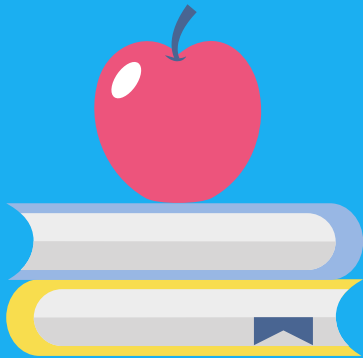


**SCHOOL
DISTRICT
OF
PHILADELPHIA**



STAR FOR PARENTS GRADES 6 - 12

**A parent's guide to understanding
school testing
Fall 2020**



**VISIT US AT
[PHILASD.ORG/ERA/ASSESSMENT/](https://philasd.org/era/assessment/)**

A decorative graphic at the top of the page features a stack of books on the left and three pencils (yellow, white, and yellow) on the right, all set against a dark blue background.

1. What is Star?

In the School District of Philadelphia, we use the Star Assessments as a universal screener to evaluate math and reading skills for all students in sixth grade through twelfth grade. Star Assessments are short tests that provide teachers with learning data. Star tests are computer adaptive, which means they adjust to each answer your child provides. This helps teachers get the best data to help your child in the shortest amount of testing time (average test time is 15-25 minutes). The screening assessments for both math and reading are available in Spanish.

2. What do teachers do with Star Assessments?

Teachers analyze the data they get from Star Assessments to learn what students already know and what they are ready to learn next, to monitor student growth, and to determine which students may need additional help. Star Assessments are heavily researched and scientifically proven to help teachers guide each student on his or her unique path to mastery.

3. What do Star Assessments do for my child?

By pinpointing exactly what your child knows, teachers can personalize your child's practice to keep them growing. Plus, short test times ensure your child spends more time learning and less time testing.

4. Does this affect my student's grade?

This test does not affect students' grades.

5. When will my child take this test?

There are four times a year that students will take Star, and these dates are roughly: (1) late September/early October; (2) December; (3) March; (4) and May/June. Teachers will schedule testing times and communicate this to caregivers and students.

6. How does my child take this? (Technology)

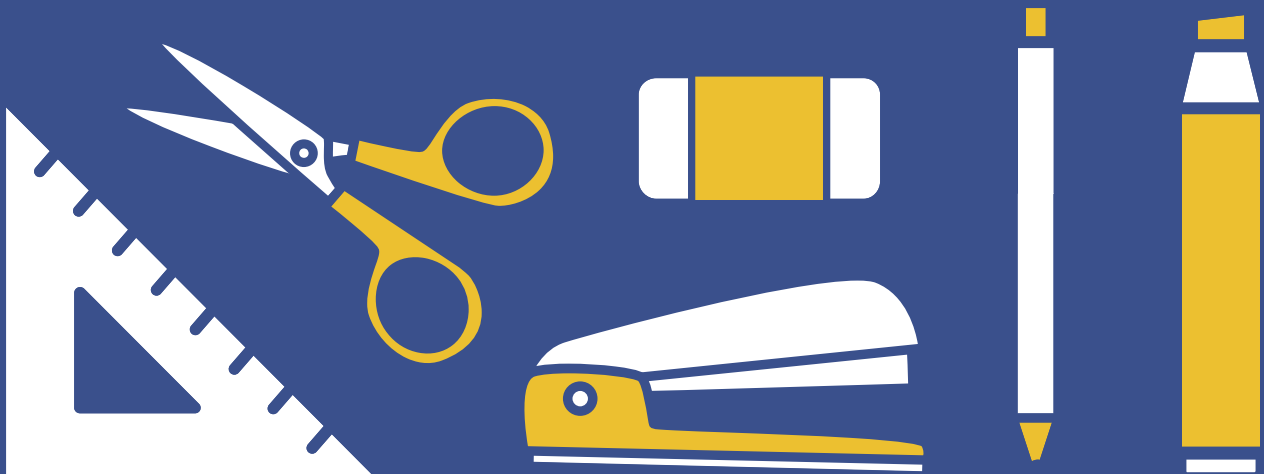
Students will need a computer or tablet, ideally with a camera and speaker, so that a teacher can virtually administer the assessment. In addition, students will need an internet connection and a web browser such as Chrome, Firefox, or Safari. Please help your child log on to Zoom at the time designated by your child's teacher. Teachers will guide students through the assessment.

7. What types of questions are on the Star Assessments?

Both the Reading and Math Star Assessments contain 34 multiple choice questions. The Star Assessments are computer-adaptive tests, which means that the difficulty level of each question will change depending on how well a student is performing on the assessment. As students answer more questions correctly, the test items increase in difficulty. Conversely, as students answer more questions incorrectly, the test items decrease in difficulty. The difficulty of questions ranges from the first grade level through to the twelfth grade level.

8. What types of scores are reported on the Star Assessments?

For both the Reading and Math Star Assessments, students receive a scale score, a national percentile ranking, a grade equivalent score, and a student growth percentile score. Additionally, for the Reading Assessment, students will also receive their instructional reading level and their lexile level.



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9. How can I set my child up for success?

- Find an area where students can sit comfortably with a computer/device in front of them and see the screen clearly.
- Choose a location without distracting sights and sounds (such as TVs or loud conversations).
- Make sure students are well rested, have eaten, and used the bathroom. Encourage them to do their best work.

10. Where can I find the results from the test?

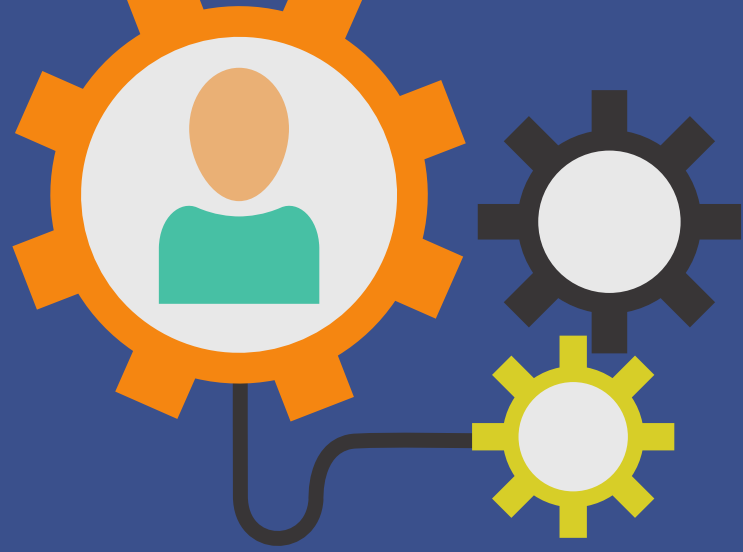
Results from the test will be available at the end of the testing window in late October through the Parent Portal. When in the portal, click the Standardized Tests tab. If you need help understanding the results, please contact your student's teacher. If you need help getting into the Parent Portal, look here:

https://www.philasd.org/face/fr/parent-and-family_portal/

11. Who can I contact for help?

Technology Questions: Call the Parent & Family Technology Support Hotline at 215-400-4444

General Testing Questions: Contact your student's teacher



Do's and Don'ts for Testing



DO:

- **Make sure that the student is seated comfortably in front of the computer/tablet.**
- **Make sure the student is not trying to find answers to test questions by using any webpages or tools on the computer or a mobile phone.**



DON'TS:

- **Don't restate directions to the student. Only teachers should give directions, and they will repeat if needed.**
- **Don't provide answers or clues to the answers. Clues could include pointing to an answer, covering up wrong answers, giving reminders, or looking directly at the item.**
- **Don't tell students whether their answer is right or wrong (such as by nodding, smiling, or telling them).**
- **Don't give feedback or ask questions to the teacher during a test. Test items are timed and interruptions could affect the student's score. Wait until the test is over if you have questions or feedback.**



Remember: The purpose of this test is to let teachers know what supports your student needs. Helping with answers will not let teachers know what skills your student still needs to learn.