Parent's Guide to
STAR™ Assessments

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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.renlearn.com/se.**

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™ **Enterprise**

STAR Early Literacy Enterprise™ is the leading computer-based diagnostic assessment of early literacy skills developed for Pre-K–3 students. STAR Early Literacy Enterprise 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™ **Enterprise**

STAR Reading Enterprise™ is an assessment of reading comprehension and skills for independent readers through grade 12. STAR Reading Enterprise 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™ **Enterprise**

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

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

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 Enterprise test in about 20 minutes, the STAR Reading Enterprise test in about 15 minutes, the STAR Early Literacy Enterprise 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 Enterprise 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 Enterprise™ 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 Enterprise 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 Enterprise reports also include scores which compare your child's performance to other students who have taken the 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. Due to federal privacy laws, Renaissance Learning is not able to release an individual student's data directly to parents.