

Why Is The Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP) Valuable For Students?

A Guide for Parent-Teacher Discussions

This document will help teachers answer parents' questions about the value and benefit of the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP). It is not a comprehensive list, but was designed to help teachers introduce the MAP test and explain its value to teaching and learning.

1. Why did students start taking the MAP test?

- MAP is the required state assessment for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and high school Algebra I and English II. MAP, which replaces our previous annual assessment, is aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, which means it measures students on the content and skills they have learned during the school year. Mississippi teachers participated in the development of MAP to identify students' strengths and areas for improvement to ensure they are on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career.

2. How is the test valuable? Why should my child take this test?

- MAP helps parents understand how their child is progressing in English Language Arts and Mathematics and how he or she is performing in comparison to peers. It is a tool to ensure a student is making the progress he or she needs to be on track for the next grade level.
- The MAP test also provides detailed information on student learning, identifying where a child is doing well and where he or she needs more support. It is important for students to take this test so that teachers have this information and can provide more personalized learning to support students in the areas where they need to improve.

3. What kinds of questions are on the test?

- The questions on the MAP test mirror the activities that students perform in the classroom on a regular basis, so they are familiar with the tasks. MAP includes complex, multi-step questions that require students to apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world problems. Students are asked to write well-organized responses citing evidence from the text, and solve complex problems while describing and defending their reasoning.
- To see a practice test, visit: www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/MAP

4. Why is it important for all students to take the MAP test?

- These tests provide valuable information on student performance that instructs classroom differentiation, as well as resource allotment for schools. MAP gives parents and teachers an important indicator of how that student is progressing and learning and helps parents and teachers identify and address individual student learning gaps.



- The test is also an important tool that schools and districts use to help identify achievement gaps. Results from the test ensure that all students, regardless of their varied abilities and backgrounds, receive a high-quality education.

5. Why is my child's score important?

- The scores on these tests are important because they serve as an “academic check-up” and show how well students are progressing year over year to ensure they are prepared to be successful in life after high school. If any learning gaps exist, they can be addressed early on so a student can get back on track for the next grade level, and eventually to graduate prepared for the next step.

6. How much time do students spend on annual assessments?

- The maximum test times range from approximately 3.5 to 4.5 hours. Most tests are scheduled over a two-day period. Overall, students spend less than 2 percent of classroom time taking the annual MAP test.
- Since the assessments are aligned to our state standards, all learning prepares students for these assessments. Good teaching will always be the best method of preparing students for success—whether that's success on an assessment, a project or presentation, or whether it's being prepared for the next grade.

7. What if my child receives special education or English language services?

- Students with IEPs or English Language Learners are also eligible for accommodations on the assessments. Talk with your child's teacher if you have questions about eligibility or the types of accommodations available.

8. Where can parents go for more information?

- For more information about the test, and to see sample questions, visit www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/MAP

Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP) Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

1. What is the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP)?

MAP is the required state assessment for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and high school Algebra I and English II. MAP, which replaces our previous annual assessments, is aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, which means it measures students on the content and skills they have learned during the school year. Mississippi teachers participated in the development of MAP to identify students' strengths and areas for improvement to ensure they are on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career.

2. How is MAP different from previous state assessments?

MAP is a Mississippi-developed assessment that tests students on critical thinking and problem-solving. The test goes beyond multiple-choice questions to get a deeper understanding of students' learning. Students are required to apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world problems and describe their reasoning. With the exception of the writing portion of the ELA test, students will take the MAP test on a computer.

3. Is there an alternate test for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD)?

Yes. The alternate test for students with SCD is called MAP-A. It includes ELA and Mathematics tests for grades 3-8, science tests for grades 5 and 8, and tests for Algebra I, English II and Biology I.

4. What if my child receives special education or English language services?

Students with IEPs or English Language Learners are also eligible for accommodations on the assessments. Talk with your child's teacher if you have questions about eligibility or the types of accommodations available.

5. When will my child take the MAP test?

MAP tests will be administered during the testing window of April 25, 2016 to May 17, 2016. Your child's teacher will provide you with specific test dates.

6. How much time will my child spend on the annual MAP test?

The maximum test times range from approximately 3.5 to 4.5 hours. Most tests are scheduled over a two-day period. Overall, students spend less than 2 percent of classroom time taking the annual MAP test.

Since the assessments are aligned to our state standards, all learning prepares students for these assessments. Good teaching will always be the best method of preparing

students for success—whether that’s success on an assessment, a project or presentation, or whether it’s being prepared for the next grade.

7. Why does my child take the MAP test?

MAP provides valuable information about your child’s strengths and areas for improvement so you and your child’s teacher can ensure your child is on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career. When combined with other measures, including teacher reports and student grades, MAP helps provide a complete picture of student achievement. MAP also helps ensure schools are meeting the needs of all students by comparing student performance across schools and districts.

8. Why is my child’s participation important?

MAP serves as an “academic check-up.” Although it is only one measure of your child’s progress, the scores on MAP can be compared from one year to the next. This makes them a useful tool to ensure your child is making progress and is on track for the next grade level and to graduate prepared for the next step.

9. Will the MAP help my child improve?

Yes. MAP score reports break down each subject into different categories of skills, and shows how well your child performed in each. This helps you and your child’s teacher understand where your child is doing well and where he or she needs more support. You can use this information to guide a discussion with your child’s teacher(s) about additional supports or challenges needed in class and other ways to help build your child’s skillset at home. Teachers will use this information to guide their instruction and provide more support and challenges when needed.

10. How will my child prepare for the annual MAP test?

Since the MAP tests are aligned to our state standards, what students are learning throughout the school year prepares them for the tests. Good teaching will always be the best method of preparing students for success — whether that’s success on a test, a presentation or project, or to move on to the next grade.

11. When will I see my child’s MAP results?

Results for tests taken in the 2015-16 school year will be released in fall 2016. The delay is due to the standard-setting process, which takes place after a new test is administered for the first time. In subsequent years, MAP results will be available before the end of the school year.

12. Where can I go for more information?

For more information on the MAP test, including links to sample test items, visit www.mde.k12.ms.us/osa/map