Amplify mCLASS® Beacon™

Reviewer Guide

2015 ELA/ELD California Adoption

Program 1 and Program 2

Amplify.

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Welcome to mCLASS® Beacon™

The tools in mCLASS® Beacon™ help teachers using Amplify ELA: California Edition evaluate students' progress with key reading and writing skills.

This guided walkthrough demonstrates how to select, assign, score, and analyze the Amplify ELA assessments.

Amplify ELA Benchmark Assessments by mCLASS Beacon

Amplify ELA: California Edition includes two reading and writing benchmark assessments designed to help teachers evaluate students' progress with key reading and writing skills.

- Reading Comprehension Assessment: A general reading comprehension assessment for each grade, relating to a wide range of standards
- Writing Assessment: A writing assessment focused on extended responses to two text passages

Teachers can assess students with mCLASS Beacon's web-based platform or with a pencil and a printed assessment (via a downloadable PDF). mCLASS Beacon can report results to schools along with information on individual student performance or class performance. The Amplify Reporting and Analysis Suite can also show district, school, and teacher performance.

Teachers and administrators can compare students' first and second benchmarks to determine whether students are making progress. The assessments also help teachers plan upcoming instruction effectively and adjust priorities and resources.

Reading Comprehension

The reading comprehension assessment shows how well students comprehend text passages that they will read on state summative assessments. Specifically, this assessment shows whether students comprehend text of a certain type and complexity, as expressed by quantitative (Lexile) and qualitative measures. Through the reading comprehension assessments, students become familiar with the range of language and types of questions used in the year-end assessments. Each assessment includes three types of authentic text from the 6 to 8 Lexile band (fiction, narrative nonfiction, and informational nonfiction), and includes one short constructed-response question and one extended constructed-response question.

Writing Assessment

The writing assessments show student's proficiency on the type of writing tasks they will encounter on annual state summative assessments. Each writing assessment includes one extended constructed-response question focused on two nonfiction text passages, in order to assess students' ability to respond to and analyze text. This assessment tests whether students can write with a clear focus, developed evidence, logical structure, and control over conventions — skills emphasized by Amplify lessons and evaluated by summative state assessments. Through the writing assessments, students become familiar with the range of texts and types of questions used in the year-end assessments.

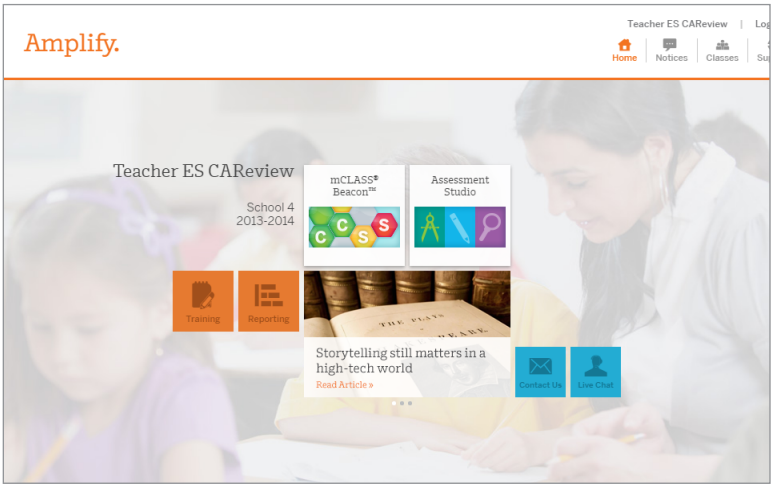
Select and Assign an Assessment

We set up a demonstration district with sample assessments. This section walks you through the process to assign assessments to students.

To access a Beacon demo account created specifically for the Reviewers of Amplify ELA: California Edition:

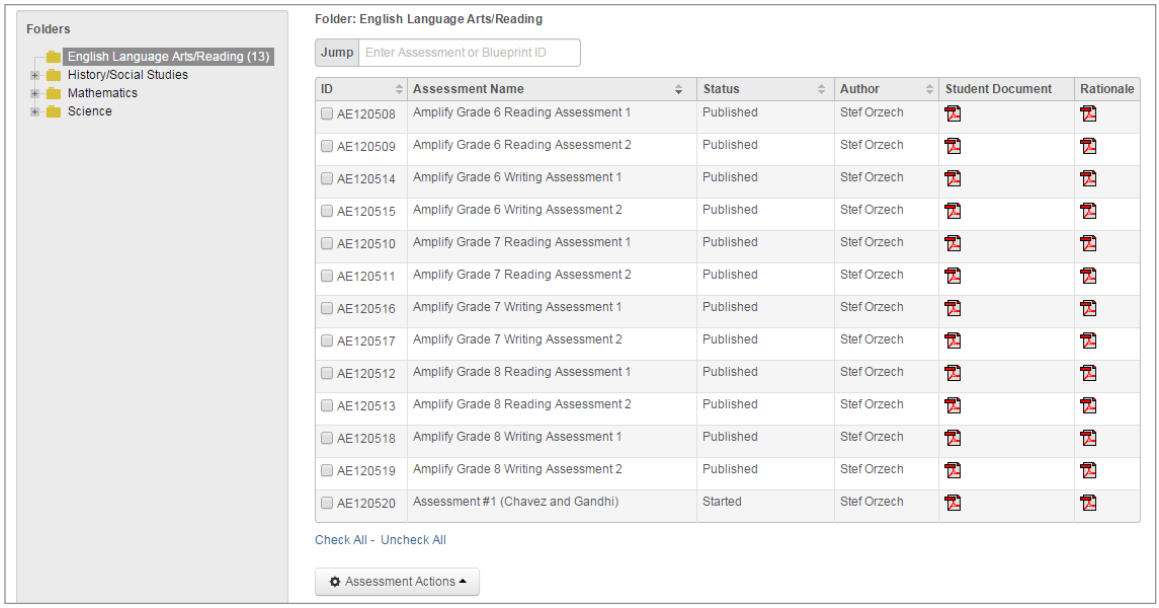
1. Click or tap the **mCLASS Beacon** icon.

2. Log in with the user name **tcareview** the password **1234**.

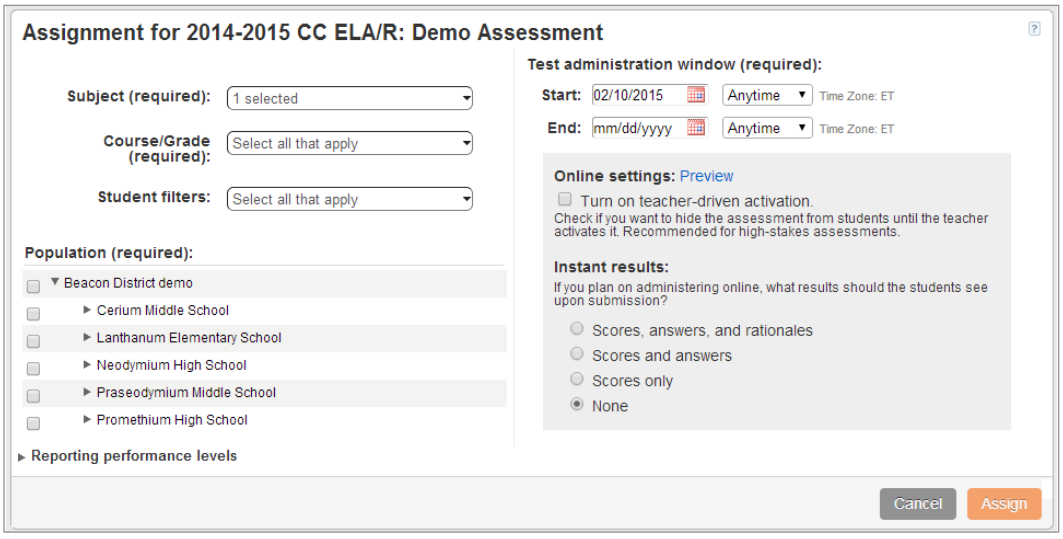


3. On the Amplify home page, you can access both Beacon and the Assessment Studio.
   - **Assessment Studio** lets you select and assign assessments.
   - **Beacon** lets you access the Matrix report, Learning Map, and teacher scoring tool.

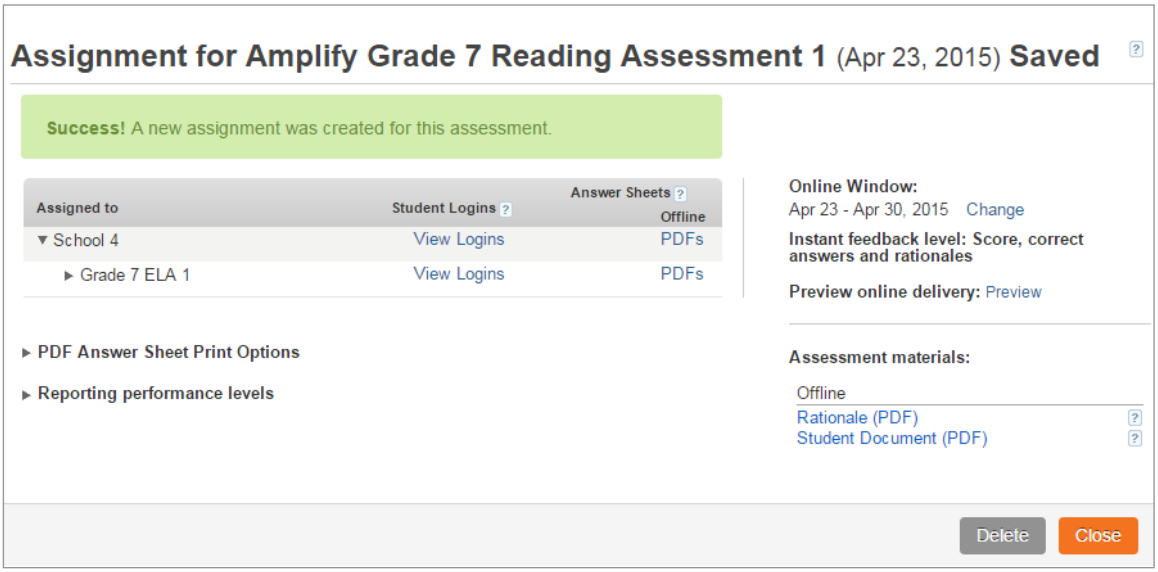
4. To select and assign an assessment, click **Assessment Studio**.



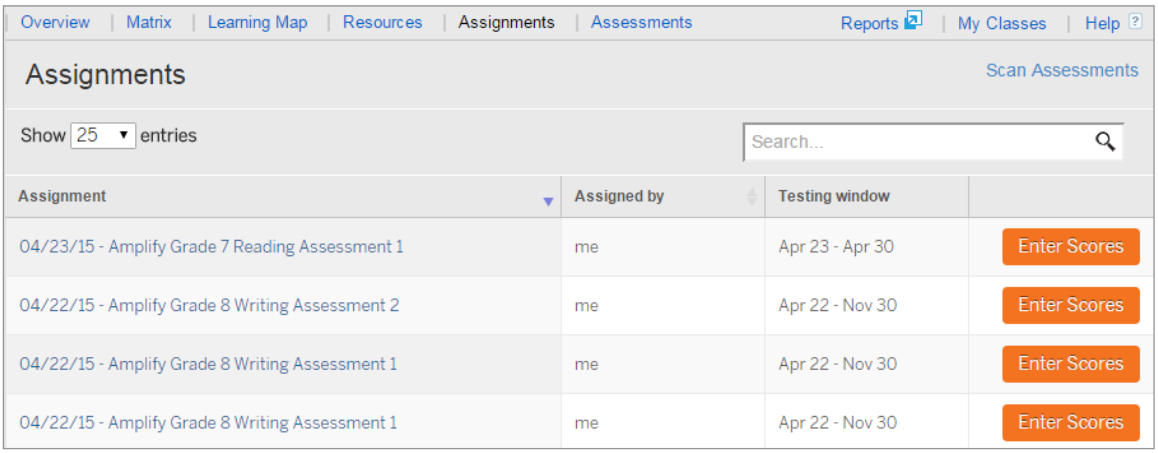
5. In the left panel, browse the available folders to locate an assessment.
6. Check the box in the ID column to select an assessment.
7. Scroll down and click **Assessment Actions**, and then select **Assign to Students**. For offline-only assessments, you can only choose **Download**.
8. In the next window, choose delivery options for your assessment. Select the subject, population to receive the assessment, test administration window, and if you want students to see results after completing the assessment. Click the help icon (?) for more information.



9. Click **Assign**. A new window opens that lets you view, print, and manage assessment materials.



10. Click **Close**, then click **Assignments** in the navigation menu.
11. Your new assignment displays at the top of the list.

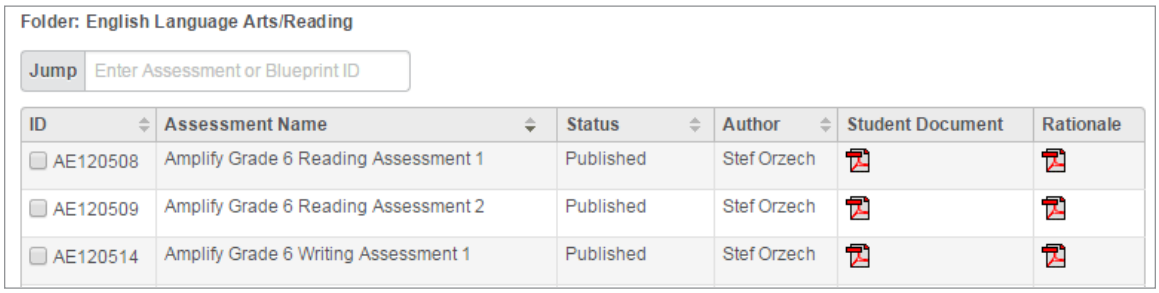


View Item Answers

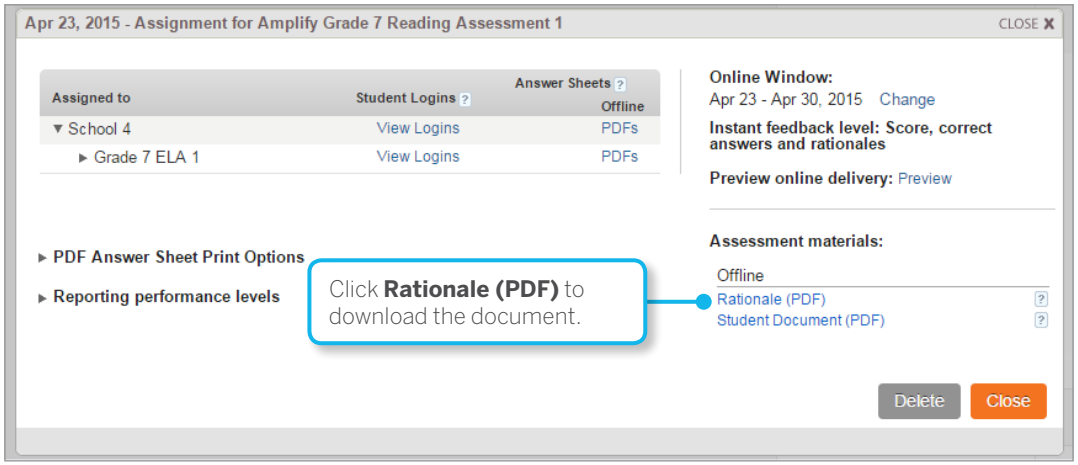
The Rationale document is the test booklet for teachers and academic staff, and contains all test questions and answers. It includes items, item-level analysis, standards, standard descriptions, Depth of Knowledge level information, correct answers, rationales, and scoring rubrics for constructed-response items.

The Rationale document is available from both the locker in Assessment Studio and the Assignment tab in Beacon.

In Assessment Studio, click the PDF icon ( ) in the Rationale column to download the Teacher Rationale document.



In Beacon, open the Assignments tab, and click the name of an assessment to open the assignment window. In the assessment materials section, click **Rationale (PDF)** to download the Teacher Rationale document.



Rationale Sample Page

The following is a sample from a Rationale document.

Rationale: Amplify Grade 7 Reading Assessment 1

Question #7 (E233597) Passage: Nsue and the Honeyguide (E15767) **What are the MOST important elements that shape the plot of this story? Choose the THREE answers that apply.** **A.** Everyone wants Nsue to bring meat to the festival. **B.** Everyone must contribute something to the festival. **C.** Nsue does not like to kill animals. **D.** Nsue's father wants him to be a hunter. **E.** Nsue decides to follow the honeyguide bird. **F.** Nsue's friends tease him too much.	**LA.7.RL.3 > DOK 2** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot). **Answer Choice Rationales** **A.** Although this expectation may be implied, the statement is not supported by the text. **B. Correct: The text explains that everyone contributes to the Festival of the New Moon, and Nsue must find something he can bring.** **C. Correct: This is a very important element because it establishes Nsue's problem of what to bring to the festival.** **D.** On the contrary, his father says that not everyone is born to be a hunter. **E. Correct: This is a critical element of the story that leads to a satisfactory resolution.** **F.** Although this is true it is not an element that critically affects the plot of the story, however, it does help us understand Nsue's situation.
Question #8 (E233975) Passage: Nsue and the Honeyguide (E15767) **Explain why the festival is important to Nsue. Give an example from the text to support your explanation.**	**LA.7.RL.2 > DOK 2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. **2 Point Response:** The student demonstrates a sufficient understanding of the text by explaining why the festival is important to Nsue, and giving an example. ● Nsue believes he has nothing to contribute to his community because he does not want to be a hunter; ● Those who could hunt animals would make their contributions to the Feast of the New Moon, and Nsue knows he won't be among them; ● Nsue feels unhappy that he does not know his role in the group; ● With luck and ingenuity, Nsue is able to find a way to contribute to the festival by bringing honey; ● The text states that "his lopsided grin was full of pride as he stepped forward and offered to share his golden prize." **1 Point Response:** The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the text by giving a partial explanation of why the festival is important to Nsue. **0 Point Response:** The student does not demonstrate understanding of the text.

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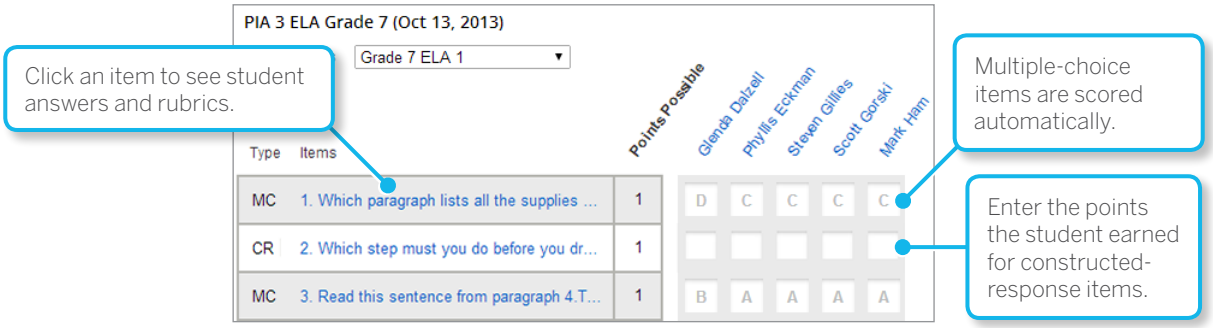
Score an Assessment

mCLASS Beacon scores multiple-choice answers automatically; online assessments are scored when the student completes the test, and offline assessments are scored when the answer sheet is scanned.

The teacher uses the teacher scoring tool, available on the Assignments page, to score the written response. Open mCLASS Beacon and click **Assignments** in the navigation menu. Click **Enter** Scores in an assignment row. Select a School and Section/Class, if applicable.



At the bottom of the page, a legend explains item type, such as constructed-response and multiple-choice items.

Click each constructed-response item in the table header. A new window opens, which displays the question, grading rubric, and each student's response. Scroll down to read each response. In the table, enter a point value in the cell beneath that student's name. The Points Possible column shows the maximum score possible for each item. Beacon will not allow you to enter a value greater than the maximum points possible.

After you score all the constructed-response items, click **Save**, then click **Back to Assignments** to return to the Assignment Manager.

Reading Comprehension Assessment Scoring

Each correct answer and rubric aligns with specific CCSS standards, and, overall, the items represent a balance of all the standards. For this reason, the composite score is the best indicator of whether students comprehend text of the type and complexity they will encounter on future state summative assessments.

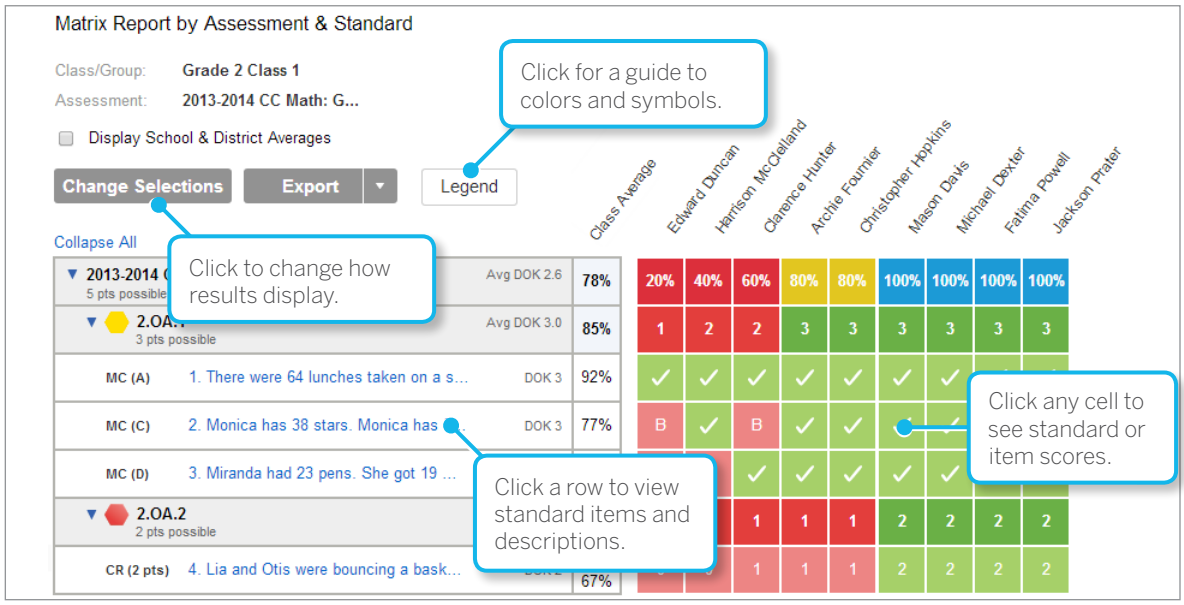
Writing Assessment Scoring

Each writing assessment can be scored for Focus, Use of Evidence, Logical Structure, and Conventions. The teacher scores each skill separately on a scale of one to four. The mCLASS Beacon web-based platform contains the four rubrics to score the writing extended responses. As with the Reading Comprehension Assessment, each of the four rubrics aligns with specific CCSS standards, and overall, the items represent a balance of all the standards measured by the state summative assessments. In this case, however, look at the score for each of the four skills as a distinct entity; this will provide the most accurate information about how students are progressing and which students may need extra support.

Analyze an Assessment with the Matrix Report

In mCLASS Beacon, the Matrix Report is a data-visualization tool that displays student assessment results, such as item-level details, point values, and correct and incorrect answers. To help analyze results, it can display different aggregations: for example, all items from multiple assessments sorted by passage or standard, and then ordered by performance.

In mCLASS Beacon, click **Matrix Report**, then click **Change Selections** to choose which assessment results to view. For help deciding, click **Help me choose**. When you make your choices, click **Change** to load your Matrix report.



In the Matrix report, the left side of the table contains a list of assessment items, grouped and sorted according to your options. This report shows a four-item assignment: three multiple-choice items aligned to one standard, and one constructed-response item aligned to a second standard. They are grouped by standard, and sorted by test order. Pause on a standard or item to display the full text, or click it to open a new window with item detail.

Student names and other information, such as the class average for each item, display across the top of the table. Click a cell to see standard or item details, depending on the row type. If a student has assessment responses you can view, click the student's name to open these responses. Some assessments, such as those containing only multiple-choice items, will have no additional student results.

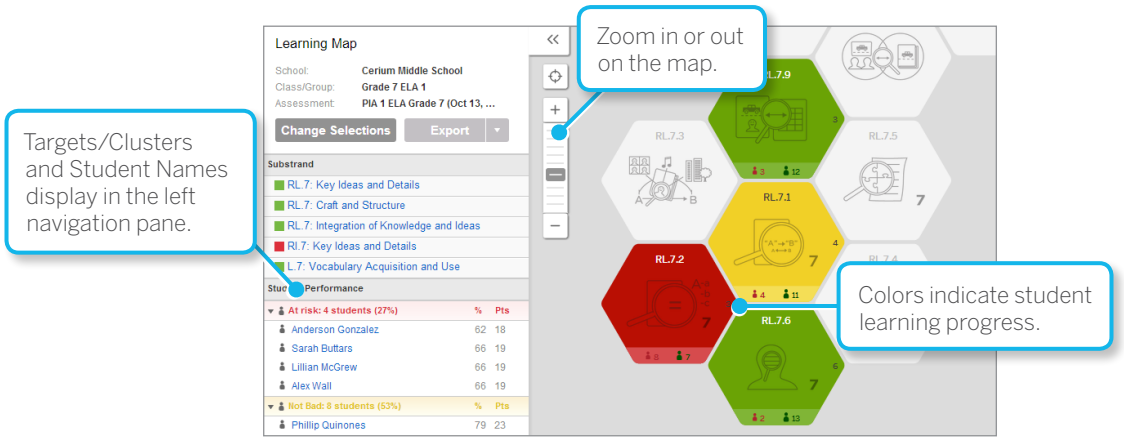
If available, check the **Display School & District Averages** box to show these averages in the table.

Click **Export** to save the assessment results as a PDF or CSV file.

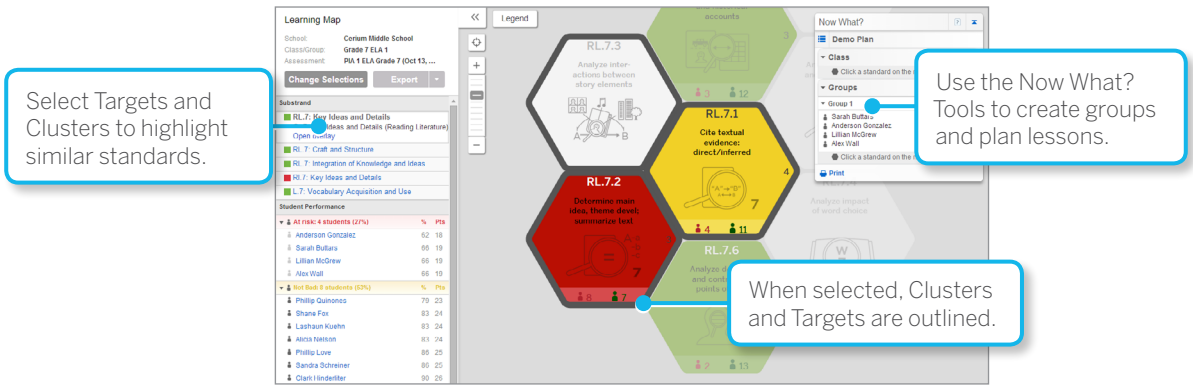
Analyze an Assessment with the Learning Map

The mCLASS® Beacon™ Learning Map is a data visualization tool that uses color to indicate student comprehension and learning progress. Each hexagon represents one standard or substandard. The map contains all the standards in a subject, and changes colors to reflect student assessment results. During the year, as you assess more students, the map can help you identify learning trends, spot problem areas, and monitor student progress.

To load a Learning Map, open Beacon and click **Learning Map** in the navigation menu. Click **Change Selections**, use the list menus to choose an assessment, and then click **Change**.



On the map, zoom in or out to see more detail or view a larger section of the map. Click a standard to open an overlay that shows results and item information. You can also view Targets and Clusters — groups of similar and related concepts — by clicking one in a list that displays in the left navigation panel. Beneath the them are a list of all students assigned to the Section or Class for the current Learning Map. Click a student name to see that student's results on the map.

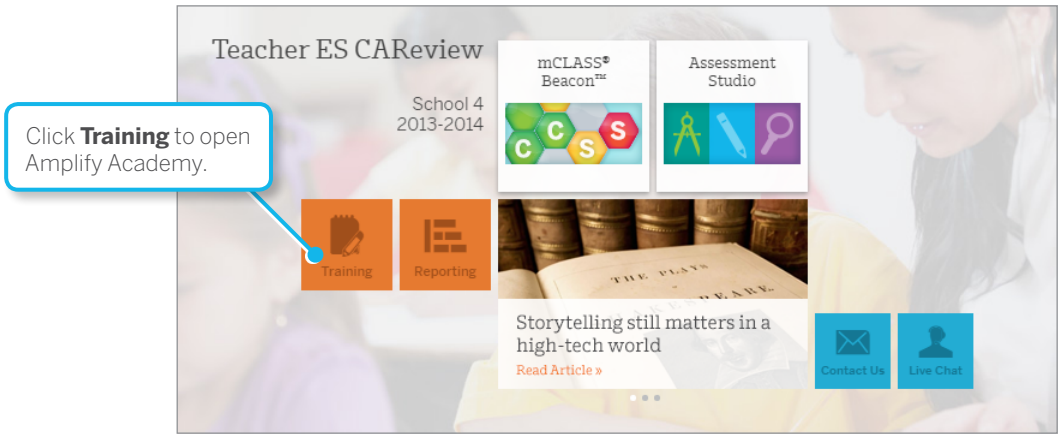


Additional Help and Support Resources

If you have questions or need help, the following resources are available to assist you:

Amplify Academy

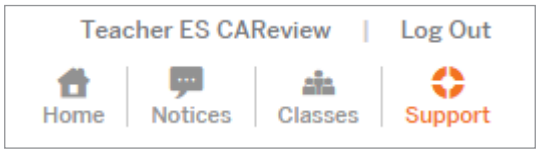
Amplify Academy is an interactive online training course for mCLASS Beacon. Its lessons teach you about Beacon functions, let you practice what you learned, and test your knowledge.



To access Amplify Academy, log in to the Amplify home page and click the orange **Training** tile on the left side of the screen, beneath your name and school information.

Beacon Guided Tour

The Beacon Guided Tour videos explain different features of Beacon. Watch the videos at: www.mclasshome.com/outcomes/static/tour/BeaconTour.html

Support and Resource Center

Visit the support and resource center to view online help, watch support videos, download user manuals, and search the knowledge base for answers to questions about your mCLASS Solutions.