

Handout 3.2. Sources of Data for Informing Growth Targets

Setting Growth Targets Without Pre-assessments

Sources of Data to Inform Targets

Surveys. A survey may be helpful to gauge if students have had exposure to course-related information outside of school. This information can help ensure you have a complete picture of your students when you set your growth targets.

Interim Assessments (e.g. Unit tests) Teachers may need to use assessments from early in the year, such as a unit test, to project reasonable growth targets for the end of the year. An early course assessment or interim assessment may have a very limited scope in terms of content coverage, so it should be used in conjunction with other student data in order to inform growth targets on the final assessment.

Prior-year student performance in the course. In some cases, teachers may be able to use prior-year scores from other students who took the course in question as a means of estimating appropriate growth targets in the current year.

Prior student performance in related subjects. Prior student performance in related subjects may help to determine what skills or content knowledge students bring into the course, and therefore help the teacher to anticipate what growth is appropriate for the student.

GPA. Whenever possible, subject-specific GPA should be used and used in conjunction with other types of information. In some rare cases where other data are not available, a student's overall GPA may be used to help estimate performance. For example, if an analysis of historical data shows that students who have a GPA of 3.5 usually score 90 or higher on the end-of-course exam in question, it may be reasonable to set a growth target for current students based in part on their GPA.

Setting Growth Targets With Pre-assessments

Pre-assessments. Where appropriate, the pre-assessment should mirror the post assessment in terms of the content and skill attainment tested, but the two test forms should not be identical. Other sources of data such as those mentioned above should still be consulted if available to base growth targets on multiple sources of information. *When the assessments are similar in scope and difficulty*, the maintenance of baseline scores does not demonstrate growth.