TAKS – Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Resources:

❖ Information Booklets contain sample items, reading/writing selections and prompts. Download at: www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/booklets/index.html.


❖ TEKS (Curriculum requirements): the state curriculum can be downloaded by grade and/or subject at www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/index.html.

❖ Student Guide to Graduation: grades 7-12. This brochure is intended to help students, parents, staff and the community understand the TAKS as well as graduation requirements. Download at www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/page5.html.

❖ Additional information about the Texas testing program: www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/.

Who takes TAKS?

**ENGLISH TAKS**

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**SPANISH TAKS**

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Student Success Initiative (SSI)

The Student Success Initiative is a set of three initiatives that provide a system of academic support to help ensure achievement on grade level in reading and mathematics so that every student can succeed. The grade advancement portion of the SSI is the result of a state law that came into effect for Grade 3 students beginning with the 2002-2003 school year.

Under this law, Grade 3 students must pass the reading section of the TAKS in order to be promoted to the next grade. Students will have three opportunities to pass this test. Each student who does not pass either the first or second administration of TAKS must receive additional appropriate accelerated reading instruction immediately.

Beginning in 2004-2005, each 5th grade student must pass both the reading and mathematics sections of the TAKS in order to be promoted to the next grade. When the current 5th grade class enters 8th grade (2007-2008) the rules will apply again and each 8th grade student from that point on will have to pass both the reading and mathematics sections to be promoted to the 9th grade.

The goal of the Texas Reading Initiative is that all students will read on grade level or above by the end of Grade 3 and continue to read on grade level or above throughout their schooling.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What will happen if a student doesn’t pass the 3rd grade reading assessment or the 5th grade reading and/or mathematics assessments?

A: The student will have two additional opportunities to take the test(s) before the next school year begins. A grade placement committee will be established for each student who does not demonstrate proficiency on the second administration of TAKS. Each student’s GPC will:

- Determine appropriate accelerated instruction that the district must provide the student before the third test administration.

- Consider all “facts and circumstances” if a parent appeals the automatic retention of a student who does not demonstrate proficiency after three testing opportunities. The GPC may promote the student if it determines, by unanimous decision, and in accordance with local school board standards, that the student is likely to perform satisfactorily at the next grade level given additional accelerated instruction.

- Develop a plan for the accelerated instruction the student shall receive during the next school year, regardless of whether a student is retained or promoted.
Q: Do these same promotion requirements apply to students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) or in Special Education?

A: Yes. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students and Special Education students who are not exempt from the TAKS test in English or in Spanish must meet these grade advancement requirements.

Q: How can families help?

- Talk, ask questions, and keep in touch with your child’s teacher and school.
- Spend as much time as possible reading a wide variety of books and other kinds of text with your child.
- Ask questions about what your child has read, discussing the meaning of new words, and comparing one story with another.
- Reduce television time. Plan family learning activities that will support your child’s learning.
- Discuss with your child’s teacher the results of the reading inventory that each student takes in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. The reading inventory is required under Texas state law and is an additional tool to monitor progress and to support the overall quality of reading instruction that your child is receiving.
- To learn more about helping your child begin to read, you may order the booklet Beginning Reading Instruction: Practical Ideas for Parents by calling the Texas Education Agency Publications Distribution Office at (512) 463-9744.

Q: What happens if a student doesn’t pass the Exit Level TAKS?

Students must pass all sections of the TAKS in order to graduate. For those students who fail one or more sections of the Exit Level TAKS, the following options apply:

- Four (4) more testing opportunities are provided prior to graduation to enable the student to pass the section(s) in which the passing standard has not been achieved – summer after 11th grade and October, February, and April of 12th grade.

- Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) – counselors meet with the student and parent(s) to devise an individualized acceleration plan which includes appropriate monitoring and intervention as well as other evaluative strategies; another component of the PGP is an intensive instructional program which should include innovative methods to promote the student’s advancement. The PGP addresses participation of the student’s parent or guardian, including consideration of the parent’s or guardian’s educational expectations for the student.

- All students who fail one or more sections of the TAKS are placed in a TAKS Acceleration class that meets daily.