



West Ada School District is committed to the academic growth of all students. A key component of meeting this commitment is the accurate communication of student learning. Every state, including Idaho, has outlined expectations for what students should know, understand, and be able to do. These expectations are called Standards.

For reporting student learning, West Ada School District organized the standards – and the goals within the standards – into Achievement Targets. Each Achievement Target contains descriptions of the level of student performance required for grade-level mastery. These Achievement Targets are end-of-the-year expectations; however, reporting on student mastery or understanding in relation to the Achievement Target is based on instruction and learning expectations for each reporting period.

How is a Performance Score Determined?

Student learning in grades K-5 is evaluated and reported relative to their grade level Content Standards. In a standards-based system, the goal is to provide accurate information about a student's level of understanding of the Standards. To do this, teachers will focus on student understanding or competency rather than the number of answers that were correct or incorrect. In a standards-based grading system, it is no longer sufficient to use the symbols A, B, C, D, F or E, M, N to communicate learning. The grading symbol – called a Performance Score – provides a clear and specific description of student academic performance. Reporting student mastery of standards changes the question from, "What's the average of the student's work?" to "What does the student understand?"

- Learning will be reported based on evidence of what a student understands and can do at particular points in time rather than an average over a reporting period.
- Performance scores are based on a student's academic achievement and do not include effort, attitude, or work habits.
- Performance scores reflect the quality of student understanding, rather than the quantity of points accumulated.

Practice

Students master Standards through instruction and practice. Student practice can be done in a group or independently. Practice is not used to measure students' mastery of the Standards but rather to give students time to develop understanding before understanding is measured. When your child talks about practice or brings home a paper with "Practice" written at the top, it means the student completed the task and the teacher has reviewed the work. A Performance Score is **not** marked on practice assignments.

Sample of a Practice piece

Name Blake Unit 1 1.9

Solve the following problems. Show how you solved each problem.

Problem 1: How Many More? Practice

A. Kenneth collects stamps from around the world. The last time he counted, he had 36 stamps in his collection. His uncle just gave him 26 more stamps from Portugal. How many stamps does he have now?

$$\begin{array}{r} 36 \\ +26 \\ \hline 62 \end{array}$$

62 stamps

B. Kenneth's goal is to collect 100 stamps. How many more stamps does he need?

62 + 38 = 100

Evidence

After providing opportunities to practice, teachers will measure, or gather evidence on, each student's level of understanding or mastery of the material taught. Evidence may be an assignment, a test, a center activity, or a one-on-one discussion. A grade—or Performance Score—is assigned to student work. Performance Score descriptions can be found on the next column. Student work used to determine mastery will have the word "Evidence" written on it.

Sample of an Evidence piece

The image shows a sample of student work on an "End-of-Unit Assessment" page. The page has a header with "Name" and "Date" fields, and a "Trading Stickers, Combining Coins" title. A checkmark icon is in the top right. The main heading is "End-of-Unit Assessment (page 1 of 3)". Below it is "Problem 1: How Many Marbles?". The instructions say: "Solve this problem. Be sure to show how you solve it and to write equations to represent your work." The problem is: "A Cara had 48 marbles in her marble collection. Her grandfather gave her 30 more. How many marbles did she have then?". The student's work shows a drawing of 48 marbles (two groups of 20 and 8) and 30 marbles (three groups of 10). A vertical addition shows 48 plus 30 equals 78. The student has written "70 + 8 = 78 marbles" and "Evidence Pro." in red.

How is a Performance Score Reported?

Evidence of student learning is collected and reported by Achievement Target. The performance score – indicated by Advanced, Proficient, Strategic or Basic - provides accurate information about students' levels of understanding or how competent they are in the Achievement Targets.

The goal is for students to master the Performance Standards. **A Performance Score of "Proficient" indicates mastery or proficiency in grade-level standards.**

By accurately reporting student learning in relationship to instruction in each Achievement Target, the instructional needs of students are better identified. Meeting these needs allows students to grow academically and be prepared to meet tomorrow's challenges.

The following are descriptions for the Performance Scores:

Advanced

The student demonstrates **consistent** competency on achievement targets **above** their grade level.

Proficient

The student demonstrates **consistent** competency on grade level achievement targets.

Strategic

The student demonstrates **inconsistent** competency on grade level achievement targets.

Basic

The student does not yet demonstrate competency on grade level achievement targets.

When are Scores Reported?

Student work (practice or evidence) is viewable in PowerSchool, the district's online student information system, throughout the academic year. Achievement Targets are reported in PowerSchool at the completion of the semester. Some Achievement Targets may be reported earlier than the end of the semester, such as when a unit of instruction has been completed.

Contact your student's teacher for information about accessing and using PowerSchool. For additional resources on PowerSchool, visit the "Parents and Students" section on the district website – www.westada.org.

Questions?

If you have questions related to standards-based grading, email testing@westada.org.