RENAISSANCE LEARNING

Parent's Guide to STAR™ Assessments

Questions and Answers

STAR™
Assessments

Your child will be taking a STAR assessment during this school year. This guide will explain what a STAR assessment is. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or visit the STAR website at **www.renaissance.com/Products/Star-Assessments.**

What are STAR assessments?

Renaissance Learning™ pioneered computer-adaptive testing in the classroom in 1996 with the introduction of STAR Reading™, and has been improving upon it ever since. As a result we offer a line of testing products that all function the same, are all built with the same high level of measurement accuracy, and all share the same design principles.

STAR™ Early Literacy

STAR Early Literacy™ is the leading computer-based diagnostic assessment of early literacy skills developed for Pre-K–3 students. STAR Early Literacy tracks development in three domains and ten sub-domains:

Word Facility and Skills

- Alphabetic Principle
- Concept of Word
- Visual Discrimination
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Structural Analysis
- Vocabulary

Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning

- Sentence-Level Comprehension
- Paragraph-Level Comprehension

Numbers and Operations

- Early Numeracy

STAR™ Reading

STAR Reading™ is an assessment of reading comprehension and skills for independent readers through grade 12. STAR Reading tracks development in five domains:

- Word Knowledge and Skills
- Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning
- Analyzing Literary Text
- Understanding Author's Craft
- Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text

STAR™ Reading Spanish

STAR Reading Spanish™ is an assessment of Spanish reading comprehension for independent readers from grade levels 1–5; however, it can be administered to Spanish-speaking students at grade levels 1–12. STAR Reading Spanish tracks a student's:

- Spanish reading level
- Spanish ZPD for independent reading practice of Spanish literature
- Spanish reading growth and overall progress

STAR™ Math

STAR Math™ is an assessment of math achievement for students in grades 1–12. STAR Math tracks development in four domains:

- Numbers and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry and Measurement
- Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability

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What are computer-adaptive tests?

All STAR assessments are computer-adaptive tests (CATs). Computer-adaptive tests continually adjust the difficulty of each child's test by choosing each test question based on the child's previous response. If the child answers a question correctly, the difficulty level of the next item is increased. If the child misses a question, the difficulty level is decreased. CATs save testing time and spare your child the frustration of items that are too difficult and the boredom of items that are too easy.

How long does it take to complete a STAR assessment?

STAR tests are designed to be as efficient as possible. On average, students will complete the STAR Math test in about 20 minutes, the STAR Reading test in about 15 minutes, the STAR Early Literacy test in 15–20 minutes, and the STAR Reading Spanish test in about 10 minutes. However, some students may require more time.

What are STAR assessments used for?

The STAR assessments are often used to screen students for their reading and math achievement levels. STAR Reading and STAR Math™ assessments help determine reading and math achievement levels in order to place students into the Accelerated Reader™ and Accelerated Math™ programs. STAR Early Literacy assessments help educators monitor students' growing literacy skills and students' progress toward becoming independent readers. STAR Reading Spanish assessments help educators working in bilingual and dual-language programs to inform instruction, match students to books, and monitor Spanish reading growth. In English-only programs, educators can use STAR Reading Spanish to determine the Spanish reading level of incoming English language learner students to help inform instruction.

STAR™ assessments can also be used to monitor student growth throughout the year, to estimate students' understanding of state standards, and predict students' performance on the state test. In addition, STAR can help teachers determine appropriate instructional levels and skills that students are ready to learn.

What kind of score does my child get?

For every STAR assessment, your child receives a **scaled score (SS)**, which is based on the difficulty of the questions and the number of correct answers. Scaled scores are useful for comparing your child's performance over time and across grades. STAR Reading and STAR Math scaled scores range from 0–1400. STAR Early Literacy scaled scores range from 300–900. For STAR Reading Spanish, the Spanish scaled scores range from 0–780.

STAR offers educators a variety of scores and reports. Some STAR scores compare your child's performance to a specific criteria or to a standard (criterion-referenced scores). STAR reports also include scores which compare your child's performance to other students who have taken the

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same test (norm-referenced scores). The criterion- and norm-referenced scores are based on the scaled score.

Please see the sample Parent Reports on the following pages for examples of some of the scores and score definitions.

How can I help my child prepare for a STAR assessment?

The teacher who gives the test uses pre-test instructions to explain the test to your child. It is important for you to encourage your child to try to do his or her best on the assessment. Since STAR is a general measure of student ability in math or reading, students perform best on the assessment in the same way they perform best in school—when they have had plenty of rest, attend school regularly, and have eaten.

How will I know how my child is doing?

Please ask your child's teacher for the results from any of the STAR assessments. Teachers can run a Parent Report for any of the STAR tests. Often teachers may share this information during a parent/teacher conference. You must contact your child's school or district directly about your child's information. Renaissance Learning cannot disclose, delete, or make changes to educational records without authorization from the school.

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STAR™ Early Literacy

Parent Report
for Lisa Carter

Printed Monday, September 14, 2015 2:12:15 PM

School: Oakwood Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. C. Rowley
Class: Mrs. Rowley's Class

Test Date: September 7, 2015 8:00 AM

Dear Parent or Guardian of Lisa Carter:

Your child has just taken a STAR Early Literacy assessment on the computer. STAR Early Literacy measures your child's proficiency in up to nine areas that are important in reading development. This report summarizes your child's scores on the assessment. As with any assessment, many factors can affect your child's scores. It is important to understand that these scores provide only one picture of how your child is doing in school.

Scaled Score: 475

The Scaled Score is the overall score that your child received on the STAR Early Literacy assessment. It is calculated based on both the difficulty of the questions and the number of correct responses. Scaled Scores in STAR Early Literacy range from 300 to 900 and span the grades Pre-K through 3.

Lisa obtained a Scaled Score of 475. Scaled Scores relate to three developmental stages: Emergent Reader (300 - 674), Transitional Reader (675-774), and Probable Reader (775 - 900). A Scaled Score of 475 means that Lisa is at the Emergent Reader stage.

Date Tested	Scaled Score	Emergent Reader				Trans. Reader	Probable Reader	
		300	400	500	600	700	800	900
09/07/15	475			▲				

▲ Initial Test Scaled Score

Children at the early Emergent Reader stage are beginning to understand that printed text has meaning. They are learning that reading involves printed words and sentences, and that print flows from left to right and from the top to the bottom of the page. They are also beginning to identify colors, shapes, numbers, and letters.

At this stage, Lisa knows that spoken speech can be represented by letters and that letters have specific shapes. She is likely to be able to identify the letters and to see the differences between them. Also, Lisa is beginning to recognize rhyming sounds.

The most important thing you can do to encourage your child's growth in emergent reading skills is to read storybooks aloud to Lisa at home. If your child asks for the same book again and again, go right on reading it. Also, talk with Lisa about what you've read. Through listening to and talking about stories, Lisa will learn to relate spoken words with printed words on the page.

If you have any questions about your child's scores or these recommendations, please contact me at your convenience.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

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STAR™ Reading

Parent Report
for Matthew Bosley

Printed Monday, September 14, 2015 12:34:01 PM

School: Oakwood Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. M. Adams
Class: Grade 4 (Adams)

Test Date: September 7, 2015 9:34 AM

Dear Parent or Guardian of Matthew Bosley:

Matthew has taken a STAR Reading computer-adaptive reading test. This report summarizes your child's scores on the test. As with any test, many factors can affect a student's scores. It is important to understand that these test scores provide only one picture of how your child is doing in school.

GE	PR	PR Range	Below Average	Average 50	Above Average	IRL	ZPD	ZPD 2000
3.1	29	22-35		◆		3.2	2.6-3.7	361-561

National Norm Scores:

Grade Equivalent (GE): 3.1
Grade Equivalent scores range from 0.0 to 12.9+. A GE score shows how your child's test performance compares with that of other students nationally. Based on the national norms, Matthew reads at a level equal to that of a typical third grader after the first month of the school year.

Percentile Rank (PR): 29
The Percentile Rank score compares your child's test performance with that of other students nationally in the same grade. With a PR of 29, Matthew reads at a level greater than 29% of other students nationally in the same grade. This score is average. The PR Range indicates that, if this student had taken the STAR Reading test numerous times, most of his scores would likely have fallen between 22 and 35.

Instructional Reading Level (IRL): 3.2
The Instructional Reading Level (IRL) is the grade level at which Matthew is at least 80% proficient at recognizing words and comprehending reading material. Matthew achieved an IRL score of 3.2. This means that he is at least 80% proficient at reading third grade words and books.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): 2.6-3.7
The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the reading level range from which Matthew should be selecting books for optimal growth in reading. It spans reading levels that are appropriately challenging for reading practice. This range is approximate. Success at any reading level depends on your child's interest and prior knowledge of a book's content. Matthew's ZPD 2000 is 361-561. The ZPD 2000 score is the ZPD converted to a 2000-point scale.

I will be using these STAR Reading test scores to help Matthew further develop his reading skills through the selection of books for reading practice at school. Matthew should also practice silent reading every day, continue reading aloud and with others, and practice reading more challenging books.

If you have any questions about your child's scores or these recommendations, please contact me at your convenience.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

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STAR™ Reading Spanish

Parent Report
for Rosario Martinez

Printed Monday, September 14, 2015 9:12 AM

School: Oakwood Elementary School
Teacher: Ms. I. Gomez
Class: Ms. Gomez's Class

Test Date: September 7, 2015 10:05 AM

Dear Parent or Guardian of Rosario Martinez:

Rosario has taken a STAR Reading Spanish test so that I have a better understanding of her reading ability in Spanish. This report summarizes the scores on her latest test.

Spanish Instructional Reading Level: 3.7
This means Rosario is successful at reading words and books in Spanish that students in the third month of third grade are commonly expected to understand.

Spanish Zone of Proximal Development (SP ZPD): 2.2-4.3
This is the reading level range that is recommended for Rosario when she is reading books independently in Spanish.

To help Rosario improve her reading skills, she should continue to practice reading materials within her ZPD. To help choose books for Rosario, use AR BookFinder at www.arbookfind.com. This is a free online tool that helps students identify books that match their interests, their maturity level, and their ZPD.

If you have any questions about your child's scores or these recommendations, please contact me at your convenience.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

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STAR™ Math

Parent Report for Timothy Bell

Printed Monday, September 14, 2015 9:12:15 AM

School: Oakwood Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. S. Fox
Class: Mrs. Fox's Class

Test Date: September 7, 2015 10:28 AM

Dear Parent or Guardian of Timothy Bell:

Timothy has taken a STAR Math computer-adaptive math test. This report summarizes your child's scores on the test. As with any test, many factors can affect a student's scores. It is important to understand that these test scores provide only one picture of how your child is doing in school.

SS	GE	PR	PR Range	Below Average	Average 50	Above Average	NCE
563	3.3	29	23-33		◆		38.3

National Norm Scores

Grade Equivalent (GE): 3.3

Grade Equivalent scores range from 0.0 to 12.9+. A GE score shows how your child's test performance compares with that of other students nationally. Based on the national norms, Timothy's math skills are at a level equal to that of a typical third grader after the third month of the school year.

Percentile Rank (PR): 16

The Percentile Rank score compares your child's test performance with that of other students nationally in the same grade. With a PR of 29, Timothy's math skills are greater than 29% of students nationally in the same grade. This score is average. The PR Range indicates that, if this student had taken the STAR Math test numerous times, most of his scores would likely have fallen between 23 and 33.

I will be using these STAR Math test scores to help Timothy further develop his math skills through the selection of materials for math practice at school. At home, you can help Timothy develop his math skills as well. At this stage, he needs to work with numbers in the thousands and practice multiplying and dividing basic facts.

If you have any questions about your child's scores or these recommendations, please contact me at your convenience.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

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