three-dimensional) and functions like a button (causes something to happen when clicked), call it a *button*. Do not call it an *icon*.

icons that function like buttons

If an element in the UI looks like an icon (displays a picture and does not appear three-dimensional) but functions like a button (causes something to happen when clicked), call it either a *button* or an *icon*.

check box (two words)

Do not use *box*, which is ambiguous, or *ballot box*. Students *click* a check box to select or clear an option (the phrase “click to select” or just *select* can also be used). Do not use “check the check box.” If the option is already selected, instructing the student to *click* clears the item.

Ambiguous: Click the check box labeled “Show points less than 4 on the number line.”

Preferred: Select the check box labeled “Show points less than 4 on the number line.”

choose See **click**.

clear Use *clear*, not *uncheck*, *unselect*, *unhighlight*, or *dehighlight*.

click Use *click* to describe the act of positioning the pointer on an object onscreen and briefly pressing and releasing the mouse button. Do not use *click on* or *click at* (though *click on* may be permissible for ELA). (Note that students do not *click* the mouse button; they *press and release* it.) Use instead of *select*, *choose*, or *pick*.

- click and drag** Do not use. Students either *click* or *drag*. In references to touchscreen devices, do not use *tap and drag*.
- Incorrect: Click and drag the bar up or down.*
- Correct: Drag the bar up or down.*
- click and hold** Do not use. *Click* means to press and quickly release the mouse button. Use *hold down* when the intent is for the student to press and hold down the mouse button.
- click in** Students *click in* a window or region, such as a scroll bar; they *click* other onscreen elements, such as icons and buttons.
- click on** Do not use (except possibly for ELA items); use *click* or *click in*.
- close** Students *close* a window or a document. Do not use *exit* or *shut down*.
- Ctrl** (abbreviation for Control)
Use the abbreviation only when space constraints do not allow use of the full term.
- cursor** Use *cursor* in general references to performing actions with text rather than objects. (Use *pointer* in general references to performing actions with objects.) Do not use *arrow cursor*, *mouse cursor*, or *mouse pointer*, because other input devices can also control the cursor or pointer.
- deactivate** See **activate; deactivate**.
- delete** Use *delete* to refer to actions, such as deselecting text, that result from pressing the Delete or Backspace key on the computer.
- Delete key** Do not refer to *DEL* key.
- depress** Do not use; instead, use *press* for the action of pushing down a key.
- deselect** In general, use *clear* when the intent is to cancel a selection. Do not use *uncheck*, *unselect*, *unhighlight*, or *dehighlight*.
- dialog box** Use *dialog box* for windows that request additional information from the student and are explicitly dismissed by clicking a button within the dialog box. Dialog boxes include alerts, which contain error messages or warnings about potentially hazardous situations or actions.
- direction/directional keys**
Do not use; use *arrow keys* instead.
- display** (*n*) Use *display* as a noun to refer generically to the visual output device and its technology. Use *screen* to refer to the graphic portion of a monitor.
- Incorrect: A dialog box appears on the display.*
- Correct: A dialog box appears on the screen.*
- Incorrect: Adjust your screen so that the top of the display is slightly below eye level.*
- Correct: Adjust your display so that the top of the screen is slightly below eye level.*

double click (*n*); **double-click** (*v*); **double-clicking** (*n, v*)

Clicking twice rapidly with the left mouse button or other input device. Note hyphenation. Do not use *double-click on*.

double tap (*n*); **double-tap** (*v*); **double-tapping** (*n, v*)

Note hyphenation. Tapping twice rapidly on a touchscreen.

down arrow Lowercase both words. Use to refer to the small arrow that a student clicks to decrease a value.

drag

Refers to an action that can be performed on a desktop or portable computer, or on a touchscreen device. Use *drag* to refer to actions students perform with objects onscreen. A student may drag an onscreen object, drag a control, or drag across part of the screen. Do not use *drag the mouse* or *drag the pointer*. See also **click and drag**.

Incorrect: Drag the mouse to draw a square.

Correct: Drag the slider to increase or decrease the value.

drag-and-drop (*adj*)

Note hyphens in the adjective. Avoid using *drag and drop* as a compound verb followed by an object; dragging includes dropping the object into place.

Incorrect: Drag and drop the file to the printer icon.

Correct: Drag the file to the printer icon.

Correct: You can create digital photo albums with drag-and-drop simplicity.

drop-down menu

Avoid using unless differentiating between menus; otherwise use just *menu*.

enter

Use in directions for responding to a constructed-response item. Do not use *write* or *provide*.

erase

Do not use as a synonym for the verb *delete*.

field

Do not use to refer to a text-entry field in a dialog box. Refer to the box by its label.

flick (*n, v*)

Refers to the act of quickly brushing the finger across a touchscreen or trackpad to scroll through a list. Flicking is similar to dragging, but quicker. *Flick up* or *flick down* to scroll quickly through a selection.

highlight (*v*) Do not use to refer to selecting text.

Incorrect: Drag the cursor to highlight the text you want to move.

Correct: Click the word, sentence, or paragraph to select the text you want to move.

highlighted (*adj*)

Note that term is not hyphenated. Do not use *hilighted*. Do not use *unhighlighted* or *dehighlighted* for an item that is not highlighted; use *not highlighted*.

Incorrect: When you click the sentence, it highlights.

Correct: When you click the sentence, it becomes highlighted.

Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Technology-Enhanced Items

- hit (v)** Do not use *hit* to refer to the act of pressing a key on the computer keyboard. Use *press* instead.
- hold down** Use *hold down* to describe the act of pressing a key on the keyboard, the mouse button, or a mechanical button until a specified action or result occurs. Do not use *hold down* interchangeably with *press*. *Press* means to press and quickly release a key or mechanical button.
- hover; mouse over**
Avoid these terms to refer to the action of briefly resting the mouse pointer on a button or link to see a definition or description. Instead, use *rest on*, *pause on*, or a similar word or phrase. Do not use *mouse over* as a verb phrase. To describe the action of moving the pointer to a button, use a phrase such as “move the pointer over the button.”
- icon** Use only to describe a graphic representation of an object a student can select and open. See also **button**.
- key** Students *press* a key on a keyboard or *tap* a key on a touchscreen; they *type* a character, word, or phrase.
- keypad** See **numeric keypad**.
- left-hand** Do not use; instead, use *left side*.
- log in (v); login (n, adj); log out (v), logout (n, adj)**
Use *log in to*, not *log into*.
- menu** In general, use *menu* alone instead of *drop-down menu* or *pull-down menu*. A menu item is *in* a menu, not *on* or *under* a menu; a menu contains *items*.
- mice** Try to avoid. If it is necessary to use the plural of mouse, use *mouse devices*.
- monitor** Use *screen* to refer to the graphic portion of a monitor.
- mouse** Avoid references to the mouse. Instead, refer to the actions on the screen, such as *clicking*, *dragging*, *selecting*, or *choosing*.
- movement keys**
Do not use; use *arrow keys* instead.
- numeric keypad**
Term can be shortened to *keypad*. Do not use *numerical keypad* or *numeric keyboard*. In general, avoid making distinctions between the keyboard and the numeric keypad. When the student can press two keys that look the same, be specific in directing the student to the proper key.
Incorrect: Press the Hyphen key on the keyboard.
Correct: Press the Minus Sign on the numeric keypad.
- onscreen** Term is one word.

onscreen keyboard

Refers to a keyboard representation on the screen that the student touches to input characters. Do not use *virtual keyboard*, *soft keyboard*, *visual keyboard*, or *keyboard display*.

pick See **click**.

point (v) Avoid using *point* as a verb in descriptions of the desktop interface. Instead, use “move the pointer to” or similar wording.

Avoid: Point to an item to see a description of what you can do with it.

Preferred: Hold the pointer over an item to see a description of what you can do with it.

pointer Use in general references to performing actions with objects rather than text, but be specific as needed to avoid confusion: *arrow pointer*. Use *cursor* when referring to actions associated with text.

pop-up Do not use as a noun. Avoid as a verb; instead, use a term that more accurately describes the action, such as *open*. Do not use *pop-up window* as a synonym for *dialog box*.

press Use to describe the act of pressing and quickly releasing keys on the keyboard. Do not use *click*, *hit*, *push*, *tap*, or *type*. Do not use *press* for onscreen items; use *click* or *tap*.

push Do not use; instead, use *press*.

put Do not use as a synonym for *drag*.

Avoid: Put the file in the Trash.

Preferred: Drag the file to the Trash.

radio button Do not use. Students *click* a button to select or clear an option (the complete phrase “click to select” or just *select* can also be used). Students do not *check* or *uncheck* a button.

right-hand Do not use; instead, use *right side*.

rotate (v) Refers to the act of placing the thumb and index finger slightly apart on a touchscreen or trackpad and twisting them clockwise or counterclockwise.

screen Use to refer to what the student looks at while working on a computer or mobile device. Do not use *display* as a synonym for *screen*.

scroll Avoid using as a transitive verb.

Avoid: Scroll a passage.

Preferred: Scroll through a passage.

Preferred: Scroll to view more of the passage.

select See **click**.

Space Bar Note that term is two words and that both words are capitalized.

Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Technology-Enhanced Items

- tap** (*n, v*) Refers to the action on a trackpad or touchscreen device that is equivalent to clicking. Students can *tap* with one or more fingers (depending on the device and the action the student is performing). Do not use *tap on*.
- tap and hold** Do not use. *Tap* means to touch and release quickly, so use “touch and hold” instead.
- toggle** Use as an adjective, as in *toggle key*. A *toggle key* turns a particular mode on or off. Do not use *toggle* as a verb; instead, use *switch*, *click*, or *turn on* and *turn off* to describe the action.
- touch and hold**
Refers to the act of touching a touchscreen or trackpad and leaving the finger motionless until something happens. Do not use *tap and hold*.
- touchscreen** Note that term is one word.
- trackpad** Note that term is one word. Do not use *touchpad*.
- uncheck** Do not use. Use *click*, *clear*, or “cancel the selection.”
- user name** Two words.
- write** Do not use. Use *type* or *enter*.
- zoom** Use *zoom*, *zoom in*, *zoom in on*, *zoom in to* (not *zoom into*), *zoom out*, and *zoom out of*. Do not use *dezoom* or *unzoom*.

Appendix A:

Word List

Word List

This appendix provides guidelines for the capitalization, hyphenation, and spelling of terms. See “Compound Terms” in Part I, “Preferred Word Usage” in Part II, and “Preferred Usage of Technical Terms” in Part VI for additional guidelines.

<p>A</p> <p>acknowledgments</p> <p>AD (uppercase; precedes date)</p> <p>advice (<i>n</i>), advise (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>African American (<i>n, adj</i>)</p> <p>a.m. (lowercase)</p> <p>Anglo-American (<i>n, adj</i>)</p>	<p>B</p> <p>babysit, babysitter, babysitting</p> <p>backup (<i>n</i>), back up (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>bandage, not <i>Band-Aid</i></p> <p>BC/BCE (uppercase; follows date)</p> <p>birth date</p> <p>black-and-white (<i>adj</i>), black and white (<i>adv</i>)</p> <p>blond</p> <p>boldface (typeface), bold-face (conduct)</p> <p>box-and-whisker plot</p> <p>brand-new (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>breakdown (<i>n</i>), break down (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>break-in (<i>n</i>), break in (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>breakup (<i>n</i>), break up (<i>v</i>)</p>	<p>C</p> <p>CE (uppercase; precedes date)</p> <p>check mark (<i>n</i>), checkmark (<i>tr v</i>)</p> <p>checkout (<i>n</i>), check out (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>criterion (singular), criteria (plural)</p> <p>cross-reference (<i>n, v</i>)</p> <p>cross section (<i>n</i>), cross-section (<i>tr v</i>), cross-sectional (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>cutoff (<i>n</i>), cut off (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>cutout (<i>n, adj</i>), cut out (<i>v</i>)</p>
<p>D</p> <p>data are (plural)</p> <p>day care</p> <p>death rate</p> <p>decision-making (<i>adj</i>), decision making (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>dialogue (speech), <i>but</i> dialog box (computer)</p> <p>die (singular), dice (plural)</p> <p>disk drive</p> <p>double-blind (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>doughnut</p> <p>dropoff (<i>n</i>), drop off (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>dropout (<i>n</i>), drop out (<i>v</i>)</p>	<p>E</p> <p>Earth, in reference to the planet (not used with the article <i>the</i>)</p> <p>earth, in reference to earth material (used with the article <i>the</i>)</p> <p>e.g., (for example, . . .); i.e., (that is, . . .)</p> <p>e-mail</p> <p>equation, not <i>number sentence</i></p> <p>equator</p> <p>et al.</p> <p>everyday (<i>adj</i>), every day (<i>n, adv</i>)</p>	<p>F</p> <p>fairy tale (<i>n</i>), fairy-tale (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>fall (season)</p> <p>field day</p> <p>field trip</p> <p>filename</p> <p>first, not <i>firstly</i></p> <p>firsthand (<i>adj, adv</i>)</p> <p>first person (<i>n</i>), first-person (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>flowerpot</p> <p>folktale</p> <p>free throw (<i>n, adj</i>)</p> <p>freshwater (<i>n, adj</i>)</p> <p>full-blown (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>full-size (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>full-time (<i>adj, adv</i>), full time (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>fund-raiser/ing (<i>adj, n</i>)</p>

<p>G</p> <p>game board</p> <p>grade appropriate (<i>adv</i>), grade-appropriate (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>grade level (<i>n</i>), grade-level (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>great-grandmother, great-uncle</p>	<p>H</p> <p>half hour (<i>n</i>), half-hour (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>hand-me-down</p> <p>hand off (<i>v</i>), handoff (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>hand out (<i>v</i>), handout (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>hands-on (<i>adj, adv</i>)</p> <p>the Hawaiian Islands, <i>but</i> the island of Hawaii</p> <p>headfirst</p> <p>head-on (<i>adj, adv</i>)</p> <p>head start</p> <p>high-definition (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>high-energy (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>high-jump (<i>adj</i>), high jump (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>high-pressure (<i>adj</i>), high pressure (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>home page</p> <p>homeschool (<i>n, adj</i>), homeschooled (<i>v</i>)</p>	<p>I</p> <p>ice cream (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>ice-cream (<i>adj</i>), <i>as in</i> ice-cream cone, ice-cream sandwich, ice-cream shop</p> <p>ice skate (<i>n</i>), ice-skate (<i>v</i>), ice-skater (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>i.e., (that is, . . .); e.g., (for example, . . .)</p> <p>in-depth (<i>adj, adv</i>)</p> <p>in-law</p> <p>in-line skate</p> <p>input-output table, <i>not input/output table</i></p> <p>Internet</p> <p>intranet</p>
<p>J</p> <p>judgment</p> <p>jump rope</p>	<p>K</p> <p>tissue, <i>not Kleenex</i></p> <p>knowledgeable</p>	<p>L</p> <p>landfall</p> <p>large-print (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>left-arrow key</p> <p>lightbulb</p> <p>low-grade (<i>adj</i>), low grade (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>low-resolution (<i>adj</i>), low resolution (<i>n</i>)</p> <p>lunchroom</p> <p>lunchtime</p>
<p>M</p> <p>make-believe (<i>n</i>), make believe (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>makeover (<i>n</i>), make over (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>makeup (<i>n, adj</i>), make up (<i>v</i>)</p> <p>media are (plural)</p> <p>middle class (<i>adv</i>), middle-class (<i>adj</i>), upper-middle-class (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>midpoint</p> <p>midrange</p> <p>midsection</p>	<p>N</p> <p>Native American (<i>n, adj</i>)</p> <p>nonfiction</p>	<p>O</p> <p>one-half</p> <p>one-way (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>online</p> <p>onscreen</p> <p>on-site</p> <p>open enrollment, open-enrollment (<i>adj</i>)</p> <p>open-response (<i>n, adj, adv</i>)</p> <p>override</p>

M

Moon (our solar system),
but moon (other solar systems)
mousepad
multiple-choice (*n, v, adj*)
multi-user

P

papier-mâché
pickup (*n, adj*), pick up (*v*)
place mat
pleaded, not *pled*
plug-in (*n*)
p.m. (lowercase)
PO Box

policy maker, policy making
prime meridian
printout (*n, adj*), print out (*v*)
pull-down (*n, adj*), pull down (*v*)

S

salt water (*n*), saltwater (*adj*)
scatter plot
school-age (*adj*)
school bus
schoolwork
screen name
screen saver (*n, adj*)
screen shot
scroll bar
sidebar
side by side (*adv*), side-by-side (*adj*)
smart card
smartphone
sound bite, not *sound byte*
spring (season)
start-up (*n, adj*), start up (*v*)
stem-and-leaf plot
stepbrother
story line
summer
Sun (our solar system)

N

Q

T

takeoff (*n*), take off (*v*)
takeover (*n*), take over (*v*)
taskbar
tide pool
tidewater
time frame
timekeeper
timeline
time-out (*n, adj*)
toolbar
tool kit
toward, not *towards*
T-shirt

O

R

rainfall
rain forest
right-arrow key
the Rio Grande (do not add *River*)
rip-off (*n*), rip off (*v*)
roller coaster
roller skate (*n*), roller-skate (*v*),
roller skater (*n*)
round-trip (*n, adj*)
runoff (*n*), run off (*v*)

U

underwater (*adj, adv*)
under way (*adv*), underway (*adj*)
US (*adj*), United States (*n*)
user-friendly
username



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Word List

V

videocassette
video game

Y

y-axis

W

warm-up (*n*), warm up (*v*)
Web page, the Web
website
winter

Z

zip code

X

x-axis
photocopy, not Xerox
X-ray

Appendix B: **Resources, Research, and Bibliography**

Recommended Resources

The style conventions and specifications in this document are based largely on information from the sources listed in this section. Refer to these sources for additional information.

Chicago Manual of Style and Words into Type

First published in 1906, the *Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)* is one of the oldest and most comprehensive editorial style guides available. The sixteenth edition, published in 2010, was updated in consultation with a broad range of scholars and professionals in the fields of academics and publishing.

Different style guides have different uses. For example, the *Associated Press Stylebook* is used primarily by journalists, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is used for social science publications, and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is most commonly used by writers of research papers in the humanities. *CMOS* is widely used in educational, scholarly, and trade publishing, as is *Words into Type*, another well-respected general-purpose style manual. Both *CMOS* and *Words into Type* provide broader coverage of mechanical issues, grammar, and usage than the more specialized style manuals listed above.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

Because hundreds of new words are added to the English language each year, and preferences regarding issues such as spelling and hyphenation change over time, it's important that publishing professionals use a recent edition of a good dictionary. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* is not only one of the most popular dictionaries on the market (as the best-selling dictionary in the United States) but is also recommended by *CMOS* and used by many educational and academic publishers.

Garner's Modern American Usage

Bryan A. Garner wrote the grammar-and-usage chapter of *CMOS*, and his usage book is an appropriate companion to *CMOS*, significantly expanding on the usage guidelines provided in chapter 5 of *CMOS*. *Garner's Modern American Usage* is considered one of the best books available on contemporary usage. Garner takes a prescriptive approach, which means that his usage guidelines are based on established norms and rules for the way language should be used.

The Copyeditor's Handbook: A Guide for Book Publishing and Corporate Communications

Amy Einsohn, the author of *The Copyeditor's Handbook*, has twenty years of experience as a professional editor and teacher of copyediting classes and is highly regarded in the copyediting community. Her book, which addresses the ABCs of copyediting, editorial style, and language editing, is intended to be used as a tool for self-instruction or a textbook for copyediting classes. *The Copyeditor's Handbook* has been recommended by current and former editors at *CMOS*, including Carol Fisher Saller and Margaret Mahan.



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Resources, Research, and Bibliography

Support for Selected Style Preferences

Emphasis Terms

The treatment of various elements of style, including emphasis terms, varies according to the preferences of the user, but it is recommended that emphasis terms in test items be set in boldface. The publication *Considerations for the Development and Review of Universally Designed Assessments*¹ cites the following arguments for and against the various treatment options for emphasis text:

- Standard typeface, uppercase and lowercase, is more readable than italic, slanted, small caps, or all caps (Tinker, 1963).
- Text printed completely in capital letters is less legible than text printed completely in lowercase, or normal mixed-case text (Carter, Dey, and Meggs, 1985).
- Italic is far less legible and is read considerably more slowly than regular lowercase (Worden, 1991).
- Boldface is more visible than lowercase if a change from the norm is needed (Hartley, 1985).

Ten style guides from Smarter Balanced states and the consortium were evaluated. Seven of the ten recommended the use of boldface for emphasis terms, whereas one recommended underscoring, another recommended small caps, and the last did not specify. Designers of online content agree that “[o]n the Web, the most common and effective method [for emphasizing text] is the use of a bold face from the current font family.”²

In addition, the application of a particular treatment to a style element could prove confusing if repeated to represent another style element: In the *Smarter Balanced Style Guide*, underscoring is used to designate vocabulary terms. That combined with the fact that the use of two treatment styles for a single element can appear overpowering reinforces the recommendation that boldface alone be used for emphasis terms. This recommendation is supported also by the *Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory* (TAMI).³

Exponents and Superscript

Only one of the Smarter Balanced states’ style guides that were evaluated specified a style for exponents and superscripts, indicating that these elements should be smaller than running text and should not be separated from the preceding text by a space. It is recommended that exponents and superscript characters be smaller than running text (scaled to 70% of base print size). Increasing the size of running text around such characters is not feasible, and increasing the size of the characters themselves introduces a risk that students will misinterpret the characters as running text and not as exponents or superscripts.

¹ Thompson, S. J., Johnstone, C. J., Anderson, M. E., and Miller, N. A. (2005, November). *Considerations for the Development and Review of Universally Designed Assessments* (Center on Educational Outcomes Tech. Rep. 42). Retrieved February 6, 2012, from www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Technical42.htm

² Hume, A. (2005, December). *The Anatomy of Web Fonts*. Retrieved February 13, 2012, from [//www.sitepoint.com/anatomy-web-fonts](http://www.sitepoint.com/anatomy-web-fonts)

³ Beddow, P. A. (2009). *Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory: Quantifying and Improving the Accessibility of Tests and Test Items*. Presented at the CCSSO 2009 National Conference on Student Assessment. Retrieved February 6, 2012, from http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Documents/pdf/PRO/TAMI_CCSSO_Beddow.pdf



Smarter Balanced Style Guide: Resources, Research, and Bibliography

The general accessibility guidelines include discussion of magnification tools. Additionally, the accessibility spoken/audio business rules provide guidelines on how mathematical notation is to be presented in spoken form. The magnification tools and spoken support should allow students with visual impairment to access all the information available on screen.

In regard to ordinals, it is recommended to use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., rather than 1st, 2nd, 3rd. In this way, the exponent size consideration is avoided, and ordinals are as easily read as other running text on a page.

Typeface: Verdana

It is recommended to use Verdana for onscreen testing materials, for its readability as compared to Times New Roman and Arial. Although other fonts are available that are specially designed to further enhance readability, these custom fonts may not be as widely available on student computers and may require the test delivery system to supply the font as part of system installation.

Serif fonts (e.g., Times New Roman), which are popular in print, can appear pixilated and blurred onscreen. In contrast, “the straight, low contrast, open strokes of a sans-serif font, such as Verdana, will always leave a good impression on-screen.”⁴ Verdana, which was designed for the screen, offers a generous amount of white space both between and within (glyphs) the characters. Currently, it is the most commonly used font on the Web, owing to its marked legibility on screen.

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⁴ Hume, The Anatomy of Web Fonts.

Appendix C:

Print-Based Testing

