

Getting Started

Selecting Students for STARI

STARI is designed for students in grades 6-9 who are 2-4 years behind grade level in reading.

To participate in the fluency strand of STARI, students should be able to read material at a third-grade level or higher (lexile 500, G.E. 3.5 or higher) with 95% or higher word reading accuracy (independent level) and with at least 75% comprehension. Students should also be able to read materials at a fourth-grade level or higher (lexile 600, G.E. 4.0 or higher) with 90% or higher word reading accuracy (instructional level). Students with mild or moderate disabilities or those who are advanced English language learners may be appropriate for STARI, along with students who struggle with reading comprehension but have no specific language or learning differences.

There are many different methods to determine which students should be placed in the STARI classroom, including diagnostic reading tests, standardized test scores, ELA teacher recommendations, grades, and IEPs. Some schools use below proficient scores on the state English language arts assessment as an initial screen for STARI eligibility. Students in the below-proficient range can participate in individual or group reading assessments, using one of the assessments below, to further determine whether their reading skills are well-matched with STARI.

- ❖ Reading Inventory Scholastic Evaluation (RISE)
- ❖ Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)
- ❖ Degrees of Reading Power (DRP)
- ❖ Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)
- ❖ Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- ❖ Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (GMRT)
- ❖ Gray Oral Reading Test (GORT)

STARI is not appropriate for students who read at a first, second, or beginning third grade level or who have an Individualized Education Plan that specifies work with a rules-based phonics program. STARI is also not appropriate for students who are English language learners at ELD levels 1-3.

Using the RISE Assessment

STARI is designed for students in grades 6-9 who are 2-4 years behind grade level in reading.

Eligibility for STARI may be determined by an individual's performance on the RISE, a diagnostic reading assessment developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) in collaboration with SERP and its school district partners.

The RISE provides six scores that correspond to six component reading skills.

- Subtest 1 (Word Recognition & Decoding)
- Subtest 2 (Vocabulary)
- Subtest 3 (Morphology)
- Subtest 4 (Sentence Processing)
- Subtest 5 (Efficiency of Basic Reading Comprehension)
- Subtest 6 (Reading Comprehension)

The scaled scores are reported as a number and are color-coded. The colors indicate a performance band:

-  Dark Green: high proficiency
-  Light Green: low proficiency
-  Yellow: needs improvement
-  Red: warning

The score reports make it easy to quickly identify the students who do not need STARI because they have all dark and light green scores. If a student has red scores across the board, s/he should be referred for further reading assessment to see if there is evidence of a language-based learning disability or other kind of profile where a rules-based phonics program would be more appropriate than STARI. To access the STARI curriculum, students need to be able to read third-grade level text and have oral communication skills at an intermediate English language development (ELD) level. STARI is really a comprehension intervention that secondarily addresses other components of reading: decoding, morphosyntax, and fluency. If students have needs improvement or warning scores in either or both of the two comprehension-related RISE subtests—Efficiency of Basic Reading Comprehension and Reading Comprehension—they are good candidates for STARI even if they have stronger scores on other RISE subtests.

Some students will have profiles that are harder to decipher because the components are all over the spectrum. It is especially important that their teachers and their performance history play a role in their placement. A student who has a mixed profile, and who had been performing well in early grades but has been slipping in the middle grades, may have an unnoticed reading problem that could be addressed in the STARI course. No single assessment should be used to determine the placement of these mixed-profile students. Further exploration of their needs, and consideration of options available in addition to STARI, should contribute to the decision.