

Creating Tiers for Baseline Data

Purpose:

The purpose of tiering baseline assessment data is to allow for growth to happen for groups of students at appropriate levels. Tiering data can also work to define what you are doing in your classroom to close the achievement gap between lower performing students and higher performing students.

Example:

Rodrigo scores a 35/45 on the fall EasyCBM.

MaryAnn scores a 2/45 on the fall EasyCBM.

For my goal, I expect MaryAnn to grow *more* than Rodrigo. First, the assessment has a ceiling of 45, and I may allow for an error or two for Rodrigo, so maybe his growth goal is to score a 43/45 in the Spring. That is a growth of 8. If MaryAnn grows by 8, she will score a 10/45 in the Spring. In my professional opinion and assessment of my student's ability, MaryAnn's goal should be set at a higher threshold. Maybe MaryAnn is expected to score a 17/45 on the Spring EasyCBM. She is still not "there," but she has gained ground and shown significant learning.

How do I choose tiers?

This is completely data- and student- dependent. You may be able to easily look at your initial data and draw natural lines between groups of data. Or, you may create "cut-offs" based on what you know about particular students. Maybe the student with the lowest score needs his own tier because of a disability. It may be that you only have two groups, or you may need four or so to set growth targets that are attainable *and* rigorous enough for each group of students.

Why do I *have* to create tiers?

The Oregon Department of Education says, "It is advisable to set tiered targets according to students' starting points because students may begin at varying levels of preparedness." However, your data will drive your goal-setting process, including setting growth targets. Tiering data is meant to make your goal more appropriate for individual students, since all students are measured in the SLGGs.