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Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Sample Items and Performance Tasks

URL: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>

On October 9, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) released an online set of sample assessment items and performance tasks. Developed in collaboration with educators and content experts, the sample items and tasks are meant to help teachers, administrators, and policymakers better understand the Common Core State Standards and prepare for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments.

"The Smarter Balanced sample items and performance tasks provide an advance look at the types of questions students will encounter when the assessments are implemented in the 2014-15 school year," said Joe Willhoft, Ph.D., Executive Director of Smarter Balanced. "Educators can use them to begin planning the shifts in instruction that will be required to help students meet the demands of the new assessments."

The samples include nearly 50 assessment items and performance tasks, including examples of technology-enhanced items that take advantage of computer-based administration to assess a deeper understanding of content and skills than would otherwise be possible with traditional item types. In addition, sample performance tasks showcase the extended classroom-based activities students will experience as part of the Smarter Balanced assessment system.

"Performance tasks ask students to research and analyze information, weigh evidence, and solve problems relevant to the real world, allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in an authentic way," said Linda Darling-Hammond, professor of education at Stanford University and senior research advisor for Smarter Balanced. "The Smarter Balanced assessment system uses performance tasks to measure skills valued by higher education and the workplace--critical thinking, problem solving, and communication--that are not adequately assessed by most statewide assessments today."

The sample items and performance tasks include several features to help teachers, students, and parents prepare for the new assessments. Each item has detailed information about the standards and assessment targets being measured. In addition, most selected-response and technology-enhanced items can be automatically scored, providing instant feedback to users. Scoring rubrics are available for constructed-response items and performance tasks. Select English language arts/literacy items include a text complexity analysis that explains how quantitative and qualitative factors were evaluated

to determine the appropriate grade level of a passage.

Smarter Balanced is working with K-12 teachers and higher education faculty to write and review assessment items and performance tasks. Among those that provided feedback on draft items and tasks was Student Achievement Partners, an organization founded by contributing authors of the Common Core State Standards.

The sample items and performance tasks that were released represent just a small fraction of the more than 10,000 items and tasks being written to support the Pilot Test in early 2013. In addition, the Smarter Balanced sample items are displayed in a simulated test platform that does not include accessibility tools and accommodations options that will be available through the operational assessment system (e.g., Braille, translation options, and the ability to change font size, highlight text, or magnify portions of items).

The sample items and performance tasks can be accessed from the Smarter Balanced website at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Offers Informative Webinars for Higher Education Faculty and Administrators

URL: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/resources-events/webinars/>

Sample Items and Tasks for Mathematics - Higher Education Webinar – On 10/16/2012, Jackie King and Shelbi Cole (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Director of Mathematics) provided higher education faculty and administrators with background information and an update on Smarter Balanced. They described the types of mathematics items and tasks being developed and introduced the new online tool showcasing sample items and performance tasks.

The purpose of the sample items is the following:

- Illustrate the rigor and complexity of the English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy and Mathematics items on Smarter Balanced assessments
- Signal to educators the shifts in instruction that will be required to help students meet the demands of the Common Core and new assessments (formative, interim, and summative)
- Showcase a variety of item types: (a) Selected response, (b) Constructed response, (c) Technology enhanced, and (d) Performance tasks.

A YouTube video of this informative webinar is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bztyXRSE6EI&feature=plcp

On Wednesday, October 31 (12:30-2 p.m. PT), Smarter Balanced Director of English Language Arts/Literacy Barbara Kapinus will present an **overview of the ELA/Literacy items and performance tasks** -- see <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/resources-events/webinars/>

A video of a presentation providing an overview of the Smarter Balanced assessment system by Executive Director Joe Willhoft is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=mB-xthUqLUk

Knowles Science Teaching Foundation Teacher Fellowship Program

Source: Alicia Marchena, Program Manager for the Teaching Fellowship Program, Knowles Science Teaching Foundation

URL: <http://apply.kstf.org/applications/> and <http://www.kstf.org/programs/teaching/apply.html>

The Knowles Science Teaching Foundation is now accepting applications for the 2013 cohort of Science and Mathematics Teaching Fellows. The Knowles Science Teaching Foundation (KSTF) was created by Janet H. and C. Harry Knowles in 1999 to cultivate and support exemplary science and mathematics high school teachers and develop the next generation of leaders in education. If you know a student interested in pursuing a career in teaching mathematics or science at the high school level, please let them know about the KSTF Teaching Fellowship. □ □ KSTF's programs are designed to help reverse the current national trend that sees approximately half of all secondary teachers leave the field within five years. The total award for each Fellow is valued at nearly \$175,000 over the course of the five-year Fellowship. Fellows receive tuition assistance while participating in a teacher credential program (e.g., CSU, UC, or private IHE), monthly stipends, and grants for professional development and teaching materials. By empowering science and mathematics teachers to be effective in the classroom, KSTF helps deliver enriched educational experiences to students and, in the long run, ensures a stronger, healthier and more competitive nation. □

Applications will close on January 9th, 2013 at 9 a.m. PST. If you have any questions about the Teaching Fellowship Program, email teachers@kstf.org or call (856) 608-0001.

"Engaging Kids Improves Math, Language Scores" by Eric Sorensen

Source: Washington State University - 18 October 2012

URL: <http://wsutoday.wsu.edu/pages/Publications.asp?Action=Detail&PublicationID=33467&PageID=21#>

Samantha Gizerian, a clinical assistant professor in Washington State University's Department of Veterinary and Comparative Anatomy, Pharmacology and Physiology, saw improved test scores in mathematics and language arts among fourth-grade students in South Los Angeles after students from the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science gave 10 one-hour presentations on science.

"A lot of students say things like, 'I didn't know science was fun,'" says Gizerian, who helped with the classes while on the Drew faculty. "And because they think it's fun, all of a sudden it's not work anymore. It's not homework. It's not something extra that they have to do."

The fourth-graders in turn took home nonfiction books and showed a greater willingness to practice reading and math, says Gizerian.

According to a poster Gizerian presented at the recent annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, the students' average percentile rank in math on a standardized test increased from 53.2 in the third grade to 63.4 in the fourth grade. The language arts percentile improved even more dramatically, rising from 42.8 in the third grade to 60.3.

The study was part of a science education initiative in which students from Drew acted as science mentors and gave science lessons. The program improved the Drew students' ability to describe difficult scientific concepts, says Gizerian, "under the premise that, if you can teach a fourth grader a complex science concept, then you can teach anybody."

The Drew students, most of whom are ethnic minorities, served as role models for the pupils, who come from predominantly low-income, minority neighborhoods. The pupil's prevailing attitude, says Gizerian, is that "in our culture, science isn't something we do. Science is for 'them.' To have kids in their classroom whose faces are the same colors, and for them to say, 'science is for me,' that's a big thing that we do."

Visit <http://www.scivee.tv/node/14801> to view a video about the study.

State Focus

California STEM Summit 2012: Transforming Ideas Into Action

Contact (CSLNet): Chris Roe - administrator@cslnet.org

Contact (FORA.tv): Lauren Toler - lauren@fora.tv □ **URL (CSLNet):** <http://cslnet.org/> □ **URL (Summit):** www.castemsummit.com/

URL (PR): www.prweb.com/printer/10002556.htm

URL (Webcast): http://fora.tv/partner/California_STEM_Learning_Network

□ On October 15-16, the California STEM Learning Network (<http://cslnet.org>) hosted the California STEM Summit 2012 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina in San Diego (www.castemsummit.com). The Summit brought together leaders in STEM fields from education, business and industry, policy, research, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies to create new partnerships designed to bring full-scale change to STEM education and workforce development.

A 2011 U.S. Department of Commerce study, "STEM: Good Jobs Now and For the Future"

(<http://tinyurl.com/stemstats2011>) found that from 2000-2010, growth in jobs involving STEM fields was three times greater than growth in non-STEM occupations (7.9% vs. 2.6%). Moreover, STEM occupations are projected to grow by 17.0% from 2008 to 2018, compared to 9.8% growth during the same time period for non-STEM occupations. Thus, the need for focused conversation in this area is great.

"All California students deserve access to world-class STEM education that prepares them for academic, career and personal success," said Chris Roe, California STEM Learning Network CEO. "The California STEM Summit serves as a catalyst to advance high quality STEM education and prepare California's future workforce so our state can continue to lead the world in innovation and new job creation."

FORA.tv provided live streaming of the Summit and has posted videos of a number of the sessions at http://fora.tv/partner/California_STEM_Learning_Network See below for video links in an annotated agenda format. The STEM Summit website contains biographical information on the speakers. COMET readers are encouraged to view the Summit videos for current views and information regarding issues in STEM education.

☐= **California STEM Summit Agenda** =

Monday, 15 October 2012 (<http://www.castemsummit.com/program/summit-day-1/>)

9:00 AM - 9:45 AM -- Welcome and Introductions

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/Pathways_to_Fostering_STEM_Education_in_California

- **Tom Torlakson**, California State Superintendent of Schools
- **Mohammad Qayoumi**, President, San Jose State University
- **Chris Roe**, CEO, and **Marcella Klein Williams**, Chief Education Officer, California STEM Learning Network

9:45 AM - 10:30 AM -- Keynote Address

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/Sugata_Mitra_The_Critical_Importance_of_STEM_Education

-- **Sugata Mitra**, Professor of Educational Technology, Newcastle University, UK

Keynote Description: Through research in rural India and Europe, Dr. Sugata Mitra has found that given the opportunity, children create their own learning environment with the help of technology: Curiosity + Peer Discourse = A Powerful Learning Tool. His address focused on how modern innovations have become a powerful learning tool that help students to engage in discovery, to innovate and most importantly, to share with and support each other.

11:45 AM - 12:45 AM -- Lunch and Networking

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/California_State_Legislature_and_STEM_Education_Policy

- Comments by **Susan Hackwood** and **Herb Brunkhorst**, Co-chairs of California Department of Education's STEM Taskforce
- California State Assemblywoman **Susan Bonilla**, Representing the 11th District

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM -- Keynote Address

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/David_Seidel_STEM_and_Inspiring_Missions_of_Curiosity

-- **David Seidel**, Deputy Manager, Elementary & Secondary Education Programs, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Keynote Description: One of the most compelling stories for science education in California this year was the landing on Mars of "Curiosity," the Mars Science Laboratory rover. Seidel recapped the landing, the science and imagery obtained so far, and the long-term goals of the mission. He also shared the education and public outreach products available at <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/participate> He reflected on the role that the space program has on science education in California and on the expectations for science and technology as motivation for students and educators.

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM -- Panel Discussion: "**Next Generation STEM: The Impact of Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments on Producing STEM-Capable Students**"

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/Next_Generation_Science_Standards_Impact_on_California

Moderator: **Dennis Bartels**, Executive Director of the Exploratorium, San Francisco

Panelists:

- **Phil LaFontaine**, California Department of Education
- **Matt Lonner**, Chevron
- **Helen Quinn**, Stanford University (Chairperson of Committee that produced *A Framework for K-12 Science Education: Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas* -- provides a vision for science education that will be reflected in the Next Generation Science Standards)
- **Trish Williams**, Vice President, California State Board of Education
- **Beverly Young**, CSU Chancellor's Office

** This session, which focused on the expected impact of the **Next Generation Science Standards**, provides an important overview of the effort by key state players. Also see <http://tinyurl.com/SB1200> for the text of SB 1200, a bill signed into law late last month. Excerpt: "60605.85. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, the state board shall adopt science content standards pursuant to the following requirements:

(1) The Superintendent, in consultation with the state board, shall convene a group of science experts... The Superintendent and the group of science experts shall recommend science content standards for adoption to the state board and shall utilize the Next Generation Science Standards as the basis for their deliberations and recommendations to the state board. (2) The Superintendent shall hold a minimum of two public meetings...to provide input on the science content standards...(3) The Superintendent shall present the recommended science content standards to the state board on or

before July 31, 2013. (4) On or before November 30, 2013, the state board shall adopt, reject, or modify the science content standards presented by the Superintendent..."

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM -- Keynote Address

"Giving STEM a Shot"

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/15/Kareem_Abdul-Jabbar_Giving_STEM_a_Shot

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, NBA All-Time Leading Scorer & U.S. Global Cultural Ambassador

* **Tuesday, October 16** (www.castemsummit.com/sample-page/summit-day-2-home)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM -- Panel Discussion

"Making STEM Work: Creating a STEM-Capable Workforce"

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/16/The_STEM_Mindset_Reengineering_the_Education_Pipeline

Description: The panelists discussed how to foster ongoing dialogue and productive partnerships between educators and employers that are responsive to economic and workforce development needs and addressed how we can help students understand the STEM skills and competencies needed by employers.

Panel Moderator: **Jamai Blivin**, Innovate+Educate

Panelists:

- **Debra Jones**, California Community College Chancellor's Office
- **Merrilea Mayo**, Mayo Enterprises
- **Bill Scroggins**, President and CEO, Mt. San Antonio College
- **Greg Till**, Raytheon Space and Airborne Systems

11:30 PM - 12:00 PM -- Conference Review and Inspiration

URL: http://fora.tv/2012/10/16/More_Than_An_Education_Getting_Inspired_by_STEM

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM -- **"Leading Women in STEM"** Lunch Reception, presented by Chevron (see report below)

(2) Twelve California Women Honored as "Leading Women in STEM" for Advancing STEM Education

Source: California STEM Learning Network (CSLNet) - 16 October 2012

URL: <http://www.castemsummit.com/leading-women-in-stem/>

Twelve women from across California were honored last Tuesday as "Leading Women in STEM" at an awards luncheon that took place at the 2012 California STEM Summit at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina in San Diego. The Leading Women in STEM awards recognized their achievements in advancing innovative and effective STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) education initiatives across the state and serving as exemplary role models for California women and girls.

Recognizing the dramatic need for increasing the number of women in STEM fields--only 25% of STEM jobs in the U.S. are held by women--CSLNet is highlighting accomplished women STEM leaders and supporting initiatives across California to bolster STEM education for female students, noting that women with STEM jobs earn 33% more than comparable women in non-STEM jobs.

"The California STEM Learning Network is proud to honor these highly accomplished education, industry, non-profit and civic leaders for their innovative and successful efforts to create world-class STEM education across California," said Chris Roe, California STEM Learning Network CEO. "Their leadership will ensure that our next generation of leaders is truly reflective of the great diversity and talent that we have in our state."

Following are the Leading Women in STEM honorees:

- Dr. Joan Bissell, Teacher Education and Public School Programs, California State University Chancellor's Office
- Sandra Birmingham, STEM Pipeline Outreach Director, California State University, Channel Islands
- Rachel Bondi, Chief of Mobile Innovation, Creative Artists Agency
- Assemblymember Susan Bonilla (CA-11)
- Dr. Pamela Clute, Assistant Vice Chancellor Educational and Community Engagement, University of California, Riverside
- Judy D'Amico, Senior Director of Engagement, Project Lead the Way
- Dawn Garrett, SAS Operations Director, Raytheon
- Dr. Susan Hackwood, Executive Director, California Council on Science and Technology
- Dr. Linda Katehi, Chancellor, UC Davis
- Dr. Helen Quinn, Professor Emerita, Stanford University
- Dr. Carol Tang, Director, Coalition for Science After School

Honorees were awarded for their leadership in advancing critical areas of STEM education, including adoption of Next Generation Science Standards, strengthening STEM teacher pathways, advocating for strengthened public-private partnerships and alignment of resources, and ensuring all California students have access to high-quality STEM in out-of-school time.

(3) Basketball Legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar to Serve as California's After School STEM Ambassador

Source: California Department of Education

URL: www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr12/yr12rel100.asp

Basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar will help lead efforts to boost after school STEM learning opportunities for California's students, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced on Monday (10/16/2012) at the California STEM Summit in San Diego. Torlakson and Abdul-Jabbar appeared together to announce the appointment.

Education in STEM--Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math--is widely considered to be one of the keys to California's economic future. It is a major cornerstone of Torlakson's *Blueprint for Great Schools* (www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/) and the focus of a task force he created in the spring.

Abdul-Jabbar--whose Skyhook Foundation aims in part to use STEM education "To Give Kids A Shot That Can't Be Blocked" by helping them aspire to higher educational goals--will serve as the California After School STEM Ambassador for the next year, speaking publicly and raising awareness of the importance of education in these subjects.

"Few things are more important to children's educations and to California's economy than the STEM subjects, and few people have more vision and commitment to making an impact in kids' lives than Kareem Abdul-Jabbar," Torlakson said. "I've long admired Kareem as an athlete, and I'm delighted now to count him as an ally in giving California's kids every chance to succeed, not just in the classroom, but after school as well."

Hall of Famer Abdul-Jabbar, 65, is the NBA's All-Time Leading Scorer, having amassed 38,387 points over a 20-year career. Since retiring from basketball, the man who perfected the "skyhook" has become a speaker, author, film-maker, educator, and Global Cultural Ambassador. His latest book, *What Color is My World? The Lost History of African American Inventors*, is being used to encourage children to master the STEM subjects in elementary schools all over the United States.

"If America is to maintain our high standard of living, we must continue to innovate," said Abdul-Jabbar. "We are competing with nations many times our size, and STEM learning represents the engines of innovation. With these engines we can lead the world, because knowledge is real power."

This is a one-year appointment. Abdul-Jabbar will make appearances at several after school STEM events throughout the year and promote STEM as a critical issue in both education and the economy.

Abdul-Jabbar will launch a multi-city national tour in 2013 in support of STEM Education that includes a 300+ piece memorabilia exhibit that allows kids to see how STEM Education continues to play a role in the business of basketball. Learn more about Skyhook Foundation goals at <http://www.skyhookfoundation.org/>

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Related article:

Statement by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on the Afterschool Alliance's "Lights on Afterschool" Celebration

Source: U.S. Department of Education - 18 October 2012

URL: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/statement-us-secretary-education-arne-duncan-afterschool-alliances-lights-afters>

On Thursday, U.S. Secretary of Education issued the following statement on the Afterschool Alliance's nationwide Lights on Afterschool celebration:

"In today's knowledge economy, America's standard school day and year are simply too short to provide our students with

the time and resources they need to earn a well-rounded, world-class education. Afterschool programs can provide a safe and engaging place where children can be productive after the school day ends. I commend the Afterschool Alliance for their advocacy on behalf of children and families who need and benefit from these programs. Lights on Afterschool celebrates schools serving as community centers and shines a spotlight on programs that give kids greater academic and extracurricular opportunities."

Lights on Afterschool has organized thousands of events around the country and at military bases abroad. Visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm> for a searchable database of 2012 celebrations.

Local Focus

MCOE will continue to provide one-day, grade level specific workshops comparing the national CCSS with our current California State Standards, and developing grade-specific lessons for teaching the content found in both the CCSS and our current standards.

The lesson design will incorporate the Eight Mathematical Practices of the CCSS:

1. Make sense of problems, and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Contact Linda Dilger (831) 755-0393 for information on how your district can participate.

LARS Mathematics CCSS Workshop

December 4, 2012 & January 29, 2013

Regional MATH CCSS Meetings

- ***South County Soledad Jack Francioni School***
 - November 5, 2012 & April 15, 2013
- ***Salinas MCOE***
 - March 14, 2013
- ***Monterey MPUSD IMC***
 - December 5, 2012 & March 6, 2013

Asilomar Mathematics Conference November 30th -December 2nd, 2012. Keynote speakers will be Kathlan Latimer, Ruth Parker, Harold Asturias, Patrick Callahan and Dan Meyer. Go to <http://cmc-math.org/>

David Foster Returns-Another View of the Next Generation of Mathematics Assessments-March 20, 2013

Mathletics 2013, May 11, 2013. Naval Postgraduate School