

## Michigan Performance Assessment Cadre (MiPAC) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Overview of Competency-Based Education and Assessment (CBE)

**Q: What is competency-based learning and assessment?**

**A:** The essence of competency-based learning is the recognition that students differ in the pace of their learning, with some ready for advanced learning before other students. Assessment, particularly performance assessments, are used to verify student achievement and readiness for more advanced learning.

**Q: How might competency-based learning and assessment be implemented?**

**A:** Competency-based education can be implemented in a variety of ways: district- or school-wide, at various grade levels, or by individual teachers. At any of these levels, CBE might be used with all students or only a subset of them.

The pool of MiPAC assessments on MiPAC.net supports all these implementation options. MiPAC assessments are available for English language arts and mathematics. More information about the use of CBE and how MiPAC assessments can support this effort is available on MiPAC.net.

**Q: How can MiPAC performance assessments promote competency-based learning?**

**A:** Teachers have choices when it comes to how to best support individual student learning with the MiPAC assessments. One potential use is “pre-assessment” prior to instruction. The assessments may also be used after instruction is completed, to determine whether students have achieved mastery and are ready for more advanced instruction and learning.

### Overview of the MiPAC Performance Assessments

**Q: Who created the MiPAC performance assessments?**

**A:** The Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC) created the MiPAC assessments with support from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). More than 100 Michigan educators created and piloted the assessments.

**Q: What do the MiPAC performance assessments measure?**

**A:** The MiPAC assessments measure students’ level of mastery of the higher order thinking and complex skills described in Michigan’s Model Competencies in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, which are posted on MiPAC.net.

**Q: In what disciplines and grades are MiPAC performance assessments available?**

**A:** Currently, there are MiPAC assessments for English language arts at grades 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12, as well as for mathematics at grades 3-5 and 6-8.

**Q: Do the MiPAC performance assessments assess all of Michigan’s Model Competencies in ELA and mathematics?**

**A:** No. At this time, only a portion of the Big Ideas and Competencies are covered in the MiPAC assessments. However, we plan to continue to expand the catalog of assessments. Teachers can search online catalogs in ELA and math on MiPAC.net to find items suitable to their needs.

**Q: What are the key features of the MiPAC performance assessments?**

**A:** Each MiPAC performance assessment has a Teacher Booklet that includes an overview of the assessment, detailed administration directions, and scoring rubrics for both the teacher and the student. A corresponding Student Booklet contains administration directions, worksheets, and scoring rubric(s) specific to the assessment. The directions are standardized so that multiple teachers—at the same or different sites—can administer the performance assessments in the same way.

**Q: Are these assessments required by the Michigan Department of Education?**

**A:** No. These assessments were commissioned by MDE but are available for voluntary use by Michigan teachers at no cost.

**Q: Can a teacher revise a MiPAC assessment to better suit their student needs?**

**A:** Yes, a teacher can download the assessment booklets (for teacher and students) and revise them as needed for their classroom. If assessments are revised, they cannot be scored collaboratively using MI-CSS software. More about this software is explained below.

**Q: What is the primary use of performance assessments?**

**A:** Performance assessments are especially useful when educators want learners to demonstrate their higher order thinking and complex skills.

## Selecting MiPAC Assessments

**Q: How can teachers review available assessments to determine which might fit with their planned instruction?**

**A:** MiPAC assessments can be explored in two ways:

- Download the item descriptions (PDF) from MiPAC.net to explore descriptions of the assessments for each discipline (ELA or mathematics) in one comprehensive document.
- Explore the searchable catalogs for ELA and math on MiPAC.net. Filters allow you to search by key words, grade level, and Big Ideas and Competencies.

Both methods permit educators to review a description of each MiPAC assessment as well as the amount of classroom time needed to administer it. The online catalog also allows you to download and preview the Teacher Booklets and Student Booklets.

## Using MiPAC Assessments

**Q: How much class time is needed to administer each MiPAC assessment?**

**A:** The amount of time and/or class sessions required to administer each assessment is specified in each assessment, as well as in the item description document and in the searchable online catalogs for ELA and math on MiPAC.net. Most of the ELA and some of the mathematics MiPAC assessments require multiple class periods for administration.

## Scoring Student Responses to the MiPAC Assessments

### **Q: How might teachers score student responses to the MiPAC assessments?**

**A:** Student responses can be hand-scored or scored collaboratively. If only one or two teachers choose to use a MiPAC assessment, or multiple teachers each choose different assessments, it may be more expeditious for teachers to hand-score student responses using the rubrics provided in the assessments. If multiple teachers choose to use the same MiPAC assessment(s), scoring student responses using Michigan Collaborative Scoring System (MI-CSS) software could be advantageous. More about this tool is provided below.

### **Q: What is collaborative scoring?**

**A:** Collaborative scoring means two or more teachers sharing the scoring of student responses from the same MiPAC assessments from their classrooms. MI-CSS is a software tool created by the MDE and the MAC to support collaborative scoring. Follow this link to view an informational video about the MI-CSS (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tleMIVj8obA>).

### **Q: What are the advantages of collaborative scoring?**

**A:** When teachers score responses from students of other teachers, it can help the teachers see how other teachers taught the skills being measured and the levels of performance the students achieved. The latter can help teachers to create “common standards” for what constitutes mastery. This internalized view of mastery performance can guide teachers in both future instruction and assessment in their classrooms. This [Learning Point](https://qr.link/XOs4gu) (<https://qr.link/XOs4gu>) describes the general purpose and benefits of collaborative scoring.

### **Q: When might MI-CSS be used to score student responses to the MiPAC assessments?**

**A:** MI-CSS collaborative scoring software is most useful when several teachers choose to use the same assessment or are interested in looking at student performance on a particular assessment. These teachers may be in the same school, same district, or even working in different school districts.

If a teacher has selected and used a MiPAC assessment on their own, MI-CSS won't be useful for scoring student responses since there are no colleagues with whom to “collaboratively score” student work.

### **Q: How might the MI-CSS software be used to score student responses to MiPAC assessments?**

**A:** MI-CSS permits educators to upload student responses from the MiPAC assessments and work together with colleagues to evaluate them. Such collaborative scoring can take place virtually or in-person, with the software guiding the process (first scoring by the teacher who assigned the assessment; second scoring by a colleague in the same discipline and grade range; and resolution scoring to resolve differences between first and second scorers). Specific directions on how to use MI-CSS are included in the MiPAC Administration Manual on MiPAC.net.

## Using MiPAC Assessment Information to Improve Learning and Instruction

### **Q: How can MiPAC assessment results inform a teacher's next steps?**

**A:** Students who do poorly on the assessments need instructional support and additional learning opportunities from their teacher(s). Students who do well on the assessments should be ready for more advanced instruction and learning.