

Performance Task Overview Module Evaluation

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### **Introduction**

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) has a variety of training modules to aid in the training of public school teachers. The trainings are interactive eLearning lessons through Adobe Captivate or Articulate Storyline. The focus of this evaluation is the Articulate Storyline object titled Performance Task Overview (PTO). Its intent is to provide “District/School Test Coordinators and teachers and overview of what a Performance Task is and the purpose of the classroom activity as it pertains to the performance task” (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium [SBAC], 2014). This object is intended to be used in a professional development or staff meeting.

The participants in the evaluation of the PTO are high school teachers, with some experience with the new state sponsored summative exams from SBAC. Only one of the teachers has administered the performance task, but all of the teachers had been involved in the planning and training of the non-performance task item portion of the SBAC. All three of the instructors are social science or English teacher. All three of the participants reported that they had little to no experience with online training modules, but they had all participated in a similar training module training module from SBAC.

The purpose of this evaluation was to measure the PTO’s usability in a staff meeting session, the effectiveness of the instruction for the identified objectives, and the impressions of the users. All of the participants fit with the focuses of this evaluation because they are in the target audience, and are they are likely to administer a performance task as part of a future SBAC summative assessment. Each of the participant also identified that they had some level of prior knowledge that lets them describe to some extent the purpose of the performance task. However,

they were not able to identify why SBAC considers the performance task important with the specifics of the lesson. It stands to reason that their prior training has created preconceived notions of the performance task. This evaluation is conducted with a small group to get initial input on the performance and inform further investigations.

## **Methodology**

### **Context**

To mimic a staff meeting, the participants met in a classroom at their school site and watched the PTO object projected at the front of the classroom. This is a common practice for summative assessment staff training; however, it is not explicitly stated by SBAC whether the self-paced training modules should be completed individually or as a group (Educational Testing Services [ETS], 2014). Each of the participants also had their own computers to access the Google Forms for the pre and post survey objects.

### **Instructional Process**

After given a quick description of the purpose of the event, the participating teachers were asked to complete the pre survey. The questions are available in Appendix A. The purpose of the pre survey was to identify if the participants have ever completed any of the SBAC training modules, how they feel about online training modules, and if they have any prior knowledge of performance tasks. All the Likert scale questions were written using the “Examples of Likert Scale Descriptors” table from Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009, p. 281).

Next, the participants were asked to read the description of the PTO on the SBAC training module website. This description includes a general overview of the objectives and identifies two frequently used terms that the participants should know before they begin the

PTO. When the participants were ready the PTO was then started on the projection screen at the front of the classroom.

Finally the participants complete the post survey. The post survey had four parts: usability, content, impression, and recommendations. All questions and rubrics are available in Appendix A. The usability portion of the survey are Likert scale questions to determine the effectiveness of the navigation of the training module. Though the participants did not control the training module itself, there is a section of the object that is devoted to the buttons and objects used for navigation; presumed to be used in an individual setting.

The content portion of the survey is a series of open ended question to evaluate if the participants met the objectives of the training module. The open ended questions were scored by rubrics, based on a low level of understanding of Bloom's Taxonomy. Specifically, the rubrics check to see if the participants were able to identify or describe the key elements of the content. Format, spelling, and grammar were not part of the rubric. Impressions of the effectiveness of the training module are represented in the third section of the post survey. This is used to check if the participants felt that the training module met the objectives or improved their understanding of the content. Recommendations are the 4<sup>th</sup> and final section of the survey and give the participants to make any comments on the training module that may not have been included in the survey questions.

### **Processing Data**

The responses collected by Google Forms was keyed for the Likert scale questions and the Yes/No questions. The open ended questions that measure the understanding of the content was graded according to the rubrics. The open ended questions that are more descriptive of the

participant's impressions were left as text responses. The participants' names were replaced with letter codes to provide anonymity.

## **Results**

### **Entry Conditions**

The classroom that was used for the evaluation was in the process of having its floors cleaned and waxed; specifically, the tables, chairs and equipment was stacked at the front of the class. This likely reduced the comfort and familiarity of the room. However, the participants did voice any complaints of the condition of the room.

### **Instruction**

Participants asked for clarification on some of the pre survey items, specifically if they had participated in an of the other SBAC training modules. They had determined that there was a staff meeting in preparation of the SBAC Field Tests that used one of the other training modules from the same source as the PTO. Another question that confused a participant dealt with describing the performance task; this participant thought the question was referring to the classroom activity portion of the performance task. This task was expected to take less than five minutes; the expectation was met.

There were no technical problems with watching the training module, its runtime is slightly over 11 minutes, and there was no significance in the time it took to complete this portion of the activity. While the training module was playing, all the participants seemed to be distracted at some point. One of the participants admitted that they had spaced out thinking about one of the aspects of the content. Another used a smart phone to search up some aspect of the

content for clarification. These were revealed during spontaneous conversation after the end of the training module.

There were few questions for clarification during the post survey; specifically, the confusion came from the questions about the navigation of the module. The participants decided that they question was evaluating if they could start the training module in staff training situation. Approximately 30 minutes was the expected duration of the post survey, and all participants were able to complete it in less time.

### **Outcomes**

As part of the pre survey, the participants were asked if they had ever completed the PTO training module. The one teacher who had actually administered the performance task marked that they had not completed the PTO training module, but the other participants identified that they had completed this training module before. This question was asked before they say any element of the training module, so it is possible that the participants had misidentified the training module they had previously participated in. This question should be internally validated on future evaluations of this nature.

The participants were asked in the pre survey if they could identify why SBAC considers the performance task important. This was to give the opportunity for the participant to explain what they knew about the performance task going in, but it was measure against the training modules content. The participants shared their views of the importance of the performance task but there was little correlation to the content of the training module. This is internally validated on the post survey; the participants again used their prior knowledge to respond to a similar question instead of using the content of the training module.

The confusion of the first question regarding navigation caused some discrepancy with the responses. Participants felt that they could navigate the training module successfully, but the navigation portion of the training was only considered somewhat useful, along with the table of contents menu. These questions are would likely be more useful if another small group were to participate in the training as an individual instead of mimicking a staff meeting.

Results from the content based questions show that the participants were not able to demonstrate the instructional content of the training module. After grading the open ended questions no student received more than 9 of the 17 points available, see figure 3 in Appendix B. This evidence shows that participants were not able to meet the objectives of the lesson. Their impressions indicated that the training module did not seem to be particularly effective at meeting the objectives. For example, the participants noted only neutral or negative effectiveness when it can to the instruction covering the purpose of the classroom activity.

Another aspect of the content was with the pre training task of reading the directions on the training module website; specifically, the terms multiple standards and domains. Although the training designers identified these terms as important on the webpage the term multiple standards was not used in the training, and the domains term was only used once. Two of the participants incorrectly marked that they used the term multiple standards during the lesson. The question was worded poorly however, responses would likely change if the phrasing was changed.

### **Recommendations**

Because this small group evaluation showed low performance in meeting the objectives of the training the instruction action should be taken to improve the retention of the instructional



content. The recommendations from two of the participants point toward preferring to use the training module as group activity to give opportunity for group discussion of the content. A way that this could be accomplished is by adding slides that pause the presentation and have questions to guide a conversation among the participants. One of the participants expressed a desire for more multiple choice questions in the survey, referring to the content items. A similar bit of advice might be useful for the design of this product if there is an intent for it to be used individually.

Participants also found the animated character to be distracting. In a discussion the participants noted that the pace was acceptable, but also felt the product could have been improved with more graphical elements that highlighted the important content of the slide. These items could be included in additional small group evaluations. To better understand the effectiveness of the lesson in the staff development environment it is suggested that a revised process and surveys are used with a larger group. Also, to effectively evaluate the navigational portion of the lesson, individuals should be given the opportunity to complete the training module on their own.

### **Summary**

The PTO training module was not effective in meeting its learning objectives in the setting of a staff training. Different contextual settings should be tested with the product to evaluate the training module's effectiveness. Also, updating the content of the lesson to include discussion prompting questions for small groups or multiple choice questions for the individual learner should be added. These additions may give the users the opportunity to check their understanding of the objectives.

### References

- Educational Testing Services. (2014). *Smarter balanced assessment consortium: California online field test administration manual*. Concord, CA: Authors.
- Russ-Eft, D., Preskill, H. (2009) *Evaluation in organizations: A systematic approach to enhancing learning, performance, and change*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. (2014). *Performance task overview*. [Articulate Storyline object]. Retrieved from: <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/ca/field-test-ca/resources/#training>

### Appendix A – Assessment Items

#### Pre Survey

1. Have you ever administered a Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) performance task?
  - a. Yes/NO
2. Have you ever administered the SBAC computer assisted non-performance task items?
  - a. Yes/No
3. Have you ever participated in an online SBAC training module?
  - a. Yes/No
4. Have you ever participated in the online SBAC training module for performance tasks?
  - a. Yes/No

5. What level of experience do you have with online training modules?
  - a. No Experience/Little Experience/Some Experience/Lots of Experience
6. To what extent do you feel you can describe the parts of a SBAC performance task?
  - a. Not at all/To a Little Extent/To Some Extent/To a Great Extent/To a Very Great Extent
7. What subject do you teach? Choose all that apply.
  - a. English Language Arts Literacy/Mathematics/Science/Social Science/Electives
8. Briefly describe why SBAC considers the performance task important.
  - a. Open Ended

### **Post Survey**

#### **Usability.**

1. How do you rate your ability to navigate this training module?
  - a. Not Successfully/Somewhat Successfully/Successfully/ Very Successfully/Extremely Successfully
2. How do you rate the usefulness of the Navigation portion of the training?
  - a. Not Useful /Somewhat Useful / Useful / Very Useful /Extremely Useful
3. How would you rate the usefulness of the table of contents menu?
  - a. Not Useful /Somewhat Useful / Useful / Very Useful /Extremely Useful

#### **Content.**

4. Identify the objectives of this training module.
  - a. Open Ended

5. Is the performance task required for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortiums (SBAC) summative assessment?
  - a. Yes/No
6. What is the intent of the performance task?
  - a. Open Ended
7. Why does SBAC consider the performance task important?
  - a. Open Ended
8. Which subjects would you be likely to administer the performance task for?
  - a. English Language Arts and Literacy/Mathematics/None/Other
9. What are the main parts of the performance task?
  - a. Open Ended
10. What parts of a performance task, if any, are not graded?
  - a. Short response
11. What, specifically, are the parts of the English Language Arts Literacy performance task?
  - a. Open Ended
12. What, specifically, are the parts of the Mathematics performance task?
  - a. Open Ended
13. When can the performance task be administered?
  - a. Open Ended
14. When does SBAC recommend administering the performance task?
  - a. Open Ended
15. Does SBAC recommend administering the performance task before or after the computer assisted non-performance items?

- a. Before/After
16. What other resources would you need to administer the performance task?
- a. Open Ended

**Impressions of the Training Module.**

17. Was the training module effective at meeting its goals?
- a. Very Ineffective/Ineffective/Neither Effective nor Ineffective/Effective/Very Effective
18. Was the training module effective at providing an overview of what a performance task is?
- a. Very Ineffective/Ineffective/Neither Effective nor Ineffective/Effective/Very Effective
19. Was the training module effective at providing and overview of the purpose of the classroom activity?
- a. Very Ineffective/Ineffective/Neither Effective nor Ineffective/Effective/Very Effective
20. Was the training module effective in improving your ability to describe the parts of the performance task?
- a. Very Ineffective/Ineffective/Neither Effective nor Ineffective/Effective/Very Effective
21. Did you need to know the term “multiple standards” in the training module?
- a. Yes/No
22. Did you need to know the term “domains” in the training module?
- a. Yes/No

23. Would completing the training module individually be more effective? Why?

a. Open Ended

24. Would you complete the training module on your own time?

a. Yes/No

**Recommendations.**

25. What recommendations would you make to the authors of the training module?

a. Open Ended

26. What recommendations would you make to the survey creator?

a. Open Ended

27. What questions were not asked that you'd like to add to a future version of the survey?

a. Open Ended

**Rubrics for Open Ended Assessment Items**

All Likert scales are graded with 0 for lowest and 3 or 4 for the highest, as needed from the number of options. Yes/No questions are 1/0 respectively.

**Pre Survey.**

8. 2 – Able to describe the purpose of the performance task. 1 – Able to identify some of the purpose of the performance task. 0 – Not able to describe the purpose of the performance task.

**Post Survey.**

4. 2 – Able to identify all objectives of the training module. 1- Able to identify 2 of the objectives. 0- identified less than two of the training objectives.

6. 2 – Able to identify all the points to describe the intent. 1 – Able to identify half of the points to describe the intent. 0 - Able to identify less than half of the points to describe the intent.

7. 2 - Able to identify all the reasons of importance. 1 – Able to identify half of the reasons of importance. 0 - Able to identify less than half of the reasons.

8 1 – ELA 0 - Math

9. 2 – Identify both parts of the performance task. 1 – Able to identify 1 part of the performance task. 0 – Not able to identify the parts of the performance task.

10. 1 – classroom activity. 0 – incorrect answer.

11. 2 – Identify all parts of the ELA performance task. 1 – Able to identify half of the parts of the ELA performance task. 0 – Not able to identify the parts of the ELA performance task.

12. 2 – Identify all parts of the Math performance task. 1 – Able to identify half of the parts of the Math performance task. 0 – Not able to identify the parts of the Math performance task.

13. 1 – Within 10 days from the beginning of the administration. 0- any other answer.

14. 1 – After the non-performance task items. 0 – any other answer.

15. 1 – After 0 – Before3

16. 2 – Test administration manual and [smarterbalance.org](http://smarterbalance.org) 1 – only one of the two resources. 0- neither of the resources.

**Appendix B – Data**

Pre Survey Question #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Participant A	1	1	1	0	2	2	Social Science	0
Participant B	0	0	1	1	2	2	English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Electives	1
Participant C	0	0	1	1	1	1	Social Science, Electives	0

Fig. 1 Results of Pre Survey

Post Survey Question #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Participant A	4	2	2	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	3	2	1	1	1
Participant B	4	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	3	2	2	3	0	0
Participant C	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	1	1
Post Survey	23						24		25						26				27			
Participant A	No, because it helps to have the testing coordinator there to ask questions of.						1		Less distractions, such as the animated man, and more clearly defined goals and visual headings to help focus viewers.						Some questions seemed redundant.				None			
Participant B	No - it allows for discussion and clarification with "others" who viewed it at the same time.						0		A real person instead of the animated person						A bit long, but it all seems relevant				None			
Participant C	Yes, I want to know what are in each of the 3 different tasks.						1		Tell us what is in each of the tasks.						Go over the parts the parts of each of the math and English in the performance test, and the domains and multiple areas.				More multiple choice questions.			

Fig. 2 Results of Post Survey



Scores on Content Based Items		
Participant A	9	53%
Participant B	6	35%
Participant C	9	53%
Possible	17	

Fig. 3 Content Based Item Scores