Part 1: Getting to Grips with the Fundamentals
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JUMP TO A KEY REPORT

Diagnostic Report
Growth Report
Summary Report
Screening Report

Don’t want to wait?
Contact our dedicated team now to learn more about using Renaissance Star Assessments™ to support your school’s assessment objectives by calling +44 (0)20 7184 4040
Introduction

The Essential Guide to Renaissance Star Assessments™ will provide you with valuable information on how these assessments support your whole school agenda.

The first in this series, ‘Getting to Grips with the Fundamentals,’ will lay the foundations for future guides, build on your knowledge and equip you with the essentials to better understand how your existing Star Assessment™ programme can deliver added value throughout whole-school assessment.
If you’re already using Renaissance Accelerated Reader™ or Renaissance Accelerated Maths™, you probably know ‘Star’ as a tool which supports the use of these programmes. But there are a few things about Star Assessments for reading and maths that you might not know...

The same test covers all age groups from early years to GCSE – so you can compare Year 2 results with Year 10 on the same scale.

Assessments built specifically for the New National Curriculum – helping you as a teacher to identify students’ mastery of skills and the next steps in their learning.

Renaissance Star Assessments™ is the only standardised test that can be taken as often as you want and provides you with instant reporting saving you time and reducing your workload.
Life without levels

It's a pretty tall order, even by education’s standards. But panic not. If you are a Renaissance® customer, then you already have access to Renaissance Star Assessments™, which means you already have everything at your fingertips to answer all those questions we posed earlier – without the need to invest in the development of home grown methods or incur the cost of procuring additional third party systems.

However, even if you already have access to Renaissance Star Reading® or Renaissance Star Maths™, we appreciate that it can still be a bit overwhelming when making the move to a new way of doing things. So to make things as easy and straightforward as possible, we’re going to walk you through the basics.

The removal of levels in assessment has brought with it equal amounts of opportunity, flexibility and confusion. But in this new world where schools have an unprecedented level of freedom, how can you:

• Maintain the right level of objectivity, validity and reliability?
• Ensure assessments effectively support student progression?
• Share meaningful insights with parents?
• Produce accurate individual, school-wide reports?

Oh, and deliver what Ofsted expects of you?
Getting ‘Star-ted’

Star Assessments are available for the following:

- **Star Reading®**
- **Star Maths™**
- **Star Early Literacy™**

It doesn’t matter which of the products you are using, the principles are still the same. Quick, easy and reliable, Renaissance Star Assessments™ support progress monitoring and intervention, and report results immediately to help inform planning and teaching. What’s more, they are built specifically to the **New National Curriculum**, revealing student mastery against age-related expectations.

Focusing exclusively on the role of supporting school assessment, Renaissance Star Assessments™ is a suite of online, adaptive, diagnostic tests. But what does this mean in practice?
Getting ‘Star-ted’

Watch a short clip of Head Teacher Richard Slade talking about how Renaissance Star Assessments™ make his school ‘bulletproof’.

vimeo.com/162370568

Online

As a cloud-based assessment programme, students take the Star tests online using a computer, laptop or tablet. So, no marking is required and there’s no need to transcribe data or results. A typical assessment takes just 20 minutes to administer. The results are available immediately and, most importantly, are consistent.

Adaptive

Unlike paper-based tests, Star Assessments are computer-adaptive. In non-jargon terms this means the questions vary based on previous responses and adjust the level of difficulty accordingly (in line with the student’s understanding). The advantage of this over many other methods is that every student sits a truly personalised test that accurately measures their knowledge and ability. Within minutes the class can be differentiated and gaps in knowledge identified.

Items answered by student

Correct Response  Incorrect Response  Standard Error of Measurement

Difficult

Easy
Getting ‘Star-ted’

This is possibly the most hard-hitting of Star’s credentials from a school management perspective. Diagnostic metrics are produced as an outcome of Renaissance Star Assessments™, including Reading Ages, Standardised Scores, Scaled Scores and indicators of early literacy and numeracy. You can also group the data to identify characteristics such as Pupil Premium, Gifted and Talented, those who are in danger of falling behind — or indeed any specific group you choose to define. And it goes even further. You can set and adjust benchmarks to match national standards (even as they change), and measure progress over time.

So now we’ve covered what Star can do for your whole-school assessment strategy, let’s look at the ‘how’ in a little more detail — starting with the four reports that will change the way you use Star forever.
There’s so much that Star can do for you when it comes to producing quick, easy and reliable reports – but here are four which are guaranteed to make it on to your ‘desert island’ list...

Diagnostic Report

Summary Report

Growth Report

Screening Report

And even if you’re unlucky enough to have a surprise Ofsted inspection – with these trusty reports available at your fingertips, you’ll always be (more than) prepared.

“The wide range of reports available has been extremely informative in helping us to effectively monitor pupil progress... For those children who are highlighted in the reporting as needing intervention, we investigate their results immediately and put in place appropriate strategies to make sure they are achieving that expected growth”

Dympna Storey
LITERACY COORDINATOR
MILLQUARTER PRIMARY SCHOOL
This shows how long a student has taken to test. Pupils should take around 20-25 minutes to complete the Star test. If you see a test below 15 minutes retest the student as this is an inaccurate test.

**PR= Percentile Rank**
Scale of 1-99
A score of 58 means this student's reading skills are greater than 58% of students the same age.

**PR Range= Percentile Rank Range**
The statistical variation of a student's PR score.

**NRSS=Normed Reference Standardised Score**
Compares a student to others nationally of the same age.
100 is Average, below 85 is Intervention, 115 and above is Gifted and Talented.

**ZPD= Zone of Proximal Development**
Book level range that the student needs to read between. This will help guide them to books best suited to their ability.

**Scaled Score**
This is the raw score from the test and ranges from 0-1400. It is based on the difficulty of the questions and the number of correct responses.

**Estimated Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)**
An estimate of the student's ability to read words quickly and accurately in order to comprehend the text.

This is represented in words read per minute. This is only reported for students in years 2-5.

**STARS Ability Reports**

Why you’ll love it!

- It gives you a structured way to discuss ability and areas of development with parents.
- The range of the “Scaled Score” provided in this report, allows you to pinpoint precisely where student progress is made and where they might need additional support.

"We check the Diagnostic Report weekly to make sure that everyone is on track and on target, and to see if any intervention is needed, which we then put in place. As a result, teachers are more conscious of struggling students, and we’re then able to support them through teaching strategies, classroom assistants and by tailoring specific work for them."

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Paud Loughran
Principal
St. Joseph’s Primary School
Growth Report

Why you’ll love it!

• At a glance you can see exactly where growth impact is being made (or not) – whether at individual, group or whole-school level – and compare in whatever way you like (remember the characteristics we mentioned earlier?)

• You can extract data from Star and use for your own reporting purposes or import into school management systems

The Scaled Score is the raw score from the test and will reflect even the smallest amount of progress.

"The Growth Reports are particularly useful in examining proportionally where children are; we can look at an entire year group and we can identify where to focus our interventions"

Graham Clayson
ICT MANAGER
CLIFTONVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
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<th>NRSS</th>
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Summary

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<th>PR</th>
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<th>NCL-R</th>
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You will have a summary at the bottom which shows the average growth made by the cohort selected.
Top Tip

If you don’t have time to go through the Diagnostic Report in detail, use the Summary Reports as a way of red flagging anything that needs urgent attention.

Summary Report

Why you’ll love it!

- It acts as an excellent indicator, giving you just enough information to know whether all is well, or if further investigation (and more detailed reporting) is required.
- It ranks the students in your class in terms of performance, providing you with a glance with information on your students who are meeting expectations, or those in need of intervention. This could be very helpful for identifying groups for pair reading or student-mentor support groups.

The Summary Report is a great report to give you an overview of a whole class or year.

- It acts as an excellent indicator, giving you just enough information to know whether all is well, or if further investigation (and more detailed reporting) is required.
- It ranks the students in your class in terms of performance, providing you at a glance with information on your students who are meeting expectations, or those in need of intervention. This could be very helpful for identifying groups for pair reading or student-mentor support groups.

To zoom in on the text, simply select the magnifying glass from the toolbar at the top of the PDF.
Screening Report

Why you’ll love it!

- You retain all of the control. You decide where the benchmarks are for your school, so no being pigeon-holed into a system. The Screening Report is for you to define... and then shine!

- Confirm the impact that additional funding has had on specific groups without losing hours manually processing spreadsheets

- A highly visual way of identifying exactly where students are in their development but also being able to view this relative to other year groups, cohorts and specific characteristics

Top Tip

Look out for your ‘blues’... with just a little bit of help this group can easily become ‘greens’

The Screening Report uses a Normed Referenced Standardised Score to identify students having difficulty reaching certain benchmarks. This score compares your students to other children of the same age nationally, with 100 being average.

A pupil that scores an NRSS below 85 will be grouped in intervention and could be entitled to access arrangements.

Students who score above 115 on their NRSS will be your gifted and talented.

Once identified you can start to organise your intervention plan.

NRSS: Normed Referenced Standardised Score PR: Percentile Rank

A pupil that scores an NRSS below 85 will be grouped in intervention and could be entitled to access arrangements.
Star-t as you mean to go on

We appreciate that there’s a lot to take in and by now your mind might be racing with lots of ideas as to how you can make more of your Star Assessments... so as a final helping hand in this guide we’ve brought you the best tips from UK schools who’ve already adopted Star as their main assessment method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Star Tip</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Run Star tests 6 times a year – termly or at even intervals</td>
<td>No curve balls when it comes to the end of year assessments – you’ll have an accurate view of student performance every step of the way – and have sufficient time to introduce or adapt interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Star as a whole-school assessment tool</td>
<td>You can easily track individual, cohort and school progress over time – if the tests have been conducted, the data for reports will be just a few clicks away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than a placement tool or evidence for access arrangements, Star has so much more to give – with virtually no additional effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make full use of characteristics</td>
<td>Gifted and Talented, Pupil Premium, Free School Meals, Gender – you choose. Assign the characteristics that are important to your school objectives. Then insight-rich reporting is just as easy as tracking individual progress.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Next steps in your Star journey

Hopefully this first part in our assessment series has given you lots to think about — and lots more to put into practice with supporting your whole school assessment. Don’t forget that if you need further support or have any specific questions as to how you can get more out of your existing Star programme, you can contact us in the following ways:

answers@renlearn.co.uk  +44 (0)20 7184 4040

Register now to receive your personal copy of the next instalment direct to your inbox at: www.renlearn.co.uk/assessment-guide

Make sure you don’t miss Part Two in the series where we will be helping you to better understand Standardised Scores, Percentile Ranks and Student Growth Percentiles (SGP), all in the context of tackling intervention and understanding growth.