

Baseline Data and Preparedness Levels Toolkit for Teachers

Baseline data are sources of data with items and/or tasks that demonstrate students' mastery of prerequisite standards, and thereby indicate and differentiate students' levels of preparedness for the course. This data should be used to plan instruction for the course.

RESOURCES INCLUDED IN THIS TOOLKIT:

[What is Preparedness?](#)

[General Guidelines for Preparedness Level Categorization](#)

[General Guidelines for Baseline Data](#)

[Baseline Data Essential Questions](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

WHAT IS PREPAREDNESS?

Preparedness is a student's readiness to immediately begin to engage in beginning-of-year, grade level material. It is an overall understanding of a student's mastery of prerequisite standards, knowledge, and skills that are necessary to be successful in mastering the content and skills of the current course.

Preparedness is different from the final expectation levels. Preparedness is the measure of proficiency of prerequisite standards, knowledge, and skills. Expectation levels are the measure of proficiency in the standards, knowledge, and skills that will be taught in the course.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PREPAREDNESS LEVEL CATEGORIZATION

Students should be categorized based on the following preparedness levels:

- **Significantly Underprepared:** Students who enter the course/grade with particularly minimal mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills for the course/grade.
- **Underprepared:** Students who enter the course/grade with minimal mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills for the course/grade.
- **Somewhat Prepared:** Students who enter the course/grade has some, but not all, prerequisite knowledge and skills for the course/grade
- **Prepared:** Students who enter the course/grade with **sufficient prerequisite knowledge and skills** for the course/grade. Students are academically prepared to engage in the content area of the SLO.
- **Ahead:** Students who enter the course/grade with a **deep command** of the prerequisite knowledge and skills for the course/grade. These students are able to apply previous learning to a variety of contexts.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR BASELINE DATA

There should be at least two, and preferably three or more, baseline data sources with items and/or tasks that indicate students' preparedness levels for the course. Baseline data sources generally fall into four types:

- Previous year command/expectation levels in natural prerequisite courses
- Previous year state CMAS assessments, if applicable
- Other, previous year end-of-course assessments (includes interims/course assessments, SCAN and ANet assessments, ACCESS data, Read Act assessments, etc.)
- Assessments from the current year that measure the prerequisite skills and knowledge students need in order to be successful in the current course

Some additional considerations

- At least one baseline data point should be from the beginning of the course.
- Data in other languages should be considered in addition to baseline data in English if available and appropriate.
- Since preparedness is a measure of the necessary prerequisite knowledge and skills, pre-tests that assess material that will be taught in the current course – but is material students are not yet expected to know – are of limited usefulness in determining preparedness (these may have instructional benefit in identifying areas in which students are already proficient and so those concepts do not need as much focus).
- Students' language proficiency levels should be identified and scores should be used to ensure students' true preparedness levels, as they relate to the objective statement, are identified.
- Baseline data should be collected as close to the beginning of the course as possible.
- Data sources should be designed/selected collaboratively and scored using a common scoring guide/rubric.*
- There should be strong, clear, and thorough rationale that explain how varying levels of student performance on the chosen baseline data points demonstrate students' preparedness for the course and differentiate amongst the five preparedness levels.

**Data sources do not have to be designed or selected collaboratively if teachers do not have sufficient opportunity to collaborate with subject matter peers. For teachers for whom this is an issue, they should reach out to a TEC, TL, or other qualified expert when designing and/or selecting assessments.*

BASELINE DATA ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How **prepared** are my students to learn the standards, knowledge, content and skills of the course?

Baseline Data Guiding Questions:

- What are some prerequisite skills or understandings students might need for this course?
- How might we make decisions about which data sources to look at for baseline information?
 - What data points do we *already* have that would give us information about how prepared students are for this course?
 - Are there sources that take into consideration language proficiency or native language?
 - What *additional data* might we need to make a decision about a student's level of preparedness?
- What evidence (assessments, tasks, student work, etc.) could we use for a Baseline on this Objective?
 - *Why* would we use that assessment?
 - How aligned is that assessment?
 - How recent is that assessment?
 - Are there considerations for language proficiency or native language?
 - What assessments should "weigh more"? Why?

Questions for *Using* Baseline Data Information (i.e. "What's next?")

- What does this data tell me about my students?
- How might I use this information to adjust my instruction?
 - Are there prerequisite skills that groups of my students are missing?
 - How might I address those skills while continuing to move forward with instruction (Scope and Sequence)?
 - How might I differentiate my instruction and assessment by language proficiency or native language as I plan? Are there language considerations for planning my formative assessments?
- **[Ongoing]** What would I expect my students to be able to do in regard to the Objective Statement at this point in the year?
 - What might I see in my classroom if students are progressing towards the Objective?
 - What might I hear?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are available on the [ARE SLO](#) website and provide additional information regarding preparedness levels and the baseline data used to determine them.

- Baseline data protocol
 - Walks teachers and schools through determining a process to determine preparedness levels
- Baseline data and preparedness turnkey
 - A presentation that introduces preparedness and baseline data and can initiate a discussion for schools or data teams on what they will determine students' preparedness levels
- Possible sources of baseline data
 - Content specialists from many content areas have provided examples of what might be used to determine preparedness levels
- Finding previous year data in Schoolnet and Illuminate
 - There are resources with click paths and screenshots that describe how to find previous year student data in both Schoolnet and Illuminate