Focused Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs)
Interim Assessments that Provide More Specific, Actionable Data on Student Performance

During summer 2021, Smarter Balanced released 38 new focused Interim Assessment Blocks (focused IABs) giving teachers even more resources for checking learning and planning instruction. Focused IABs are designed to measure smaller bundles of content than IABs—focused IABs assess 1–3 targets—to give teachers a more detailed understanding of student learning and provide teachers with precise next steps for instruction.

Educators can explore the details of all 118 fully accessible focused IABs on Smarter Content Explorer. With this year’s release, there will be 60 ELA/literacy focused IABs and 58 math focused IABs. There are typically 10 to 18 items in IABs, and typically 10 to 15 items in focused IABs.

INTERIM ASSESSMENTS AT A GLANCE

Focused Interim Assessment Blocks
Assess 1–3 targets in ELA/literacy or math.
Examples:
- Grade 3 ELA, Research: Use Evidence
- Grade 3 Math, Time, Volume, and Mass

Interim Assessment Blocks
Assess 1–8 targets in math and ELA/literacy.
Examples:
- Grade 3 ELA, Reading Literary Texts
- Grade 3 Math, Operations, and Algebraic Thinking

Interim Comprehensive Assessments
Assess a broad range of targets, similar to the summative.
Examples:
- Grade 3 ELA
- Grade 3 Math

Spotlight: Interim Connections Playlists
Each focused IAB has a corresponding Tools for Teachers Interim Connections Playlist that helps educators match student performance on focused IABs to specific topics and find related instructional resources to use in the classroom the very same day. Playlists can also be used as part of an observational tool, to support student goal setting, or provide guidance on various differentiation needs.

What’s New for the 2021–22 School Year
Smarter Balanced will be releasing 38 new focused IABs for the 2021–22 school year, including:
- 20 new focused IABs in ELA/literacy (2–3 per grade) and
- 18 new focused IABs in mathematics (1–5 per grade).

“The data that we receive from the Interim Assessment Blocks is immediate. I’m able to see it right away. I can then reevaluate my lesson plans for the next day.”
—Elementary Teacher, Oregon

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