



RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

Year-End Model Use of Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessments: 2018–2019

AUTHORS: Jennifer Kobrin and Amy K. Clark

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A small percentage of students from Year-End model states participated in the Dynamic Learning Maps optional instructionally embedded assessments in 2018-2019.
- These students showed similar performance as all Year-End model students.
- The data show that teachers participating in instructionally embedded assessments took advantage of flexible delivery options.

TEACHER SELECTIONS

The DLM Consortium designed the instructionally embedded assessments to be *flexibly delivered*.

Teachers make decisions regarding when and how often students are assessed based on their individual academic goals. Ideally, teachers assess their students throughout the instructionally embedded assessment window following instruction.

The instructionally embedded assessment window spanned 161 days in 2018–2019 (September to February, including weekends). The majority of students (67%) completed all assessments in five days or fewer (i.e., all instructionally embedded assessments were completed in a single week). Teachers administered the assessments throughout the instructionally embedded assessment window, but most commonly administered assessments just prior to winter break and again in the last few weeks of the testing window.

BACKGROUND

Dynamic Learning Maps[®] (DLM[®]) alternate assessments measure the knowledge, skills, and understandings of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities relative to grade-level alternate content standards (called Essential Elements). Teachers in states adopting the Year-End assessment model have the *option to participate* in instructionally embedded assessments throughout the year. Instructionally embedded assessments enable teachers to test their students throughout the year to inform their teaching. Teachers using the instructionally embedded assessments create instructional plans and administer assessments for the Essential Elements of their choosing. Short, 3–9 item assessments measure each Essential Element at five levels in English language arts and mathematics, and three levels in science, to provide all students with access to grade-level academic content.

SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATION

During the 2018–2019 academic year, students in seven Year-End model states took at least one instructionally embedded assessment. The table below shows the number and percentage of students, teachers, schools, and districts participating in instructionally embedded assessment in each state based on that state’s total participation in the spring 2019 DLM assessment, along with how many assessments were completed.

State	Students n (%)	Teachers n (%)	Schools n (%)	Districts n (%)	Assessments n (%)
CO	76 (1.5)	18 (1.5)	16 (1.8)	2 (1.7)	126
DE	38 (3.1)	25 (7.9)	17 (14.9)	7 (28.0)	78
IL	19 (0.1)	5 (0.1)	4 (0.2)	4 (0.6)	153
NY	129 (0.6)	92 (1.6)	12 (0.6)	7 (1.0)	505
OK	236 (4.0)	101 (6.7)	68 (6.1)	31 (7.5)	3,739
UT	7 (0.2)	3 (0.4)	3 (0.6)	2 (2.1)	75
WV	8 (0.5)	3 (0.6)	3 (0.8)	3 (5.5)	65

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Prior to administering DLM assessments, teachers complete a First Contact survey for each student. The DLM system uses some of the survey responses to recommend the difficulty level of the assessments to provide an optimal match between a student’s knowledge, skills, and understandings and the test content. Overall, students participating in instructionally embedded assessments had similar characteristics as non-participating Year-End model students. In all three subject areas, the system assigned the majority of students (approximately 69%–76%) to Band 1 and Band 2 from among four Complexity Bands: Foundational (lowest complexity), Band 1, Band 2, and Band 3 (highest complexity).

TEACHER SELECTIONS CONTINUED

Test Administration and Essential Element Selection

Students who participated in the 2018-2019 instructionally embedded assessment window took between 1-187 tests across all three subjects, with a median of three tests each. Teachers assessed between 1-24 students, with most teachers (82%) creating instructional plans and administering tests for three or fewer students. Teachers also determine which and how many Essential Elements to administer to their students. Students in Year-End model states tested on an average of seven Essential Elements, with a range of 1-51 Essential Elements across all three subjects.

Level of Test

When creating instructional plans, teachers select an Essential Element, and the system recommends a level using the student's complexity band. Teachers accepted the DLM system's recommended level 64% of the time. In instances where teachers assigned a level different from the system recommendation, they typically adjusted to the level below the recommended level (12%). Teachers most commonly made adjustments for students who were above the Foundational level (i.e., Complexity Bands 1, 2, or 3).

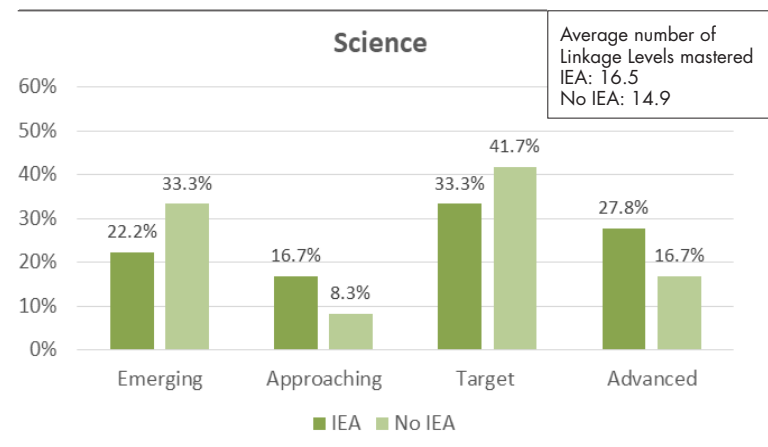
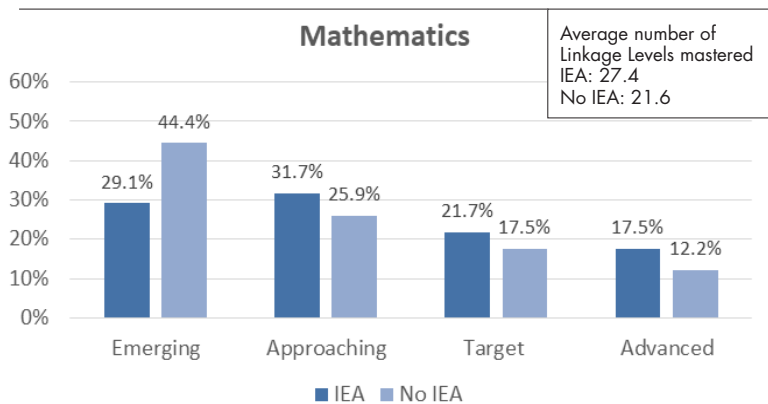
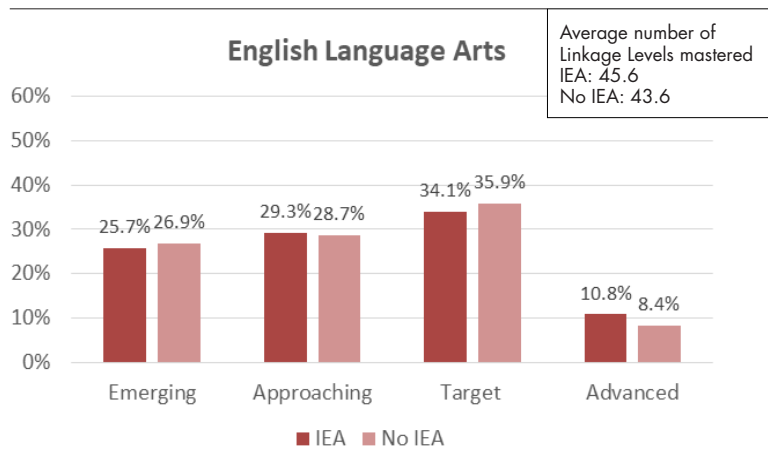
Readministration of Assessments

During instructionally embedded windows, teachers can choose to readminister assessments on the same Essential Elements, either at the same level or a different level. Teachers chose to reassess just under a quarter (24%) of students on an Essential Element multiple times. The majority (87%) assessed on different levels for the same Essential Element. Eleven days was the median amount of time teachers waited between administrations on the same Essential Element.

PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

DLM staff compared performance on the 2019 DLM spring assessment for Year-End model students participating and not participating in instructionally embedded assessments. Staff created a matched sample by randomly selecting a non-participating year-end model student taking at least three tests in the same state, grade, and complexity band as each participating student.

Comparison results show a significant difference in performance levels for students taking and not taking instructionally embedded assessments (IEA) in mathematics, but no differences in English language arts and science.



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