The Indiana Academic Standards define what students need to know, understand, and be able to do. Educators use standards as a basis for lesson planning. Review the standards that students expect to master in the next unit and ensure that instruction, class activities, and formative assessments are aligned to those standards.

In creating ILEARN’s test blueprint, educators defined essential content from Indiana’s Academic Standards and assigned priority to each standard and reporting category. Test blueprints contain the standards associated with each reporting category, standard and reporting category item allocations and percentages, and the range of total items possible on the assessment. Educators can use the blueprint to prioritize instructional content. Consider which areas are prioritized in the blueprint when determining approximately how much time to spend on each major concept in the next unit. On teacher-created assessments, educators decide what to test and how to prioritize different concepts on the test.

In developing the item specifications, Indiana’s educators determined the content limits, evidence statements, item types, and cognitive complexity that are appropriate for measuring each standard. Item specifications provide guidance to item writers and reviewers to ensure that items are aligned to Indiana’s Academic Standards. The item specifications also serve as a resource to help educators understand the types of items and tasks that their students will encounter on the ILEARN assessments. Educators can use item specifications to guide class assignments and discussions. When assigning projects or creating formative assessments, think about how students will provide evidence of mastery. Vary the cognitive complexity of different questions and tasks, and consider any content restraints based on the unit of study.

Indiana educators review items from licensed banks to ensure that test items are aligned to Indiana’s Academic Standards. Educators can audit their own items when creating classroom assessments. When creating a quiz from a set of items provided in a curriculum, only include those items that are aligned to the standards and to the objectives of the lesson or unit.
Professional item writers use item specifications to create items that are aligned to and assess particular standards and reporting categories.

Educators can review items that have been released. After the first year of ILEARN administration, educators can use released items to better understand how certain standards are assessed and as a starting point when creating questions for classroom assessments that are aligned to Indiana standards.

Data review is typically led by educational measurement experts who work with Indiana educators to analyze item data from the field test. The objective is to determine if test items appropriately measure student mastery of the standard(s).

On teacher-created assessments, educators may want to look at how the items are functioning. When an educator administers a classroom assessment, he or she may want to consider whether the items are functioning as intended. If a large percentage of students respond incorrectly to the same item, it could mean that the students need reteaching, or it is possible that there is an issue with the item.

Trained Indiana educators apply well-defined rubrics to score open-ended test items.

Educators can apply knowledge and understanding of the rubrics and hand-scoring criteria to inform their instruction of the standards. Consider how student responses on the ILEARN assessment will be scored when determining whether your students have satisfactorily mastered a particular standard.

During standard-setting, educational measurement experts and Indiana educators will review impact data to determine where to set proficiency cut scores for each performance level. During standard-setting, Indiana educators review impact data and Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) to determine where to set proficiency cut scores for each performance level.

Educators can use the PLDs and proficiency cut scores in the classroom. Educators can consider the PLDs for a specific grade level and content area, along with other data, when planning instruction and promoting student progress from one proficiency level to the next.