

Writer's Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Question

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the question carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the question relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- ☐ I stayed focused on answering the question.
- ☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

PSSA TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS SCORING GUIDELINES

Score Point	Description	Score Point	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas and inferences Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Skillful use of transitions to link ideas Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion Minimal evidence of an organizational structure Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) Few, if any, transitions to link ideas Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES FOR MATHEMATICS OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- 4 – The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response provides correct answer(s) with clear and complete mathematical procedures shown and a correct explanation, as required by the task. Response may contain a minor “blemish” or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

- 3 – The response demonstrates a *general* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response and explanation (as required by the task) are mostly complete and correct. The response may have minor errors or omissions that do not detract from demonstrating a *general* understanding.

- 2 – The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required mathematical concepts and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

- 1 – The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

- 0 – The response has no correct answer and *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task for that grade level.**

Response may show only information copied from the question.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

BLK (blank).....Blank, entirely erased, or written refusal to respond

OTOff task

LOEResponse in a language other than English

ILIllegible

Formulas and conversions that you may need on this test are found below.

You may refer back to this page at any time during the mathematics test.

2024
Grade 4

Standard Conversions

1 yard (yd) = 3 feet (ft)

1 foot = 12 inches (in.)

1 pound (lb) = 16 ounces (oz.)

1 gallon (gal) = 4 quarts (qt)

1 quart = 2 pints (pt)

1 pint = 2 cups (c)

Metric Conversions

1 kilometer (km) = 1,000 meters (m)

1 meter = 100 centimeters (cm)

1 kilogram (kg) = 1,000 grams (g)

1 liter (L) = 1,000 milliliters (mL)

Time Conversions

1 year (yr) = 12 months (mo)

1 year = 52 weeks (wk)

1 year = 365 days

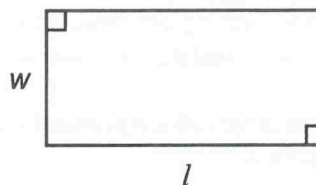
1 week = 7 days

1 day = 24 hours (hr)

1 hour = 60 minutes (min)

1 minute = 60 seconds (sec)

Rectangle



Area = length \times width

$$A = l \times w$$

Perimeter = length + length + width + width

$$P = l + l + w + w$$

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Why Family Engagement Matters for Student and School Success

PTA works with families, schools and other organizations to help all children be successful throughout their school years and prepare them for college and a career. As an engaged family member—parent, grandparent or other caregiver—you make essential contributions to your children's education to make their potential a reality.

The research is clear. [Findings from the Global Family Research Project report](#) show that when families and teachers join together to support children's learning and development, children are more likely to succeed in school, graduate and stay on their path to college or a career.

How You Engage in Your Child's Education Matters

Research Shows That Children Learn Anywhere, Anytime.

Children achieve more in school when their families engage in activities such as reading, asking thoughtful questions, and providing the structure children need to complete assignments. Discussing with your child your expectations for his or her future and monitoring their progress has also been linked with higher achievement. You can also promote your child's learning out of school through activities such as library visits and participation in after school and summer programs.

Family Engagement is Crucial All Along Children's Learning Pathways From Birth Through High School and Beyond.

Your involvement in your child's education and school matters not only when he or she is in a young child but all through adolescence. Your engagement, however, changes as your child grows up. You will likely

take an active role in supporting your child's learning during the early grades. But as your child gets older, ask him or her to teach you what they are learning, encourage them to take ownership of their progress, and help them navigate pathways for college and career.

Children and Families Aren't the Only Ones Who Benefit When Families Are Engaged in the Educational Process.

Your participation also contributes to the overall success of your school. And research shows that when families advocate for school improvements, such as backing educators to develop strong family engagement practices, all children receive a better education. When families are engaged, teachers also feel more supported and the atmosphere at the school is more positive and welcoming.

5 Ways Families, Teachers, Schools and Communities Can Work Together to Support Children's Learning and School Success

Research suggests that there are five especially powerful areas for engagement.



1. Ensure Children Attend School Regularly

Children can't make academic progress if they aren't in school—especially if they miss several days over the course of the school year. Regular attendance keeps children from falling behind, which could then lead to behavior problems, frustration, and, ultimately, dropping out. Communicating with children even in the preschool years about the importance of attendance can help build strong habits as they get older.

Consider How do you and your school support regular attendance?



2. Share Information About Student Progress

use multiple ways to communicate how children are doing—conferences, report cards, standardized tests, and more. Some schools are trying to improve how they communicate with families so that families don't get mixed messages and more easily know whether their child is on grade-level. Talk to teachers and school leaders about whether there are ways to clearly communicate how students are doing.

Consider What questions do you have about how your child is doing, what different tests and measures mean, which results are most important, and what you can do to support your child's progress?



3. Reinforce Shared Learning

Families play a key role in supporting learning in and out of school. For example, showing children how science, math, engineering, and technology are part of our daily lives and talking about careers in these areas can also motivate children to prepare for the future. Project-based learning activities in schools, after school programs, libraries, and other community venues give families hands-on experiences with some of the latest technological and scientific tools as well as opportunities for cooperation. Community organizations offering family-oriented learning experiences is one way to support children's interests outside of the classroom.

Consider: *What guidance, interactive activities, and opportunities for shared learning with your child does your school provide?*



4. Use Digital Media In Positive And Safe Ways

Technology now allows children to learn anytime, anywhere. You can show your children how to use apps and websites for learning and guide them in setting screen-time limits. Apps and other online communication tools can be a way to

build relationships with teachers too! Schools can also educate students and their families on the use of social media, how to prevent or report bullying, and how to develop media literacy skills that will help them throughout life.

Consider: *How do you and your school support positive use of digital media to support learning at home and at school?*



5. Provide Support During Transitions to New Schools and Classrooms

Children and youth benefit from support from their families, schools and communities when they are adjusting to a new school, meeting a new teacher or learning with new peers. Whether children are beginning kindergarten, entering ninth grade, moving to a new neighborhood, or starting a new after school program, transitions can be a time of stress and uncertainty. Events for newcomers, buddy programs and helpful websites that anticipate some of the questions that families are likely to have are a few ways schools can smooth the transition process.

Consider: *What information and support does your current or future school provide to help you navigate key transitions with your child?*

Reflect on Where You Are and Potential Solutions

Here's an exercise to reflect about what you are doing now and what you could do better to promote student success in partnership with your PTA and school community. Think about how you, your PTA, teachers and school administrators are working together and identify new opportunities and next steps.

1. Making Sure Children Attend School Regularly

2. Sharing Information About Student Progress

3. Reinforcing Shared Learning

4. Using Digital Media in Positive and Safe Ways

5. Transitioning to New Schools and Classrooms

What We're Doing

What Else We Can Do

We'd love to hear from you! Share your experience and ideas at [PTA.org/FamilyEngagement/ShareYourStory](https://www.pta.org/FamilyEngagement/ShareYourStory)

Resources

Global Family Research Project • National PTA

Por Qué Las Alianzas Colaborativas Son Importantes para El Éxito Estudiantil y Escolar

PTA trabaja con familias, escuelas y otras organizaciones para ayudar a los niños a tener éxito durante sus años de escuela y prepararles para la universidad y una carrera profesional. Como familiar comprometido –padre, madre, abuelo, abuela u otros tutores–, usted puede hacer una contribución fundamental a la educación de sus hijos para que su potencial sea una realidad.

Las investigaciones son claras. Las conclusiones del informe [Global Family Research Project report](#) indica que cuando las familias y los maestros se unen para apoyar el aprendizaje y el desarrollo de los niños, es más probable que estos tengan éxito en la escuela, se gradúen y sigan en la universidad o con una carrera profesional.

La manera en que usted se compromete en la educación de su hijo importa

Según las investigaciones, los niños aprenden en cualquier momento y en cualquier lugar.

Los niños tienen más logros en la escuela cuando sus familiares apoyan su aprendizaje en el hogar a través de actividades como la lectura, contarles cuentos y hacerles preguntas para pensar, y cuando les proporcionan la estructura y los materiales que ellos necesitan para completar sus tareas. Hablar con su hijo sobre sus expectativas para el futuro y supervisar su progreso también ha sido relacionado con un mayor logro estudiantil. Motivar a los niños para que aprendan fuera de la escuela mediante actividades, como las visitas a la biblioteca y la participación en programas después de clases o durante el verano, también potencia el logro y el aprendizaje.

La participación familiar es crucial a lo largo de todo el aprendizaje de los niños, desde su nacimiento hasta la escuela secundaria y más allá.

Su intervención en la educación y la escuela de su hijo importa no solo cuando está en un programa de primera infancia o ingresando

en el kínder, sino también durante la adolescencia. Sin embargo, su compromiso va cambiando a medida que su hijo crece. Es probable que usted adopte un papel activo para apoyar el aprendizaje de su hijo durante los primeros grados, pero, a medida que su hijo se hace mayor, es buena idea que usted le pregunte qué está aprendiendo y le aliente a apropiarse de su progreso. La participación familiar también es clave para ayudar a los estudiantes a hacer elecciones y tomar decisiones acerca de las opciones y oportunidades universitarias y profesionales para involucrarse en la comunidad.

Los niños y las familias no son los únicos que se benefician cuando los familiares se comprometen en el proceso educativo. Su participación también contribuye al éxito general de la escuela. Según las investigaciones, cuando las familias luchan por mejoras escolares, como respaldar a los educadores para que desarrollen prácticas sólidas de participación familiar, todos los niños reciben una educación mejor. Cuando las familias están comprometidas, los maestros se sienten más apoyados y la atmósfera en la escuela es más positiva y agradable.

5 maneras en que las familias, los maestros, las escuelas y las comunidades pueden trabajar juntas para apoyar el aprendizaje de los niños y el éxito de la escuela

Algunas investigaciones indican que hay cinco áreas especialmente poderosas para la participación.



1. Asegurarse de que los niños asistan a la escuela regularmente

Los niños no pueden progresar académicamente si no van a la escuela, en especial si se pierden varios días de clase a lo largo del año escolar. La asistencia regular no solo evita que los niños se retrasen, sino que también les previene de tener problemas de comportamiento y de frustrarse tanto que terminan abandonando la escuela. Hablar con los niños, incluso durante los años preescolares, acerca de la importancia de asistir a la escuela y otros programas de aprendizaje puede ayudarles a establecer hábitos de asistencia sólidos a medida que se hacen mayores.



2. Compartir información acerca del progreso estudiantil

Las escuelas no solo supervisan el progreso académico de los estudiantes, sino también su desarrollo social y emocional, su comportamiento y su asistencia. Además de las reuniones de padres y maestros, algunas escuelas ofrecen oportunidades más frecuentes para que los maestros y las familias vean en profundidad cómo los datos del rendimiento arrojan luz sobre las maneras en que pueden trabajar juntos para contribuir con el crecimiento

de los niños en áreas específicas. Hable con los maestros y los líderes escolares para ver si hay un modo de hablar claramente sobre cómo les está yendo a los estudiantes, y a las escuelas.

Piense en: ¿Tiene preguntas sobre cómo le está yendo a su hijo, qué significan las distintas pruebas y evaluaciones, qué resultados son más importantes y qué puede hacer usted para apoyar el progreso de su hijo?



3. Reforzar el aprendizaje estudiantil en asignaturas como Lectura y STEM

Los familiares cumplen un papel clave para respaldar el aprendizaje dentro y fuera de la escuela. Leer a los niños es una manera de ayudarles a ser exitosos. Mostrar a los niños cómo la ciencia, las matemáticas, la ingeniería y la tecnología son parte de nuestra vida cotidiana –y las carreras en que se usan estos temas– también puede motivarles a tomar más de estas clases en la escuela y a participar en actividades relacionadas fuera de la escuela. Las actividades de aprendizaje basadas en proyectos que se realizan en la escuela, en los programas para después de clases, en las bibliotecas y en otros lugares de la comunidad brindan a las familias experiencias prácticas con algunas de las últimas herramientas tecnológicas y científicas, así como oportunidades para compartir y colaborar. Preguntar a los educadores si conocen organizaciones comunitarias que ofrezcan experiencias de aprendizaje orientadas a las familias es una manera de apoyar los intereses de los niños fuera del salón de clases.

Piense en: ¿Qué orientación, actividades interactivas y oportunidades de aprendizaje compartido con su hijo proporciona su escuela?



4. Usar los medios digitales de modos positivos y seguros

Hoy en día, la tecnología permite que los niños aprendan en cualquier momento y en cualquier lugar. Usted y los maestros de su hijo pueden mostrarle cómo usar

aplicaciones y sitios web de aprendizaje y guiarle para que establezca límites saludables de tiempo frente a la pantalla. Las aplicaciones y otras herramientas de comunicación en línea también pueden ser un modo de entablar relaciones con los maestros. Las escuelas también pueden educar a los estudiantes y sus familiares sobre el uso de las redes sociales, cómo prevenir y reportar el bullying, y cómo desarrollar herramientas de alfabetización mediática que les ayudarán a lo largo de su vida.

Piense en: ¿Cómo apoyan usted y su escuela el uso positivo de los medios digitales para respaldar el aprendizaje en el hogar y la escuela?



5. Dar apoyo durante las transiciones a nuevas escuelas y salones de clase

Los niños y los jóvenes se benefician del apoyo de sus familiares, la escuela y la comunidad cuando están haciendo la transición y adaptándose a una nueva escuela, conociendo un maestro nuevo o aprendiendo con un grupo nuevo de compañeros. Ya sea que los niños estén comenzando el kinder, entrando en noveno grado, mudándose de vecindario o comenzando un programa nuevo después de la escuela, las transiciones pueden ser un período de estrés e incertidumbre para los niños, los jóvenes y los familiares. Los eventos para los recién llegados, los “buddy programs” (programas para la integración de alumnos nuevos) y los sitios útiles que anticipan algunas de las preguntas que probablemente tengan las familias son algunas maneras en que la escuela puede suavizar la transición.

Piense en: ¿Qué información y respaldo proporciona su escuela actual o su próxima escuela para ayudar a atravesar las transiciones claves con su hijo?

Reflexione sobre dónde está usted y las posibles soluciones

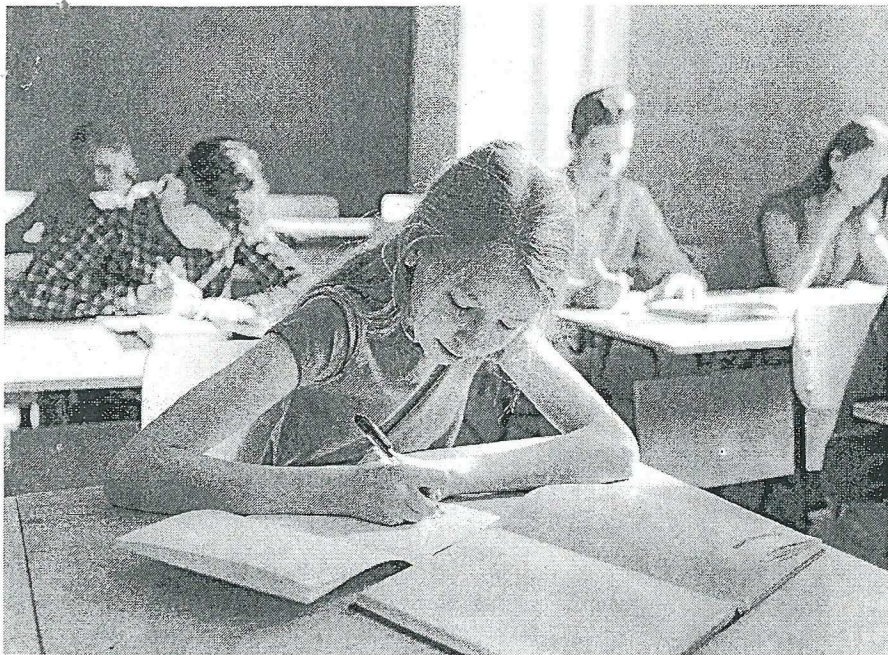
Este es un ejercicio para reflexionar acerca de qué está haciendo usted ahora y qué podría hacer mejor para promover el éxito estudiantil en asociación con su PTA y comunidad escolar. Piense en cómo usted, su PTA, los maestros y los administradores de la escuela están trabajando juntos e identifique oportunidades nuevas y los próximos pasos.

1. Asegurarnos de que los niños asistan a la escuela regularmente
2. Compartir información acerca del progreso estudiantil
3. Reforzar el aprendizaje estudiantil en asignaturas como lectura y STEM
4. Usar los medios digitales de modos positivos y seguros
5. Hacer la transición a nuevas escuelas y salones de clase

Qué estamos haciendo

Qué más podemos hacer

¡Nos encantaría saber de usted! Comparta sus experiencias y sus ideas en [PTA.org/FamilyEngagement/ShareYourStory](https://www.pta.org/FamilyEngagement/ShareYourStory)



TESTING AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

What you should know
and how you can help

There's no getting around it. Tests are nerve-wracking, for both kids and their parents. But they serve an important purpose—ensuring that your child is getting the education they need to succeed in school and in life.

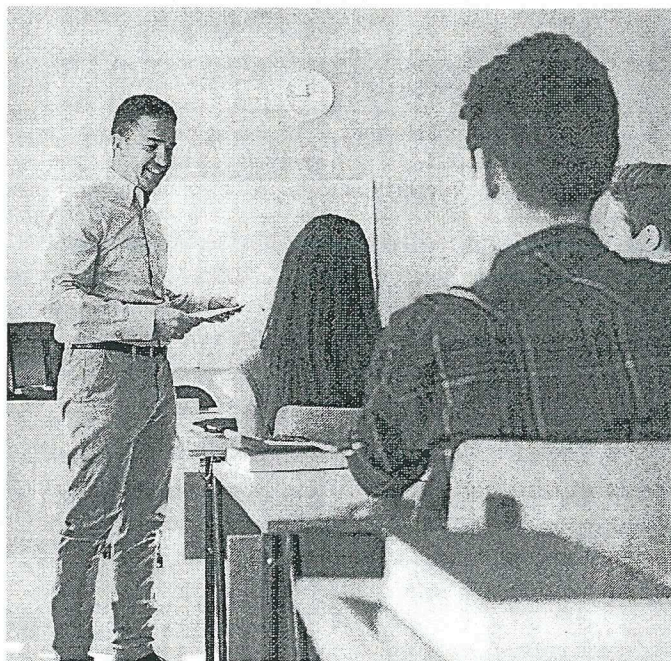
Your child's role is to learn, study hard and do their best. Your role as a parent is to understand what type of tests your child is taking and why, how the results will be used and ways to help them do well and remain confident. You should also be mindful of how many tests your child is taking to ensure over-testing is not occurring in your school district.

As your child is tested on multiple subjects and skills throughout their K-12 education, keep in mind that love of learning is the ultimate measure of success. Encourage your child every step of the way. Push your child to excel while reminding them that they are more than just their test scores.

What type of tests will my child be taking?

At the classroom level

The most common tests your child will need to prepare for are the routine quizzes and exams that teachers administer in the classroom throughout the year. These assessments help teachers understand how students are progressing, so they can adjust instruction or support as needed. They vary widely from class to class and school to school. For example, quizzes or tests in music class might require students to play an instrument.



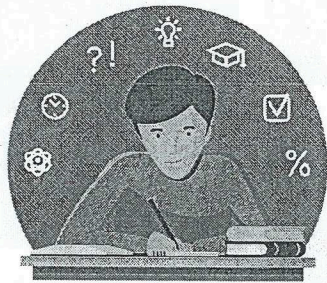
At the district and state levels

There are also standardized tests—assessments administered by the school district at specific points in your child's education, such as at the end of the school year or in certain grades, often third, fifth, eighth and eleventh-grade. These are often called "summative assessments," because they literally sum up what students have learned. While they vary by district and state, standardized tests are generally used to compare a student's performance to other students at the district, state and sometimes national level. In addition to providing a benchmark for student learning, they are used to assess how schools are performing overall as well.

Parents should receive regular information about their child's performance on classroom, district and state achievement tests.

Don't hesitate to ask the following questions:

- ❶ How does the material my child learns in class relate to what is covered on different tests?
- ❷ In what other ways does the school measure how well my child is learning, such as projects, music concerts?
- ❸ How much time does my child spend taking tests during the school year and how many tests are there?
- ❹ Does my child's performance on state achievement tests match their performance in the classroom? (Note: If an achievement test doesn't align well with what your child is being taught in the classroom, they could score poorly on the test even though their classroom grades are good.)
- ❺ How does the school use the results from classroom and state achievement tests?
- ❻ What help is available if my child is struggling with a specific test or test-taking in general? You have the right to request this information from your state and school district.



What are high-stakes tests?

When a test's results affect your child's future—such as their ability to move to the next grade level or graduate from high school—it is known as a high-stakes test. Usually, these are state-mandated, standardized tests.

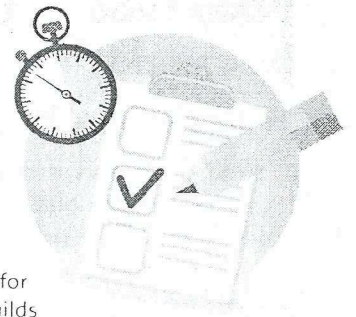
Low-stakes tests generally carry less significant or formal consequences. A pop quiz or an exam on three chapters of a textbook, for example, are important but generally won't make or break your child's future.



It's important to ask your school how the results of high-stakes tests will be used, as well as how your child is (or is not) being adequately prepared. High-stakes tests should never be the only factor used in making big decisions about your child's education. Schools should also take into account report cards, performance in routine classroom tests or projects throughout the year and feedback from teachers.

How can I help my child do well on tests?

- ✓ Make sure your child attends school each day and shows up for all classes.
- ✓ Provide a quiet place at home for studying, and take an interest in your child's homework.
- ✓ Make sure your child is well rested on school days—especially on the day of a test. Children who are tired are less able to pay attention in class or handle the demands of a test.
- ✓ Help your child to develop strong reading skills, which are critical to doing well on tests across all subjects. (See our brochure, "Developing Your Child's Reading Skills.")
- ✓ Encourage your child in all areas of their life. Praise them for things they do well. If your child feels good about themselves, they may do better in school. Children who are afraid of failing are more likely to become anxious and make mistakes.
- ✓ Meet with your child's teacher as often as possible to discuss their progress. Ask the teacher to suggest activities you can do at home to prepare for tests.
- ✓ Don't judge your child's abilities—or let others do so—based on a single test score. Any given test provides limited information about what your child knows and is able to do. And many things can influence how your child does on a test—from not feeling well that day to having been late to school because the bus got stuck.
- ✓ Help your child avoid test anxiety. Students with anxiety can become self-critical and lose confidence in their abilities. With any test, encourage your child to plan ahead, start studying well in advance and ask the teacher questions if they don't understand the material or what the test will cover.
- ✓ After a tough test, sit down with your child to review any areas where they had difficulty and why. This is especially important for classes in which material builds from one section to the next.

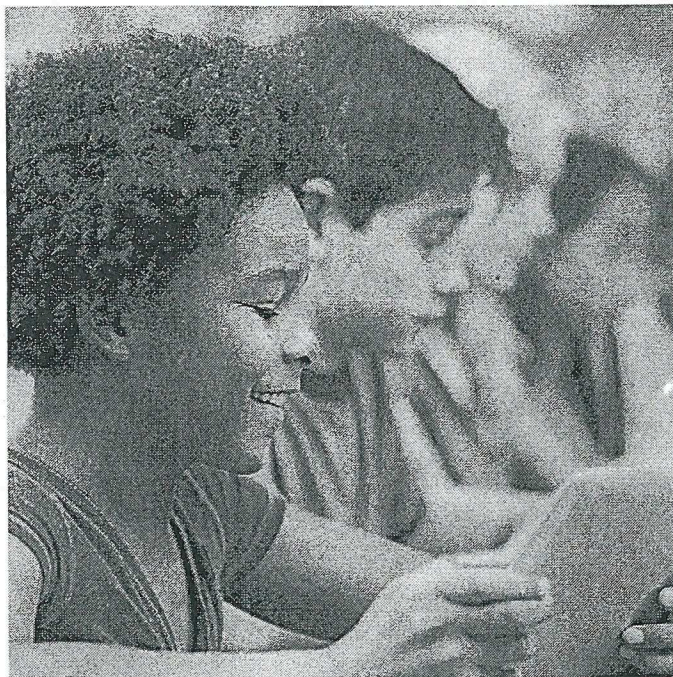


Are tests the best indicator of how well my child is doing in school?

Tests are far from perfect measures of what your child has learned at school, or of the quality of the school. At best, they measure some of what they have learned.

For this reason, tests are only one of the tools that teachers use to develop a complete picture of children's learning. Teachers also assess work in class, including participation and completing assignments: They may share these assessments with you through in-person meetings, phone calls, emails or notes sent home. If they don't, get in touch with the teacher and ask for regular reports.

Make sure you communicate with your child's teacher, review report cards and ask your child regularly how they think they are doing. Let your child know that tests are important and they should always be prepared. But also make it clear that you recognize all of your child's different achievements and are proud of them in many ways.



Resources

"Top 10 Tips for Effective Test Taking":

FamilyEducation.com/School/Testing/Top-10-Tips-Effective-Test-Taking

"Ten Must-Know Facts About Educational Testing":

PTA.org/Programs/Content.cfm?ItemNumber=1724

NEA and Time to Learn:

nea.org/timetolearn

PTA Assessment Guides:

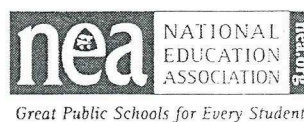
pta.org/assessmentguides

Other Resources

There is a range of other Parents' Guides to help you ensure your child thrives at school. Here are just a few examples:

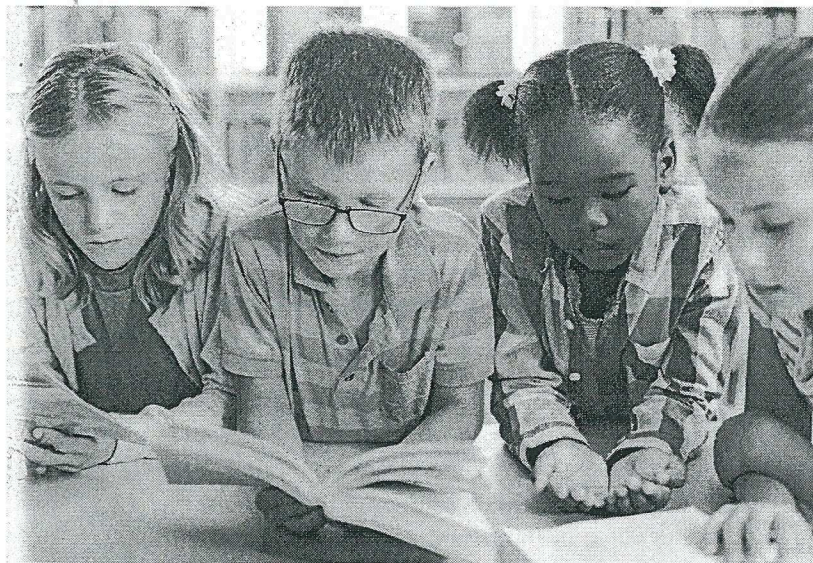
- ✓ Preparing Your Child for School
- ✓ Raising Ready Readers
- ✓ Raising Scientifically Literate Children
- ✓ Helping Your Child with Today's Math

For these and other guides, visit NEA.org/Parents/NEAResources-Parents.html or pta.org/familyguides



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For more information about NEA, visit nea.org



DEVELOPING YOUR CHILD'S READING SKILLS

Tips for Every Age

Fostering a love and aptitude for reading is critical to your child's success, from the moment they start school all the way up to their high school graduation. Your child needs strong reading and comprehension skills to succeed—not just in English, but in science, math, social studies and various school activities as well.

Use the following tips to support your child at each stage of their education. Readers at all levels should be encouraged to read books that celebrate diversity, focus on social and emotional learning and books that foster critical thinking.

Reading with infants and toddlers

Goals at this age include fostering a love of reading, an understanding of the relationships between pictures, words and sounds, and responsiveness to rhythms and rhymes.

- ✓ **Have lots of books at home.** This doesn't have to cost a lot. Visit the library, ask family members to read to your child and ask for books as gifts.
- ✓ **Read with expression.** Use different voices for different characters and animals. Point to pictures that relate to what you're saying.
- ✓ **Find stories with strong rhythms and rhymes.** Have your child repeat or sing them along with you.
- ✓ **Make reading a daily habit.** Pick a regular time, such as before bed or after breakfast or lunch.

- ✓ **Use pictures to start building vocabulary.** Talk with your child about what the pictures show. Ask them to point to things as you say them.



- ✓ **Link reading to real life.** For example, once your child learns hot and cold, ask them to find something hot in the picture, like the sun.
- ✓ **Encourage your child to ask questions.** As you read, stop regularly and prompt them with questions of your own, such as "Why did the rabbit get lost?" or "What do you think will happen next?"
- ✓ **Find books on topics you know will interest your child.** Make note of topic preferences, such as cars or animals. Ask your child to choose their own books.
- ✓ **Read the same stories over and over.** Repetition helps your child become familiar with the way stories are organized, as well as concepts and vocabulary.

Reading with children in kindergarten through third grade

Goals at this age include developing the basic building blocks of reading like letters and words, as well as increasing reading confidence and comprehension.

- ✓ **Keep reading to your child.** Even when they have started to read on their own, it's important to maintain a daily practice.
- ✓ **Use opportunities in everyday life.** Build vocabulary and listening skills by talking through what you're seeing and doing while cooking, driving or visiting new places.



- ✓ **Make words tactile.** At first, use magnetic letters on the refrigerator to spell out basic words, or cut letters out of magazines. As your child progresses, point out new words in books and practice pronouncing them. As they advance further, point out parts of words that are important to the definition, such as "un," "full" and "less."
- ✓ **Take turns reading out loud.** Don't interrupt your child to correct mistakes that don't change the meaning of the story.
- ✓ **Talk about the main components of stories.** Discuss the plot and characters. Ask your child how different characters are related, how they think a character will solve a problem and what parts of the story were the beginning, middle and end.
- ✓ **Develop comparison skills.** Ask how characters or subjects in one book are similar to or different from those in others your child has read.
- ✓ **Ask your child to name the stories they like best and why.** Discuss which books are adventures, mysteries or other genres.
- ✓ **At the end of a book, ask your child to name anything they learned or enjoyed.** Ask about the author's intention: "How did she want us to feel?" "Did she teach us anything new?"

Reading with children in grades four through six

Goals at this age include improving fluency, analytical skills and diversity of reading materials.

- ✓ **Practice reading difficult text out loud.** Do this until your child no longer stumbles over words.
- ✓ **Read the same story or novel separately.** Then discuss it together.
- ✓ **Monitor independent reading choices.** Make sure your child is challenging themselves. Make sure they are transitioning from early reader books with only a few words on the page, to longer books with chapters.
- ✓ **Keep a running list of difficult vocabulary words and their meanings.** Include words your child is learning in other subjects such as science and social studies.
- ✓ **Play word games like Scrabble and hangman.** Or, find fun word games online.
- ✓ **Start to introduce informational materials.** Read items such as instructions, mail or maps together.
- ✓ **Read non-fiction articles in newspapers or online.** Discuss the difference between facts and opinions.
- ✓ **Encourage research.** When your child asks questions, ask them to think about where they might find the answer.
- ✓ **Develop recall skills.** After your child reads, have them verbally summarize the main ideas and details to you.



Reading in middle and high school

Once your child has basic reading skills, they will be expected to develop—and continually deepen—their ability to use the written word to:

- ✓ Conduct research for various school subjects
- ✓ Compare and contrast points of view and form their own opinion
- ✓ Understand what's going on in the world
- ✓ Gather information and instructions needed to manage everyday life
- ✓ Seek enjoyment, enrichment and inspiration

As your child moves through middle and high school, ensure they have many different kinds of books at home and read the news, whether on paper or online. Talk to your child's teachers about their progress and, if they are struggling, make a clear action plan for helping them improve. Many schools and libraries have tutoring programs and other resources. It's critical to catch reading problems early, as reading is fundamental to every aspect of your child's education and, later on, college and professional success.

Reading Resources

PTA Reading Programs:

pta.org/programs

NEA Read Across America Program:

nea.org/grants/886.htm

First Book:

firstbook.org

Reading is Fundamental:

RIF.org

Reading Rainbow:

readingrainbow.com

Reading Rockets:

ReadingRockets.org

International Literacy Association:

Reading.org

PBS Parents:

PBSParents.org/Education

Scholastic:

Scholastic.com/Parents/Resources

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