

## Performance Standards (reported in Lexile® measures)

**Test.** Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS).

**Test Publisher.** Wyoming Department of Education (Educational Testing Service).

**Test Information.** In the spring of 2006, the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) in reading, writing, and mathematics were administered for the first time to Wyoming students in grades 3 through 8, and 11. Science was added in spring 2008 in grades 4, 8 and 11. During 2011, the writing assessment was renamed Student Assessment of Writing Skills (SAWS). In June 2012, Wyoming adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as its newest standards in English/Language Arts and Math, under the name “Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (2012 WyCPS).” Subsequent legislative action, 2012 Wyoming State Enrolled Act 65, removed grade 11 from the 2013 PAWS and future administrations. PAWS state-level assessments are aligned with the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science. PAWS is designed to provide information for use as federal, state, and local indicators of the extent to which students satisfy academic performance standards.

Beginning with the 2013 administration, PAWS reading, mathematics, and science assessments are composed of all four-response multiple choice items, with each item measuring a single skill-reporting category within a content standard. The reading and science items are grouped together into item sets that refer to a common passage. The PAWS assessments are administered through a paper/pencil test. The SAWS assessment is composed of a single writing prompt.

The 2014 PAWS assessment utilizes the Common Core Strands as reporting categories and have become the new scale measuring students’ academic performance on the 2012 WyCPS. In 2014, these new content standards were implemented for state assessments, so new reporting scales were established for the PAWS Reading and Math tests for grades 3 through 8. Because the common set of items between the 2013 and 2014 assessments were field test items, they could not be used to perform equating between the 2013 and 2014 PAWS tests. As a result, concordance tables were developed to link the 2013 and 2014 test scores.

The 2012 WyCPS ask students to demonstrate an understanding of literary and informational text and be able to integrate knowledge and ideas from the text. Approximately 12-14% of the test items also address use of language within the texts such as understanding the use of figurative language or using context to determine the meaning of a word or phrase. Students are required to examine texts with accuracy, to make relevant connections, and to support their inferences as a measure of reading concepts on the PAWS assessments.

The items on the PAWS have been calibrated using the Rasch model. Scale scores for the 2014 PAWS Grades 3 through 8 range from 375 to 925.

**Method.** A linking study was conducted in 2006 in conjunction with the Wyoming Department of Education and Harcourt Assessments (now Pearson) using linear equating methodology: (A) vertical scale for Grades 3 through 8; (B) within grade for Grade 11. The Wyoming Department of Education discovered scoring errors by their testing contractor for the 2006-07 and 2007-08

administrations of the PAWS requiring a revision in the raw score to scale score conversion formula, which then necessitated a revision in the scale score to Lexile conversion table. Further updates to the PAWS assessments were conducted by Educational Testing Service and a concordance table was developed between the 2013 and 2014 PAWS scale scores. An update to previous PAWS scale score to Lexile measure conversion tables was needed to align the Lexile measures with the 2014 scale scores established for the 2014 PAWS Reading tests for grades 3-8.

**Performance Standards.** Revised in 20012 (adopted April 27, 2012). Performance level descriptors are statements about how well students must perform the benchmark standards. The “proficient” level is required to meet the standards. Policy level performance level descriptors were developed to align with the 2014 PAWS assessments. Detailed performance level descriptors organized by domain and cluster are available on the Wyoming Department of Education web site (<http://edu.wyoming.gov/>) Three policy level performance level descriptors are provided. A descriptor for the Below Basic level has not been published.

- **Advanced:** Superior academic performance indicating an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. *Text Complexity Statements:* The advanced student demonstrates thorough ability to independently read and comprehend a variety of literary and informational text of high complexity. The student reads closely and analytically and uses textual evidence effectively to demonstrate complex critical thinking.
- **Proficient:** Satisfactory academic performance indicating a solid understanding and display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. *Text Complexity Statements:* The proficient student demonstrates adequate ability to independently read and comprehend a variety of literary and informational text of moderate-to-high complexity. The student reads closely and analytically in order to use textual evidence to demonstrate critical thinking.
- **Basic:** Marginal academic performance, work approaching, but not yet reaching, satisfactory performance, indicating partial understanding and limited display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. *Text Complexity Statements:* The basic student demonstrates partial ability to independently read and comprehend a variety of literary and informational text of low-to-moderate complexity. The student reads closely in order to use minimal textual evidence to demonstrate critical thinking.

Table 1. PAWS performance standards in the Lexile metric.

Grade	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3	410L and Below	415L to 595L	600L to 860L	865L and Above
4	715L and Below	720L to 815L	820L to 1215L	1220L and Above
5	710L and Below	715L to 925L	930L to 1155L	1160L and Above
6	850L and Below	855L to 1020L	1025L to 1220L	1225L and Above
7	875L and Below	880L to 1040L	1045L to 1270L	1275L and Above
8	915L and Below	920L to 1085L	1090L to 1325L	1330L and Above

**Test Administration.** PAWS will be administered March 2<sup>rd</sup> through March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015.