



# State Learning Standards & Testing

## What are learning standards?

The Washington State K–12 Learning Standards define what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

## Why do we need them?

Rigorous learning standards require students to think critically and creatively about content—rather than memorize it—so they are prepared for successful futures on the education and career paths they choose.

## Which content areas have learning standards?

Standards exist in 13 content areas including math, English language arts, science, educational technology, and world languages.

## Why do we have state tests?

Measuring student progress on important skills and knowledge is key for families and teachers to know if students are on track to graduate with options, or if they might need extra help or advanced learning opportunities.

Testing data is also a tool for schools, districts, and the state to help educators improve instruction for all students. Statewide testing also helps ensure all public school students, no matter where they go to school, have access to a quality education.

## Are state tests required?

State and federal laws require students to be tested in:

- **English language arts and math:** Grades 3 through 8 and high school (students take the Smarter Balanced assessments)
- **Science:** Grades 5, 8, and 11

To see which tests are required for high school graduation, please visit [www.WAtesting.com](http://www.WAtesting.com).

## TOP 5 FACTS about Washington's K-12 Learning Standards and Assessments

### 1 *Real-world skills*

Washington's learning standards and assessments focus on real-world skills that students are learning and practicing in the classroom every day such as problem solving, critical thinking, and writing. On assessments, students show their work, write, and explain their answers as part of the assessment process, thus measuring skills and knowledge they will need to pursue the career path of their choice.

### 2 *Closing gaps*

The assessments help identify achievement gaps and allow school districts and the state to direct resources where they are needed the most.

### 3 *Testing is just one measure*

State testing is one of several indicators, in combination with report cards, teacher feedback, and classroom work used to create a complete picture of a student's progress in school.

### 4 *The right stuff*

Washington's state learning standards and the aligned assessments are designed to prepare students for college, work, and life.

### 5 *Accessible for all students*

The Smarter Balanced tests are designed to accommodate all students, including those with disabilities and English language learners.

## LEARN MORE!

### *Learning Standards*

[bit.ly/StateStandards](http://bit.ly/StateStandards)  
or email [CoreStandards@k12.wa.us](mailto:CoreStandards@k12.wa.us)

### *State Testing*

[www.WAtesting.com](http://www.WAtesting.com)  
or email [StateTesting@k12.wa.us](mailto:StateTesting@k12.wa.us)

### *Support Your Student*

Great Schools:  
<http://bit.ly/2tRyZoO>