New York State Item Review Criteria for Grade 3-8 Mathematics Tests

With the transition to the New York P12 Common Core State Standards (CCSS) significant changes have been made to the New York State Testing Program (NYSTP). The 2013 Grade 3-8 Common Core Mathematics Tests will measure the CCSS for Mathematics. The tests will approach Mathematics differently from past assessments. To help ensure consistent and rigorous interpretation and measurement of the CCSS for Mathematics, the state has articulated criteria for reviewing test questions (items).

Item Review Criteria

The Item Review Criteria is a framework that helps assessment developers and reviewers ensure that Grade 3-8 Common Core Mathematics Tests measure the CCSS for Mathematics with high quality questions. The Item Review Criteria articulate the four major item characteristics NYSED looks for in developing quality questions. NYSED uses the Item Review Criteria to ensure:

1. Clarity and Graphical Appropriateness;
2. Fairness; Free from Bias
3. Fidelity of Measurement to CCSS
4. Conformity to the Expectations for the Specific Item Types and Formats (i.e., multiple-choice questions, 2-point constructed-response questions, and 3-point constructed-response questions).

The Item Review Criteria is organized into these four categories. Each section of the criteria includes pertinent questions that help reviewers determine whether or not an item is of sufficient quality. The first two categories, Clarity and Graphical Appropriateness and Fairness, identify the basic components of quality assessment items. The criteria for Clarity and Graphical Appropriateness are used to help ensure that students understand what is asked in each question and that the language in the question does not adversely affect a student’s ability to perform the required task. Likewise, the Fairness criteria are used to evaluate whether questions are un-biased, non-offensive, and not disadvantageous to any given subgroup(s).

The third category of the Item Review Criteria, Fidelity of Measurement to CCSS address how each item measures a given Mathematics standard. This criterion asks the reviewer to comment on key aspects of how the item addresses and calls for the skills demanded by the standards. Additionally, this criteria prompt reviewers to comment on how more than one standard is addressed by a given question.

The fourth category of the Item Review Criteria addresses the specific demands for different item types and formats. Reviewers evaluate each item to ensure that it conforms to the given requirements. For example, multiple-choice items must have, among other characteristics, one unambiguous correct answer and plausible but incorrect answer choices.

How the Item Review Criteria is Used

Using these criteria to review draft questions is one of many steps employed to help ensure a valid, fair, and quality assessment. Draft questions that meet these criteria are allowed to move forward in the development process. The next step is for the items to be reviewed, and when necessary, edited, by a Committee of certified New York State educators [1]. The educator panel evaluates each question for fairness, valid measurement of the intended standard(s), and language clarity. Only items that are approved by the educator panel are allowed to be field-tested.


How Educators can use the Item Review Criteria to design assessments or modify instruction

The Item Review Criteria can also serve as a helpful guideline as educators develop assessment items and instructional activities.
Teachers will want to consider:

1. Clarity and Graphical Appropriateness;
2. Fairness; Freedom from Bias
3. Fidelity to the precise language and structure of the CCSS
   1. In order to ensure assessment items and instructional activities align with the CCSS, they must adhere to the following:
      1. The learning targets for a lesson are simply the standards themselves or portions of the standards themselves.
      2. The assessment question prompts/instructional materials use language from the actual standard(s) or the alignment is easily discernable.
      3. The learning experience directly informs students' understanding/ the Item requires students to show understanding of aspects of the particular standard(s).
      4. The Item's learning experience does not require students to attend to all aspects of the standard(s).
      5. The Item's learning experience is dependent on the students' ability to access skills referenced in the primary standard and also the secondary and additional standards.
      6. The Item's learning experience measures/teaches students to show understanding of the skills in the standard.
         The Item's learning experience includes non-standard numbers (e.g. Students are asked to solve questions using non-whole numbers).
4. Mirroring in item/lesson design to the “Expectations for the Specific Item Types and Formats” (i.e., multiple-choice questions, 2-point constructed-response questions, and 3-point constructed-response questions).

Downloadable Resources:
Math Item Review Criteria

Created on:
Friday, February 22, 2013

Tags:
Common Core assessment
Grade:
Elementary
Third Grade
Fourth Grade
Intermediate
Fifth Grade
Sixth Grade
Seventh Grade
Eighth Grade

Subject:
English Language Arts

Resource Type:
General Supporting Materials

Topic:
Common Core Learning Standards