

A closer a look at the new reading dashboard - Q & A

Q1. It would be great to be able to see the front page dashboard screen for a year group. That way we could see how we are doing versus the National Average in a simple way. Can you do this?

A: This is a feature that we are hoping will be available at some point in the near future. It will require the creation of a new Dashboard to view that level of data, as the current Dashboard cannot process beyond individual classes.

Q2. Are the suggested skills in the growth planning section printable?

A: Yes they are for individual students.

Q3: How do I do that please? I can do it from the domain score page, but I am assuming these are different.

A: On that page, click where you can see it says Suggested Skills in blue, above the domain scores, and that will show the skills.

Q4: How does it happen that I have a pupil's scaled score shown in blue (On Watch) when their vocab, discussion skills etc. are all coloured either red or yellow?

A: The Scaled Score colour relates to the category they appear in when compared to their peers (i.e. At/Above Benchmark, On Watch etc...) The domain scores in red means that the student has not fully mastered the domain. As they start master the domains, the On Track bar will move from red to yellow and then to green to show mastered.

Q5: I missed what SGP stands for...

A: Student Growth Percentile. How well a child is growing when compared to their peers.

Q6. Are the targets that you need to set for both points earned and book level?

A: You can set either or both for book level and points targets for Accelerated Reader quizzing. Targets can also be set in STAR Reading for the student to achieve a certain Scaled Score or Reading Age by a certain point in the year.

Q7: Is this pattern happening a lot to anyone else after the new test?

A: Student's scores can fluctuate over the course of the year. Many factors can affect a student and how well they perform on each individual test.

Q8: are those four tests Star reading tests?

A: Yes they are.

Q9: should the students be tested every term?

A: We recommend a minimum of 4 STAR tests per year, if you can. This will allow you to test at the start of each term as well as a final test.

Q10: Is there a STAR reading test at the beginning of the year which the students take?

A: The students take the same STAR Reading assessment all through the year. Questions/difficulty will change depending on growth being made. Any question seen by a student in STAR is retired for a 90 day period if they were take another test within that 90 days, this way the test does not repeat itself.

Q11: When interventions are in place it is possible to set a scaled score target which is automatically calculated. How does this SS relate to reading ages? It could be confusing to set an age in the dashboard and a SS in Progress and Intervention Monitoring.

A: The STAR Technical Manual (in the STAR Resources section in your website) provides a list of which Scaled Scores link to which Reading Ages. They're found on pages 30 - 35. You can also set STAR Reading targets in Progress, Monitoring and Intervention which does calculate a Scaled Score target for the student.

Q12: Is that 4 tests a year 120 days apart?

A: If you test 4 times a year (Sep, Jan, April & July for instance) you'll get 2 SGP scores, one in January and another from April onwards.

Q13: I meant the slightly different pattern - the new style which came in seemed to lead to a lot of mine down grading

A: Some schools mentioned students finding their first test on the new questions harder and longer than they usually found it, this lead to some lower scores in September - which we sometimes see anyway after the Summer holidays. As long as the students are prepared sufficiently and take each test in a controlled environment, allowing them to take their time on the questions then you shouldn't find too much difference. What they do between each test on Accelerated Reader affects overall growth patterns too. Our customer Services team can help if you want us to look at certain students & their data!

Q14: Why are some of the students coloured grey, even having taken a recent STAR test?

A: If you access the Reading Dashboard before a student takes their first STAR test, they will show in as ungrouped. You will still see the SGP and the Suggested Skills but if you want to view them within their benchmark groups you can manually group them

Q15: Can a student be in more than one group? E.g. Class group and Intervention Group.

A: Yes they can, you can view for the whole class or just your intervention group or even just an individual student.

Q17: How do you select those pupils?

A: On the SGP screen you decide who you want to look at i.e. class, group or student and then click on Growth Planning to look at the Learning Progression Navigator for the students selected.

Q18: this looks amazing but more easily used by Primary than secondary. This would take ages for 600 pupils!

A: We are hoping that updates to the software in the near future will allow you to generate a list of skills for a group and print it out. Or print all Suggested Skills for multiple students at once.

Q19: Are the skills priority rank from top to bottom or from left to right - in other words - does it matter which horizontal line you start on?

A: The skills have all been put into a teachable order by difficulty. Using your professional judgement though, you can decide where to start your students from but you will see Focus skills so you may want to start with those.

Q20: Can I print these pages?

A: In the top left of every screen you will see a PDF button that will allow you to print what you are looking at via PDF. You can only be print the Suggested Skills pages for individuals at the moment. The ability to create it for groups or classes is on the development schedule.

Q21: STAR testing every half term means the students targets and ZPDs are constantly changing. They might get confused!

A: Book level and points targets can be set either termly or every half term and pupils can be made aware that their target is only for that period of time. Reading age targets would be set for the whole year. ZPD's may not change dramatically every half term. Feel free to test as

and when required and when is logistically possible. A minimum of 4 tests is encouraged per year - but you don't need a new STAR test in order to set a new target in AR.

Q22: can class teachers access all these things or just admin?

A: The class teachers will be able to access the data for their class. Having Administrative capabilities means that you can access everything.

Q23: how can we extract data from the dashboard for our internal tracking and monitoring systems?

A: Data cannot be extracted from Dashboard yet. All raw data of students' scores can be exported by the admin user in the Users tab on your homepage, then in the Export Information link.

Q24: Can all users' access all the resources demonstrated or is it just for the administrator?

A: All users can access the resources that are made available.

Q25: Can we still test every half term? Under SGP what will happen if you test more than every 120 days?

A: You can still test every half term but the SGP will just track within the SGP periods. (August-Nov, Dec-March, April-July).

Q26: Will there be information available for target setting?

A: Information on target setting for STAR is found in the STAR Resources link within your RP site. Information on Target setting for AR is found in the Record Books & Targets section, then in Reading Practice Targets. We also hold information about targets on our renlearn.co.uk website. There is a Customers section and within that a Training tab that contains user guides for all products.

Q27: How do you arrange transfer of data from primary school?

A: Contact our Customer Services department by using Live Chat or by calling 020 7184 4000.

Q28: Our feeder high school has requested our year 8 data. You mentioned that this is easy to do but how do we do it please?

A: Please contact our Customer Services department using Live Chat or by calling 020 7184 4000. They will be able to talk you through it.

Q29: If some feeder primary schools use STAR and AR, but others don't is it still valid to use the data from the ones that do?

A: If you can have historical data on certain students then that will always be very useful - but we understand not all schools use STAR & AR and therefore cannot provide that data to you.

Useful Links:

- www.renlearn.co.uk/events
- www.renlearn.co.uk/starresources
- <http://www.renlearn.co.uk/customers/training/>