

EBA Formative Assessments User's Guide

Purpose

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) represent a dramatic shift in the field of education. They are based on the notion that students must master a core set of skills to be successful in high school, college, and career. Across subject areas, the standards repeatedly highlight the importance of argumentation skills. The Evidence Based Argument (EBA) instructional tools are designed to support student mastery of several skills outlined in the CCSS. The EBA Formative Assessments allow educators to track student progress toward mastering these essential skills.

Common Core State Standards

There are two sets of CCSS: one for Mathematics and the other for English Language Arts. Within the ELA standards there is a separate section for literacy across a range of subjects including: History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. The standards are based on the premise that literacy skills must be developed, not only in English class, but throughout the school day. Additionally, there are a set of College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards that are the same for ELA and Literacy Across History/ Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. .

EBA instructional activities are geared toward developing student skills that are high priorities for college and career readiness in ELA, History/Social Studies, Science, and the Technical Subjects, according to the CCSS. Specifically, EBA instructional tools support student mastery of the following CCR Anchor Standards:

- Writing 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Writing 9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Reading 1. Read closely to determine what the texts says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Reading 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Reading 8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

The EBA Formative Assessment tools can be used to help teachers determine whether students are mastering the *Common Core State Standards* listed above. These tools

also allow teachers to identify which aspects of EBA's *Five Core Skills* they should target in upcoming lessons to ensure that students are mastering the *Common Core State Standards*. Additionally, the EBA activities are designed for adaption. Teachers can customize the activities to focus on virtually any of the skills outlined in the CCSS, such as the CCR Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening.

There are additional CCSS standards for the practice of Math as well as Language that EBA does support, and Math and ELL teachers have indicated they believe their Math and ELL students skills will be meaningfully impacted, but we have not yet developed the tests for those skills.

Administering the Assessments

We have provided a baseline and a post-EBA assessment for each of the *Five Core Skills*. We estimate that each assessment should take students about 15 minutes, though the assessment for Skill 5 should take students 20-30 minutes.

None of the assessments have a Lexile® reading score higher than that of typical 8th grade texts. The assessments can be adapted and administered orally for students who have a particular difficulty with reading and writing in English. For the first version of the oral adaptation, the teacher reads the assessment aloud while the students complete the assessments as they otherwise would. For the second version of the oral adaptation, the entire assessment, both administration and response, is completed orally (e.g., for Skill 5, students give a well-organized speech rather than craft a written response).

Evaluating the Assessments

We have provided an answer key and grading rubric for each assessment below. Additionally, we have included a table at the top of each section that lists the components of each core skill and the *Common Core State Standards* that are relevant for each component. A teacher can use the assessment results to identify the skills to target going forward. For example, if a large number of students miss question #5 on the Skill 1 assessment, the teacher would know that their students are struggling with “demonstrating the ability to make a complete argument” and are unlikely to demonstrate proficiency on the Writing 1 Common Core Standard. Teachers can then select EBA activities for future lessons that are geared toward helping students develop their ability to make complete arguments.

Additionally, teachers can administer the baseline assessments before implementing the EBA curriculum and the post-EBA assessments after using the EBA curriculum to get a sense of how much progress students are making. We recommend that teachers use the assessments for each core skill after having completed a unit focused on one of the core skills. However, teachers can also tailor the assessments to suit their needs.

Answer Keys & Grading Rubrics

SKILL 1: MAKING A BASIC ARGUMENT		
QUESTION	EBA CORE SKILLS	CCSS
1	Students demonstrate understanding that a complete argument includes both a claim and a warrant.	Writing_1
2-5	Students are able to distinguish between a simple assertion and a complete argument.	Reading_8; Writing_1
6	Students demonstrate the ability to make a complete argument.	Writing_1

Skill 1 Baseline Assessment

1a. Claim and warrant

1b. A claim states the basic premise of the argument.
A warrant provides a reason to believe the claim.

2. (c)

3. (b)

4. (a)

5. (b)

6. The point of this question is to test whether or not students can create their own complete argument with both a claim and a warrant. You are therefore looking for two things:

- a) The student must provide a claim that is related to their prompt. Possible claims could include schools should require uniforms or schools should not require uniforms.
- b) The student must provide a warrant of the claim, that is, a reason to believe the claim is true.

Skill 1 Post-EBA Assessment

1a. Claim and warrant

1b. A claim states the basic premise of the argument.
A warrant provides a reason to believe the claim.

2. (b)

3. (d)

4. (b)

5. (d)

6. The point of this question is to test whether or not students can create their own complete argument with both a claim and a warrant. You are therefore looking for two things:

- a) The student must provide a claim that is related to their prompt. Possible claims could include students should be required to take art classes or students should not be required to take art classes.
- b) The student must provide a warrant of the claim, that is, a reason to believe the claim is true.

SKILL 2: MAKING A STRONG ARGUMENT		
QUESTION	EBA CORE SKILLS	CCSS
1a-1c	Students are able to identify different types of warrants	Reading_8
1d	Students are able to support an argument with persuasive warrants.	Writing_1
1d	Students are able to identify why some warrants are more effective than others.	Reading_8; Writing_1
2	Students demonstrate understanding that different types of warrants persuade different types of audiences.	Reading_8; Writing_4; Writing_1

Skill 2 Baseline Assessment

1a. (c)

1b. (b)

1c. (a)

1d. Students should identify one of the three warrants (1a, 1b, and 1c) and provide a complete argument (both a claim and a warrant) for why that warrant is stronger than others. Possible arguments include: 1a is most persuasive because doctors have expert knowledge of health risks, or 1c is strongest because it is based on data that takes into account the experiences of a large number of people.

2a. Student demonstrates understanding that different types of warrants persuade different types of audiences. For example, the principal might care most about funding for the school.

2b. Student demonstrates understanding that different types of warrants persuade different types of audiences. For example, the friend might care more about convenience than fundraising.

Note: the student can still earn full credit if he or she provides a reason why the student would be most persuaded by the same argument as the principal.

Skill 2 Post-EBA Assessment

1a. (b)

1b. (d)

1c. (a)

1d. Students should identify one of the three warrants (1a, 1b, and 1c) and provide a complete argument (both a claim and a warrant) for why that warrant is stronger than others. Possible arguments include: 1c is strongest because it is based on data that takes into account the experiences of a large number of people.

2a. Student demonstrates understanding that different types of warrants persuade different types of audiences. For example, the principal might care most about students getting sleep so they can come to class ready to learn.

2b. Student demonstrates understanding that different types of warrants persuade different types of audiences. For example, the mom might care more about helping the sister than the principal would.

Note: the student can still earn full credit if he or she provides a reason why the mom would be most persuaded by the same argument as the principal.



SKILL 3: USING TEXT AS EVIDENCE		
QUESTION	EBA CORE SKILLS	CCSS
1	Students are able to identify an author's main claim	Reading_1; Reading_2
2	Students are able to identify portions of a text that support the author's arguments.	Reading_1; Reading_2
4	Students are able to identify portions of a text that support their own arguments.	Reading_1; Writing_9
5	Students are able to explain how the textual evidence they identify strengthens their arguments.	Reading_1; Writing_9

Skill 3 Baseline Assessment

1. (a)
2. (b)
3. Student writes a claim. Possible claims could include: Global warming is caused by humans or global warming is not caused by humans.
4. Student writes a quote from the passage above that indeed supports the claim they made in question 3.
5. Student provides one reason why the quotation they included in question 3 supports their argument.

Skill 3 Post-EBA Assessment

1. (c)
2. (b)
3. Student writes a claim. Possible claims could include: Courts should not use lie detector tests or courts should only very rarely use lie detector tests or courts should use lie detector tests.
4. Student writes a quote from the passage above that indeed supports the claim they made in question 3.
5. Student provides one reason why the quotation they included in question 3 supports their argument.

SKILL 4: RESPONDING TO COUNTERARGUMENTS		
QUESTION	EBA CORE SKILLS	CCSS
1	Students are able to define a counterargument.	Writing_1
2	Students are able to identify counterarguments in text.	Reading_1
3a	Students are able to anticipate arguments intended to weaken their own claims.	Writing_1
3b	Students are able to respond to arguments intended to weaken their own claims.	Writing_1

Skill 4 Baseline Assessment

1. (d)

2. (c)

3a. Student provides both a claim (e.g., “watching TV is a better use of time than reading”) and a warrant (e.g., “TV programs are an easier way to learn new information than books”). Students should be able to earn full credit by arguing either side of the prompt.

3b. Student comes up with one warrant that is responsive to the argument he or she made in #3a.

3c. Student provides a defense in response to the first counterargument he or she came up with in question #3b.

Skill 4 Post-EBA Assessment

1. (d)

2. (c)

3a. Student provides both a claim and a warrant. Students should be able to earn full credit by arguing either side of the prompt.

3b. Student comes up with one warrant that is responsive to the argument he or she made in #3a

3c. Student provides a defense in response to the first counterargument he or she came up with in question #3b.



Assessment Spreadsheet for Skill 4 Post-EBA Assessment

Name	1	2	3a	3b
	Total Correct			
	Total Possible*			
	Percent Correct			

*Determine this number based on the number of students who completed the assessment



SKILL 5: STRUCTURING A COMPLEX ARGUMENT		
QUESTION	EBA CORE SKILLS	CCSS
N/A	Students are able to create a complex argument that includes:	Writing_1; Writing_2; Writing_4; and many of the others listed for Skills 1-4
	an overarching claim	
	at least 3 warrants that support the overarching claim	
	each warrant should have some type of evidence support	
	at least one warrant should respond to a potential counterargument	
	at least one warrant should include a piece of textual evidence that is analyzed (an explanation is given as to why the evidence supports the warrant)	
	arguments work well together (e.g., don't contradict)	

Skill 5 Baseline and Post-EBA Assessments

- Student presented a clear overarching claim/ thesis statement
- Student gave at least 3 warrants supporting overarching claim
- Each warrant had some type of evidence support
- Student's arguments were persuasive / non-trivial (e.g., "because I like it")
- Student used textual evidence/ quotations to support at least one argument
- Student explained how the textual evidence supported at least 1 of his/her warrants
- Student predicted and defended against at least one counterargument
- Student made arguments that worked well together and did not contradict

Name	clear overarching claim/ thesis statement	3 warrants supporting overarching claim	each warrant had some type of evidence support	arguments were persuasive / non-trivial	textual evidence to support at least 1 argument	explained how textual evidence supported at least 1 warrant	predicted and defended against at least 1 counterargument	arguments worked well together / did not contradict
Total Correct								
Total Possible*								
Percent Correct								

