

## Definitions

STAR Early Literacy scores represent how well a student understands concepts and possesses specific skills that are important in the development of reading ability. These scores represent a snapshot of achievement at a specific point in time. As with any assessment, it is important to remember that many factors can affect a student's scores. STAR Early Literacy scores give only one picture of how well a student is doing in school.

**Scaled score (SS)** is calculated based on the difficulty of items and the number of correct responses. Because the same range is used for all students, scaled scores can be used to compare student performance across grade levels. STAR Early Literacy scaled scores range from 300 to 900 and relate directly to the literacy classifications.

**Literacy classifications** are the stages of literacy development measured in STAR Early Literacy and associated with scaled scores: emergent reader (300–674), transitional reader (675–774), and probable reader (775–900). These stages are an easy way to monitor student progress:

### Emergent Reader (300–674)

- *Early Emergent Reader (300–487)*—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 Emergent Reader (488–674)*—Student can identify most of the letters of the alphabet and can match most of the letters to their sounds. The student is also beginning to “read” picture books and familiar words around the 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 (675–774):** 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, and is probably able to blend sounds and word parts to read simple words. The student is also likely using a variety of strategies to figure out words, such as pictures, story patterns, and phonics.

**Probable Reader (775–900):** 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 was read. Probable readers can blend sounds and word parts to read words and sentences more quickly, smoothly, and independently than students in the other stages of development.

**Literacy domain score** is a criterion-referenced score that represents the percentage of items a student would be expected to answer correctly within a domain. Literacy domain scores range from 0 to 100 in seven areas, covering 41 literacy skills:

**General readiness (GR)** assesses a student's ability to identify shapes, numbers, colors, and patterns; explore word length and word pairs; and examine oral and print numbers.

**Graphophonemic knowledge (GK)** assesses a student's ability to relate letters to corresponding sounds. Graphophonemic knowledge addresses skills and concepts such as matching upper- and lowercase letters, recognizing the alphabet, naming letters, recognizing letter sounds, and knowing alphabetical order.

**Phonemic awareness (PA)** assesses a student's ability to detect and identify individual sounds within spoken words. Phonemic awareness assesses skills and concepts such as rhyming words; blending word parts and phonemes; discriminating between beginning, medial, and ending sounds; understanding word length; and identifying missing sounds.

**Comprehension (CO)** assesses a student's ability to understand what has been read aloud, understand word meaning, and read text correctly. Comprehension addresses skills and concepts such as identifying and understanding words, selecting the word that best completes a sentence, and answering items about stories.

**Phonics (PH)** assesses a student's ability to read words by using the sounds of letters, letter groups, and syllables. Phonics addresses skills and concepts such as identifying short and long vowels, beginning and ending consonants, and consonant blends and digraphs; recognizing word families; and using strategies such as consonant and vowel replacement.

**Vocabulary (VO)** assesses skills and concepts such as identifying high-frequency words, matching pictures with synonyms, matching words with phrases, matching stories with words, identifying opposites, matching pictures with opposite word meanings, and identifying opposite word meanings.

**Structural analysis (SA)** assesses a student's ability to understand the structure of words and word parts. Structural analysis addresses skills and concepts such as finding words, adding beginning or ending letters or syllables to a word, building words, and identifying compound words.

**Skill score** is a criterion-referenced score that estimates a student's percent of mastery of specific skills within each of the seven domains. Skill scores range from 0 to 100.

**Estimated oral reading fluency (Est. ORF)** is an estimate of a student's ability to read words quickly and accurately in order to comprehend text efficiently. Students with oral reading fluency demonstrate accurate decoding, automatic word recognition, and appropriate use of the rhythmic aspects of language (e.g., intonation, phrasing, pitch, and emphasis). Est. ORF is reported in correct words per minute, and is based on a known relationship between STAR Early Literacy performance and oral reading fluency.