



## **Florida’s Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy FAQs for VPK Program Administrators, Teachers or Staff**

### **General Questions**

- 1. What is the Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program and its purpose?**  
Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program is the statewide, standardized program known as Florida’s Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy implemented in all VPK programs as required by s. 1002.68, F.S., FAST using Star Early Literacy will be used to assess student achievement of the performance standards established in s. 1002.67(1)(a), F.S., in early literacy and mathematics.
- 2. What do VPK Administrators need to know to get started?**  
In the [Kickoff](#) and [Next Steps](#) letters you will find the URL site information and what you as a VPK Program will need to know and do and know such as rostering, informing families about FAST assessment requirements, screening windows, accommodations, non-participation status’ and additional resources available on the website <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>. All Test Administrators are required to complete the VPK FAST Training and have a copy of the [Test Administration Manual](#) prior to assessing students. Test Administrators will need the student login information, VPK Administrators and Teacher will need their login information to run reports.
- 3. What do VPK Programs do if they have changes in their program or enrollment?**  
If students are missing, need to be added, removed, or changed to another classroom, this must be done through your Provider Services Portal. The Division of Early Learning (DEL) sends nightly files to Renaissance generated from the DEL Provider Portal. The files will include students enrolled in VPK and information about classrooms and instructors. This allows the Renaissance system to setup the site for VPK Programs to administer the Star Early Literacy Assessment. All program changes must be made in the Provider Portal. Changes cannot be made in the Renaissance site. The changes made in the Provider Portal can take up to 48 hours to reflect in the Renaissance system.
- 4. Who will have access to the VPK Programs Star Early Literacy Assessment data collected?**  
The State of Florida Department of Education and the Division of Early Learning will have access to all VPK Programs data. Early Learning Coalitions will have access to the data in only the counties they serve. School Districts will have access to VPK Program data within their school district. VPK Programs will have access to data within their program.
- 5. Will there be trainings on how to administer the Star Early Literacy Assessment for VPK Program Test Administrators?**  
Anyone needing to complete the training requirements can do so through the Renaissance-U Training Courses for either Administrators or Teachers are available, using the: [FAST Star Early Literacy Renaissance-U Enrollment Guidance](#).

**6. Are the training sessions recorded and available for review purposes?**

Yes, a Review training course is available in Renaissance-U for anyone who needs to review the training information. To access this Review Course use the: [FAST Star Early Literacy Renaissance-U Enrollment Guidance](#). This training course is for review purposes only and does not meet the training requirement.

**7. Where can VPK Programs go for most recent updates on the Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program requirements?**

Updates can be found on Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy website: <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>.

**8. When are the Star Early Literacy Assessment scores to be shared with families?**

VPK Programs are required to provide a student's performance results from the assessment to the student's parents within seven calendar days after the administration of the assessment. VPK Programs must provide the Star Parent Report. The Star Parent Report provides a printable informational letter for parents or guardians and is available in **English** and **Spanish**. The link to running instructions can be found here: <https://help2.renaissance.com/reports/25027>.

**9. How can families become familiar with the Star Early Literacy Assessment if they do not have access to a computer at home?**

You may share the [Family Letter: What Parents Need to Know](#) families may use computers at local coalition, libraries or other agencies and learn about Star Early Literacy Assessment on the Renaissance website.

**10. What technology assistance is available for VPK Programs?**

The Division of Early Learning has provided funding for technology to each coalition. Coalitions should have communicated this with VPK Programs to ensure you have the needed technology for implementation.

**11. Do VPK programs assess VPK students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan?**

Yes. The Star Early Literacy Assessment should be administered to all VPK students unless, the VPK Program Administrator determines that the assessment is inappropriate. The assessment may be inappropriate for students that are Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, or who require a Medical Exemption Accommodation that can't be met with a computer-based test. In these cases, the student should be marked with a non-participation status of "Assessment Inappropriate."

**12. Do VPK programs assess VPK students who are English Language Learners (ELLs)?**

Yes, the Star Early Literacy Assessment should be administered in English to all VPK students, including those whose first language is not English. All students should be given the opportunity to complete the practice items, and if successful, complete the assessment. **Students who initially fail the practice items should be given two additional attempts to pass the practice items. If the student fails the practice items after three attempts, they should be marked with the non-participation status of "Non-English Speaker."** Every student should be provided an opportunity to complete the assessment in each Progress Monitoring period (PM1, PM2, and PM3).

**13. Can parents choose to opt-out their child from participating in the Star Early Literacy Assessment for VPK?**

No. Section [1002.53\(6\)\(d\)](#), Florida Statutes, require that each parent who enrolls their child in the VPK program must allow their child to participate in the coordinated screening and progress monitoring program. In addition, when parents complete the application for their child to participate in VPK, they also certify that, “Upon enrollment of my child in the VPK Program, I understand that I must allow my child to participate in the Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program (Section [1002.68](#), Florida Statues).”

**14. Can VPK programs complete progress monitoring between the required PM1, PM2, and PM3 windows?**

Yes. Throughout the VPK program year, the assessment will be available for ongoing progress monitoring, as needed for students. The Division of Early Learning encourages VPK programs to follow the below recommendations for additional progress monitoring of students that have a Percentile Rank that falls in the Below Average and Average ranges.

- a. For students with a Percentile Rank that falls in the Below Average range, best practices would be to progress monitor no more than every two weeks.
- b. For students with a Percentile Rank that falls in the Average range, best practices would be to progress monitor no more than once a month.

**15. Can VPK programs assess a new VPK student that enrolls after the program year has already begun?**

Yes. When a new student enrolls into your VPK Program you should administer the assessment after their first instructional week to establish a beginning or baseline score for that student.

**16. Does student assessment data transfer with a student that reenrolls with another VPK Provider?**

Currently, transferring student data is not available between VPK providers. The Division of Early Learning is actively working on solutions that will allow for student data transfers.

**17. Does student data transfer from the original VPK Program owner to the new owner?**

Currently, transferring student data is not available between VPK providers who change ownership during a program year. The Division of Early Learning is actively working on solutions that will allow for student data transfers.

**18. When a VPK program has a change of ownership during a program year how does this impact the Administration Schedule for the program?**

**The Progress Monitoring periods are based on the classroom schedule:**

PM1: Is the **first thirty (30) instructional days** of the VPK class schedule beginning with the first VPK instructional day.

PM2: Is the period of time in a VPK class schedule where **at least 40% of the instructional hours have been completed and no more than 60% of the instructional hours** have been completed.

PM3: Is the **last thirty (30) instructional days** of the VPK class schedule ending on the last VPK instructional day.

**19. Where can I find the Demo Video for Computers and Tablets, and can it be played in Spanish?**

You can view the [English Computer Demo Video](#) or [English Tablet Demo Video](#) or the [Spanish Computer Demo Video](#) or [Spanish Tablet Demo Video](#).

**20. What technical support is available?**

The Star Early Literacy Technical Manual is available, by clicking the link below:

<https://help2.renaissance.com/US/PDF/SEL/SELRPTechnicalManual.pdf>

**Renaissance System:** Users that need Renaissance System support should contact the Renaissance Place Help Desk and Technical Assistance Team at 1-800-338-4204 or by email at [FAST\\_Star@renaissance.com](mailto:FAST_Star@renaissance.com).

**Policy:** Users that have questions related to FAST using Star Early Literacy implementation requirements may email the Division of Early Learning at [VPKFAST@oel.myflorida.com](mailto:VPKFAST@oel.myflorida.com).

## Implementation Requirements

**21. Who is required to administer the assessment to students?**

A person who has been approved by the coalition as a test administrator by completing the training requirements established by the Division of Early Learning’s program requirements.

**22. Who will the assessment be administered to?**

The Star Early Literacy Assessment will be administered to all VPK Program students enrolled with valid certificates of eligibility. Districts/providers may choose to administer Star assessments to other students at their own expense.

**23. Where is the Star Early Literacy Assessment completed?**

The Star Early Literacy Assessment is a computer-adaptive assessment administered through a secure login on the Renaissance Welcome Portal. All VPK Programs have been assigned a testing site URL based on their early learning coalition. Each program should locate the testing site and corresponding URL to access the Star Early Literacy program in the [Kickoff Letter](#).

**24. How have VPK Programs been provided login information?**

Directors have previously been sent the Login Credential Conventions for VPK Programs and should be ensuring they use the correct Provider ID for their username. If you are the Director and are unsure of your login information, email [VPKFAST@oel.myflorida.com](mailto:VPKFAST@oel.myflorida.com).

VPK Administrators can look up their Personnel and Student login information by:

**VPK Instructor Login Information**

- Administrators can view the teacher login information once you login to your VPK Renaissance™ testing site, on the Home page:
  - 1) Select the user account in the upper-right corner. Select **Manage Apps & Users**, in the drop-down list.
  - 2) Select **Users**.
  - 3) With **“Personnel”** selected, select **search all personnel** and **click Search**.
  - 4) The teacher username starts with a lowercase t. Example (t12345)

**Note: Instructors are required to customize the password after the first login.**

#### **VPK Student Login Information**

- Administrators and Instructors can view the student login information once logged into the VPK Renaissance™ testing site, on the Home page:

- 1) On the Home page, select the user account in the upper-right corner. Select **Manage Apps & Users**, in the drop-down list.
- 2) Select **Users**.
- 3) With **“Students”** selected, select **Password Report**

**Note: Student username and passwords may not be customized.**

#### **25. Is there an Administration Manual?**

Yes, the Star Early Literacy Administration Manual is available at

[https://help2.renaissance.com/US/PDF/SEL/SEL\\_TAM.pdf](https://help2.renaissance.com/US/PDF/SEL/SEL_TAM.pdf)

All test administrators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Test Administration Manual.

This provides instructions on accessing the assessment for students. You may follow these steps as well:

1. Open your web browser and go to your VPK Site URL.
2. On the Login page, select I'm a Student.
3. The student enters their username and password and then selects Log In. The test administrator must verify the correct student has logged in.
4. Select the Star Early Literacy tile on the Home page. Students should not click on the Star Early Literacy tile until the test instructions have been read aloud to the students and they are ready to begin the test.
5. Are you inside your school? VPK Students are required to take the assessment at school. Select, Yes.
6. Test Administrators must enter the Monitor Password, (default is admin).
7. Select Start and begin the assessment.
8. The student will see a demonstration video that shows the student how to choose and enter an answer and how to use a Listen option to hear a question repeated.
9. The hands-on exercise will follow which teaches students to properly choose and enter an answer using the mouse, keyboard, or by tapping. Then the test will begin.
10. If administration of the assessment needs to be paused, select Resume Later to save the student's progress on the assessment. The student must complete the assessment within eight (8) calendar days. In order to resume later, test administrator will be prompted to enter the monitor password (default is admin).
11. Once the student completes the assessment, they will be redirected to the login screen. Please wait 5 minutes after students complete the assessment to check the Test Activity Report to verify the student completed the assessment.

**26. What happens if a user is prompted to enter the Monitor Password when administering the Star Early Literacy Assessment?**

The Monitor Password is **admin** (all lowercase)

*If an administrator wishes to disable the initial monitor password prompt that students see when they log in to test, they can do so by following these directions.*

**Editing the Password Requirement Preference:** From your Home page select your name in the upper-right corner > Edit Preferences > Password Requirement. By default, all of your classes are listed. For each class, un-check the 'Before a Star test' box, then click Save Changes.

**27. Are VPK programs using the Enterprise Scaled Score or the Unified Scaled Score?**

Beginning with the 2022-23 program year, VPK programs will use the Unified Scaled Score, with a scale of 200 to 1100. Having Pre-K (VPK) students on the Unified Scale puts them on the same scale as students in kindergarten through third grade.

Please Note: The Enterprise Scaled Score, with the scale of 300 to 900, was used by providers who participated in the Star Early Literacy VPK Pilot.

Literacy Classification	Enterprise Scale*	Unified Scale			Definition
		Pre-K to Grade 1	Grade 2	Grades 3+	
Emergent Reader	Early 300–487	Early 200–682	Early 200–709	Early 200–732	Student is beginning to understand that printed text has meaning. The student is learning that reading involves printed words and sentences, and that print flows from left to right and from the top to the bottom of the page. The student is also beginning to identify colors, shapes, numbers, and letters.
	Late 488–674	Late 683–785	Late 710–802	Late 733–824	Student can identify most of the letters of the alphabet and can match most of the letters to their sounds. The student is beginning to read picture books and familiar words around their home. Through repeated reading of favorite books with an adult, students at this stage are building their vocabularies, listening skills, and understandings of print.
Transitional Reader	Early 675–724	Early 786–815	Early 803–829	Early 825–851	Student has mastered alphabet skills and letter-sound relationships. The student can identify many beginning and ending consonant sounds and long and short vowel sounds.
	Late 725–774	Late 816–851	Late 830–862	Late 852–882	Student is probably able to blend sounds and word parts to read simple words. The student is likely using a variety of strategies to figure out words, such as pictures, story patterns, and phonics.
Probable Reader	775–900	852–1100	863–1100	883–1100	Student is becoming proficient at recognizing many words, both in and out of context. The student spends less time identifying and sounding out words and more time understanding what he or she has read. Probable readers can start to blend sounds and word parts to read words and sentences more quickly, smoothly, and independently.

**28. How often is the Star Early Literacy Assessment administered?**

VPK Programs are required to administer three times a program year, Progress Monitoring 1, 2 and 3. Coalitions will monitor that VPK Programs follow the [Administration Schedule](#) for 2022-2023 on Florida’s Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy [website](#) which details when the Star Early Literacy Assessment is administered:

**PM1:** Is the **first thirty (30) instructional days** of the VPK class schedule beginning with the first VPK instructional day.

**PM2:** Is the period of time in a VPK class schedule where **at least 40% of the instructional hours have been completed and no more than 60% of the instructional hours** have been completed.

**PM3:** Is the **last thirty (30) instructional days** of the VPK class schedule ending on the last VPK instructional day.

Throughout the year, the assessment will also be available for ongoing progress monitoring, as needed for students. *The State will collect the student’s first assessment score in the Progress Monitoring period for students who complete the assessment more than once.*

**29. How many attempts should VPK students be provided to pass the practice items before marking them with the non-participation status of “Failed Practice?”**

**Students should be given three attempts to pass the practice items.** If after three attempts, the student continues to fail the practice items, the student should receive a non-participation status of “Failed Practice.”

**30. What is best practice for administering PM1 to students?**

The Division of Early Learning discourages VPK Programs from testing students within the first instructional week.

**31. What is the group size requirement for administration in VPK Programs?**

The assessment shall be administered individually or in a small group with no more than five students.

**32. Where can administrators find information and resources available in reviewing data and to support data-driven decision making and instructional planning?**

Running Instructions for [Administration Resources](#) and [Reports](#) are available on Florida’s Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy website, <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>.

**Accommodations**

**33. What language will be available for Star Early Literacy Assessment administration?**

The Star Early Literacy is required to be administered in English.

**34. What test accommodations for students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan?**

The only accommodation in the software is extended time. See Timing Accommodations below.



**35. Are there general accommodations that are available to students who may need additional assistance in accessing Star Early Literacy?**

Yes, Star Early Literacy can be administered with a number of accommodations that typically do not impact the validity of the students' scores. Available accommodations include the following:

**General Accommodations**

- Administer the test in a location with minimal distractions.
- Administer the test in a separate location.
- Administer the test in a small group.
- Administer the test individually.
- Administer the test in a room with special acoustics.
- Administer the test in a room with special lighting.
- Administer the test in a room with special furniture.

**Presentation Accommodations**

- Magnify the size of the font type.
- Read the testing directions (but not the test itself) orally to students.
- Sign the testing directions (but not the test itself) to hearing-impaired students.
- Read the testing directions (but not the test itself) in the students' native language.
- Click the Listen button for the student, so that the platform repeats the question.

**Response Accommodations**

- Alter the method of input from mouse to keyboard (or vice versa), or to an assistive device. Assessments also can be administered on an iPad to utilize touchscreen functionality.
- Have the student respond orally, have the teacher enter the student's response in the system.

**Timing Accommodations**

- While nearly all students are able to answer Star Early Literacy assessment items within the standard time limits (90 seconds), teachers may extend time limits (270 seconds) for individual students who need more time to demonstrate their proficiency. Extended time limits have no effect on the test's validity, as a student's performance on a test question remains solely a function of the test's calibrated difficulty and what that student knows and can do, not how quickly the student can do it.
- Star Early Literacy reports indicate (via a footnote) whether a student was given an extended time limit to complete a test. A further note indicates that norms, as well as other technical data such as reliability and validity, are based on test administration using standard time limits.

**Non-Participation Status**

**36. What happens if a student is unable to complete the Star Early Literacy Assessment during the specific Progress Monitoring periods?**

VPK Program Administrators will use Non-Participation Status for students unable to pass the practice test items or for another reason why the student did not test. *If a student has a Non-Participation Status and a score the Division of Early Learning will not take the score.* The Non-Participation Status options are described below:



**Assessment Inappropriate-** For students that are Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Medical Exemption Accommodation that can't be met with computer-based test (IEP/504 requiring Paper Based Test). The Star Early Literacy Assessment may not be appropriate for all VPK students. If you have a student with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan and the VPK Program Administrator determines this assessment will not meet the student's needs, the student should receive a Non-Participation Status of "**Assessment Inappropriate.**"

**Failed Practice-** For students who failed the practice items after three attempts. The Star Early Literacy Assessment Practice Items should be administered to all VPK students unless the student has been given a Non-Participation Status of the Assessment Inappropriate and students should be given at least three attempts to pass the items. If a student continues to fail the items, the student should receive a Non-Participation Status of "**Failed Practice.**"

**Not Present During Testing Window-** For students absent during the **entire** Progress Monitoring period. The Star Early Literacy Assessment dates should be provided to VPK student families, to ensure their child's attendance on testing days.

**Non-English Speaker-** For students with a first language other than English who are unable to pass the practice items after three attempts. The Star Early Literacy Assessment is only administered in English. All students with a first language other than English should be given the opportunity to complete the practice items, if they pass, they continue and complete the assessment. They should be given two additional attempts to pass the practice items. If the student fails the practice items, then the student should receive a Non-Participation Status of "**Non-English Speaker.**"

**VPK Administrators are required to mark Non-Participation Status for students:**

1. Login to Renaissance with your school administrator account.
2. On the **Home page**, select your name in the upper-right corner.
3. In the drop-down list, select **Manage Apps & Users**.
4. On the Manage Apps & Users page, select **Users**.
5. **Type the name of the child** that did not test and select **search**.
6. Select the student that did not test.
7. Select the **Non-Participation Status tab on the View Student page**.
8. For the Assessment Type, select Star Early Literacy.
9. Then, in the drop-down list, select the Non-Participation Status.
10. To save your changes, select **Save**.

**37. Should VPK programs inform a student's family when the student is marked with a non-participation status for a given Progress Monitoring period?**

Yes, the family should be informed if a VPK student is marked with a non-participation status for any Progress Monitoring period.

## Intellectual Property

**38. Are VPK teachers or other staff allowed to photograph, film, or record the assessment as it happens on the student's screen?**

No, Renaissance Learning owns the intellectual property, including copyrights and trademarks, related to the Star Early Literacy Assessment. Capturing the screen or copying it by taking a photograph or filming it would infringe upon Renaissance's intellectual property rights. Those rights are protected by federal and Florida laws.

**39. What are the consequences of infringing intellectual property rights?**

The consequences for violating those rights can be very severe and include penalties for statutory damages ranging up to \$150,000 per violation.

**40. What should I do if I see a colleague or visitor filming or otherwise copying the assessment?**

As soon as possible, let a proctor or assessment coordinator know so that they can address the situation. In most cases, especially those when the person capturing the assessment is unaware of intellectual property laws, this will likely mean educating that person and having her or him delete the infringing photos or video.