

Additional info on Item Development for Common Core-aligned MAP Growth assessments:

Here's a press release on an alignment study that was conducted by EdMetric on Common Core Alignment for MAP Growth assessments:

<https://www.nwea.org/blog/2018/study-concludes-map-growth-items-align-common-core-state-standards/>

Test Design

Educators need detailed information about individual student achievement to provide appropriate instruction, form instructional groups within a class, and help parents and other stakeholders understand the student's academic strengths and weaknesses. NWEA MAP Growth test designs factor in the needs of educators and students, psychometric principles, and content alignment to provide the value needed by partners.

The development and design of each MAP Growth test starts with an analysis of the standards to be assessed. NWEA Content Specialists review the state standards carefully and organize them into reporting frameworks, or blueprints, for MAP Growth assessments. Blueprints are created by combining standards and grade-level expectations across grade levels to create a two-tier framework consisting of instructional areas and subareas. These areas and subareas have a direct relationship with the state standards.

Items that align to standards are included in a pool and grouped into the instructional areas and subareas of the test blueprint. Although each item pool is tailored to specific standards, all MAP Growth assessments follow the same design principles and content rationale. Correlation between test instructional areas and the standards exists in the MAP Growth for Mathematics, Reading, Language Usage, and Science assessments and the MAP Growth K-2 assessments for Mathematics and Reading.

Item Alignment to Standards

When a new standard set is released by a state or other agency, NWEA content specialists review the standard set and align the MAP Growth item bank to the standard statements within the set. This is done for every standard set that is the basis for a MAP Growth assessment, and only the items that are a clear match to a partner's standards are used in the item bank for the partner's tests. To perform alignment, NWEA content specialists craft alignment guidelines tailored to the structure of the standards. These guidelines are based on a review of supporting documents (e.g., progressions documents, tools for the Common Core or other Standard Sets, Illustrative Mathematics items). An item is considered aligned when the item targets either the whole standard or an integral part of a standard in a way that is both grade-appropriate and at a level of cognitive complexity addressed by the standard.

The items in the CCSS MAP Growth assessments were aligned by NWEA Content Specialists from our robust item bank to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects standards. Item alignments for these tests received an additional review by at least one Content Specialist who was not involved in the initial alignment process. As a result of this work, each item in the assessment item pool for each MAP Growth test has an alignment to the CCSS standards.

Demonstrations of Alignment

Partners can see how their MAP Growth Assessments are aligned to their state standards in several ways:

- Review of the Learning Continuum Report – Each partner district receives a suite of reports called the Learning Continuum, which shows the alignment of standards within each test. The Learning Continuum, designed for classroom use, displays learning statements that show what students performing at a given RIT level on MAP Growth assessments are typically ready to learn. A partner

can refer to the Learning Continuum to see where each standard statement from the state standards is represented in the MAP Growth test, and how the skills, difficulty levels, and general practices of the standards relate to one another.

- The Instructional Areas documents – The instructional areas documents available to partners show the blueprints for each MAP Growth test aligned to the state standards. These documents will contain language—defining the categories of content within a test—that is traceable back to the standards strands, clusters, and/or domains. Partners can see how the language of their standards was used to construct the framework of their MAP Growth tests.
- Third party Alignment studies – When proof of alignment is required, MAP Growth assessments are reviewed by an external party with expertise in assessment and academic research, such as EdMetric or WestEd. These organizations review items and test designs to ensure that MAP Growth assessments are aligned to a partner’s depth and breadth of standards and providing the value expected by the partner. Alignment studies have been performed on the MAP Growth assessments for Ohio, Indiana, Oklahoma, New Jersey, Florida, Michigan, the Common Core state standards, and South Carolina. All these studies have shown extremely tight alignment to the respective state standards (≈99% for math and ≈97% for ELA).

Expertise

- NWEA Content Specialists are experts on the CCSS and take part in ongoing training around how the standards are interpreted and implemented.
- NWEA Content Specialists participate in ongoing professional development to stay abreast of the CCSS. This includes attending NCTM, NCTE, and IRA annual conferences.
- NWEA Content Specialists regularly attend webinars sponsored by organizations such as the Alliance for Excellent Education and edWeb. They are very knowledgeable about how the assessment consortia plan to assess the standards, and their guidance on levels of cognitive demand associated with each standard and on whether a standard is a major, additional, or supporting standard. They work daily on developing items aligned to the CCSS and engage in ongoing in-house discussion and collaboration about the standards.