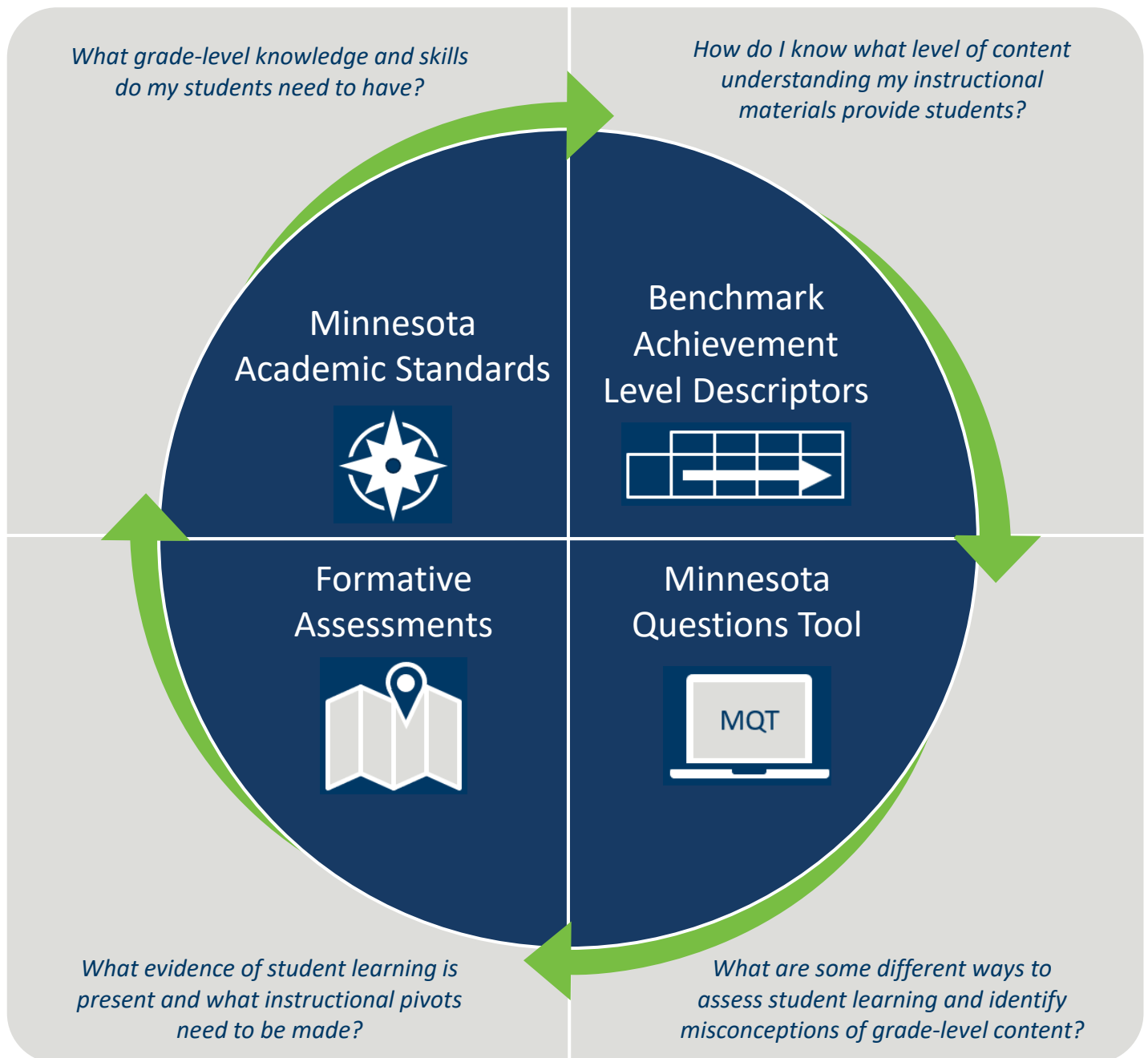


## Standards-Aligned Planning Resources

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) offers instructional tools and learning resources that provide educators with content to support or supplement their grade-level instructional materials for the classroom at any point in the standards implementation process.

This guide outlines some of the instructional tools and learning resources that are aligned to the English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science Minnesota Academic Standards. Tools, such as the Minnesota Questions tool (MQT) and the Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors (BALDs), coupled with classroom formative assessments, support or supplement grade-level instruction in the implementation of academic standards for all students.



## Instructional Tools and Resources



### Minnesota Academic Standards

A summary description of student learning in a required content area or elective content area identified by state law. Academic standards include anchor standards comprised of one or more benchmarks. To find all the Minnesota Academic Standards, go to the [Minnesota Academic Standards page](#) of the MDE website.



### Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors (BALDs)

Outline of knowledge, skills, and abilities demonstrated by students for each benchmark of the standards. Educators use this standards-aligned planning resource similar to a rubric to evaluate the rigor and cognitive demand of instructional content across achievement levels. For examples of different achievement levels for the benchmarks in mathematics and reading, look up the provided question ID number in the MQT (see below). BALDs are currently only available for Mathematics and Reading for grades 3–8 and high school. Go to the [Success Criteria page](#) of the [MDE Testing 1, 2, 3](#) website for more on how to use this standards-aligned planning resource.



### Minnesota Questions Tool (MQT)

An educator resource that contains released test items from past MCA administrations. MQT content is aligned to the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards, and are specific to subject, grade level, strand, and Norman Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK). Educators can use these questions as examples of a few ways the academic standards are assessed on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). The MQT helps identify student progress and analyze different DOK levels. Educators can analyze their own instructional materials in relation to the insights from the MQT. Student learning can also be informed with quality formative assessments. To learn more, go to the [Released MCA Questions page](#) of the MDE Testing 1, 2, 3 website.



### Formative Assessments

A planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers to elicit evidence of student learning. Educators use evidence and feedback to adjust learning strategies, goals, or next instructional steps to move learning forward. To learn more about formative assessment resources, go to the [Classroom Assessment page](#) of the MDE Testing 1, 2, 3 website.

More information is available on the [MDE Testing 1, 2, 3](#) website.

# Content Benchmark Examples from the Minnesota Academic Standards

## Mathematics

### Benchmark

4.1.2.1 Represent equivalent fractions using fraction models such as part of a set, fraction circles, fraction strips, number lines and other manipulatives. Use the models to determine equivalent fractions.

### BALDs

### Meets

4.1.2.1 Uses fraction models (such as fraction strips, fraction circles, other manipulatives, and written descriptions) to determine equivalent fractions.

Uses fully labelled number lines to plot equivalent fractions.

### MQT

245000  
242042  
244065

### Formative Assessment

Scan or select the QR code to see a sample mathematics formative assessment.



## Reading

### Benchmark

3.2.2.2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

### BALDs

### Meets

3.2.2.2 Summary: Summarize from a section of text or text as a whole.

3.2.2.2 Main Idea: State main idea and topic from a section of implicit text or text as a whole.

### MQT

430697 (Summary)  
430690 (Main Idea)

### Formative Assessment

Scan or select the QR code to see an example unit using formative assessment of the 2020 standards in COMPASS data literacy modules.



## Science

### Benchmark

3L.3.2.1.1 Construct an explanation using evidence from various sources for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing.

### Associated NGSS Evidence Statement\*

3-LS4-2: Use evidence to construct an explanation for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing.

\*BALDs do not currently exist for the science standards

### MQT

850761-63  
850765-66  
850768

### Formative Assessment

Scan or select the QR code to see a guide to developing 3D formative assessments in science.



More information is available on the [MDE Testing 1, 2, 3](#) website.