NWEA™

A Parent's Guide to MAP

This guide was created as a resource to help you and your family better understand MAP and your child's results.

1. What is MAP?

MAP® is a computer adaptive test created by NWEA™ that kids take two to three times per school year. The results provide teachers with information to help them deliver appropriate content for each student and determine each student's academic growth over time.

2. What does it mean to be computer adaptive?

Computer adaptive tests adjust to each student's learning level, providing a unique set of test questions based on their responses to previous questions. As the student responds to questions, the test responds to the student, adjusting up or down in difficulty.

3. What does MAP measure?

MAP is used to measure a student's performance level at different times of the school year and compute their academic growth.

4. What is a RIT score?

After each MAP test, results are delivered in the form of a RIT score that reflects the student's academic knowledge, skills, and abilities. Think of this score like marking height on a growth chart. You can tell how tall your child is at various points in time and how much they have grown between one stage and another.

The RIT (**Rasch Unit**) scale is a stable, equal-interval scale. Equal-interval means that a change of 10 RIT points indicates the same thing regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom, or middle of the scale, and a RIT score has the same meaning regardless of grade level or age of the student. You can compare scores over time to tell how much growth a student has made.

You can find out more about the RIT scale **here**.

5. How do schools and teachers use MAP scores?

MAP helps schools and teachers know what your child is ready to learn at any point in time. Teachers can see the progress of individual students and of their class as a whole. Principals and administrators can see the progress of a grade level, school, or the entire district.

Since students with similar MAP scores are generally ready for instruction in similar skills and topics, it makes it easier for teachers to plan instruction. MAP also provides typical growth data for students who are in the same grade, subject, and have the same starting performance level. This data is often used to help students set goals and understand what they need to learn to achieve their goals.

5. Can MAP tell me if my child is working at grade level?

Yes. Just as a doctor has a chart showing the most common heights of people at certain ages, NWEA researchers have examined the scores of millions of students and put together charts showing the median RIT scores for students at various grade levels. You can see a chart of these scores in the **Comparative Data to Inform Instructional Decisions PDF**. Please note that MAP scores are just one data point that teachers use to determine how a student is performing. Please discuss any questions that you have about your child's performance with your child's teacher.

6. What subjects are available with MAP?

There are MAP tests for grades 2 – 12 in reading, language usage, math, and science.

There are also primary grades tests for grades K – 2, referred to as MAP for Primary Grades (MPG), in reading and math. With these child-friendly tests for young learners, students wear headphones, since many questions include audio to assist those who are still learning to read.

7. How long is a MAP test?

Tests are not timed, and students may take as much time as they need to complete them (this eliminates some of the pressure and anxiety students may feel about taking tests). Most students take less than an hour to complete a MAP test. MPG tests are typically shorter.

8. How often will my child take MAP tests?

Most schools give MAP tests to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Some schools have students take MAP tests at other times throughout the year.

9. Is MAP a standardized test? How is it different from "high-stakes" or state tests?

MAP tests are interim assessments, which means they may be given periodically during the year. MAP is based on the same standards as the summative ("high-stakes" or state) tests, so they measure similar content. Teachers receive immediate results with MAP that show what students know and what they are ready to learn. The results can be used to help personalize lessons at the appropriate level for the students.

Most state or high-stakes tests measure what students already know—based on what is expected at their grade level—and are typically given at the end of the school year as a way to measure grade-level proficiency.

10. What types of questions are on MAP tests? Are there sample tests?

The MAP tests include multiple choice, drag-and-drop, and other types of questions. You can view our **MAP Warm-Up Test** to get an idea of what MAP questions look like.

11. Are MAP tests accessible?

Yes, NWEA is committed to making our tests accessible for all students. Download our **Accessibility and Accommodations FAQ** for more details.

12. What information will I receive from my child's school?

Most schools will provide your child's Student Progress Report, which contains information and scores from your child's most recent and past MAP tests. A simplified sample report with definitions and explanations is included on the last page of this document to help you better understand how to read and interpret the report.

13. How do I learn more about my child's test results, and who do I contact with specific questions?

Ask your child's school or teacher about your child's test results and what more you can do to help your child achieve their academic goals.

Due to privacy laws regarding student information (specifically stemming from the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA]), NWEA is unable to discuss any student information, test results, or school assessment programs directly with parents, guardians, or other family members.

14. What does NWEA do with my child's information? Is it secure?

NWEA uses technological and operational measures to ensure security and privacy, including regular security audits and monitoring, technological controls, physical access controls, and privacy training for employees.

NWEA does not use your child's personally identifiable information (PII) for any purpose other than to provide services to your child's school. Combined information that has been stripped of PII, and therefore is not traceable to any student, is used for research and development so we can continuously improve our products and accelerate learning for all students.

We do not sell PII. Data sharing (if any) is completely at the control of the educational institutions that purchase our products.

NWEA™ is a global not-for-profit educational services organization known for our flagship interim assessment solution, Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®). For nearly 40 years, educators have trusted our assessments, professional learning offerings, and research to help advance all students along their optimal learning path.

Tips for Parents

Ways to help your child prepare for testing

- Meet with your child's teacher as often as needed to discuss his or her progress. Ask about activities you and your child can do at home to help prepare for tests and improve your child's understanding of schoolwork. Parents and teachers working together benefits students.
- Provide a quiet, comfortable place for studying at home without distractions from TV or electronic devices.
- Make sure that your child is well rested on school days and especially the day of a test. Children who are tired are less able to pay attention in class or handle the demands of a test.
- Give your child a well-rounded diet. A healthy body leads to a healthy, active mind.

Ways to help your child with language

- Talk to your child and encourage him or her to join in conversation during family activities.
- Give your child a journal or diary as a gift.
- Help your child write a letter to a friend or family member. Offer assistance with correct grammar usage and content.
- Select a "word of the week" and encourage your child to use the new word throughout the week.
- Plan a special snack or meal and have your child write the menu.
- After finishing a chapter in a book or a magazine article, have your child explain his or her favorite event.

Ways to help your child with reading

- Provide many opportunities for your child to read a wide variety of books, magazines, and other materials. By reading new materials, a child learns new words that might appear on a test. Read aloud to your child, even when your child can read independently. Research shows that this is the most important activity parents can do to increase their child's chance of reading success.
- Make time for frequent visits to the library, and let your child explore books that interest him or her.
- Ask your child's school about a suggested outside reading list or get suggestions from the public library.
- Play games like Scrabble®, Spill and Spell™, Scattergories®, and Balderdash™ together.
- Work crossword and word search puzzles with your child.

Ways to help your child with math

- Spend time with kids on simple board games, puzzles, and activities that encourage better attitudes and stronger math skills. Even everyday activities such as playing with toys in a sandbox or in a tub at bath time can teach children math concepts such as weight, density, and volume.
- Encourage children to solve problems. Provide assistance, but let them figure it out themselves. Problem solving is a lifetime skill.
- The kitchen is filled with tasty opportunities to teach fractional measurements, such as doubling and dividing cookie recipes.
- Point out ways that people use math every day to pay bills, balance their checkbooks, figure out their net earnings, make change, and tip at restaurants. Involve older children in projects that incorporate geometric and algebraic concepts such as planting a garden, building a bookshelf, or figuring out how long it will take to drive to your family vacation destination.
- Children can learn to read and interpret charts and graphs such as those found in daily newspapers. Collecting and analyzing data will help your child draw conclusions and become discriminating a reader of numerical information.

Quick Reference

This sample report is meant to help you better understand your child's Student Progress Report and MAP test results.

NWEA researchers analyze test data from millions of students and determine how student's MAP scores typically change over time based on subject, grade, and starting performance level. The report uses this information to show you how your child is doing compared to other students in the same grade, not only in your child's school district, but all across the United States.

Your child's report may contain multiple charts reflecting the various test subject areas. Because school districts can make several choices when they print this report, your report may look different, but it will not change the meaning of the data on the report.

If you have any questions about your child's Student Progress Report, please contact your child's school or teacher.

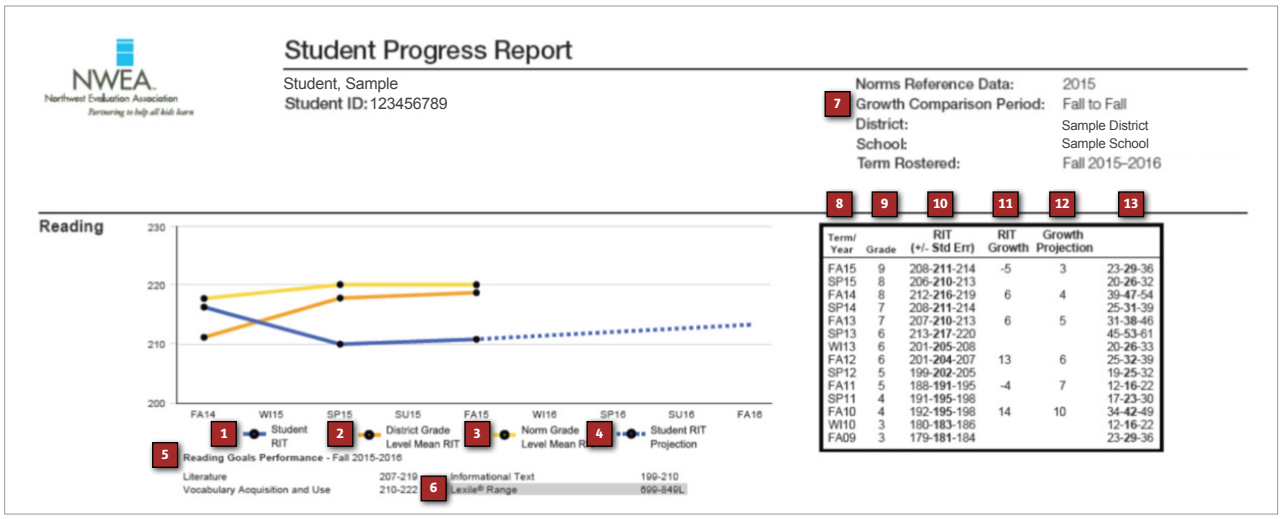

Chart Legend

1. Student RIT – Your child's RIT score on each test.
2. District Grade Level Mean RIT – The average RIT score for students in the same school district, same grade level, and same subject that were tested at the same time as your child. This number is only generated after the district finishes testing. If you do not see this number, it is because the district did not mark the testing season complete for the term.
3. Norm Grade Level Mean RIT – The average RIT score for students who were in the same grade and tested in the same subject in the same term (uses information from districts all over the country). If you do not see this number, that information is not available due to a lack of sufficient comparable data for the grade and subject.
4. Student RIT Projection – A projection of how your child will perform on future tests based on how your child has performed on past tests, as well as how other students in the same grade and subject who tested in the same term with similar scores have performed.
5. Goals Performance – This section shows how your child did in each goal area. You may see a RIT range here or a descriptive adjective. Goal descriptors translate the percentile to one of the following: Low (percentile less than 21), LoAvg (percentile between 21 and 40), Avg (percentile between 41 and 60), HiAvg (percentile between 61 and 80), and High (percentile greater than 80). So, for example, if your child's score for "Building Vocabulary" is HiAvg, this means that the student is performing better in this goal than 61-80% of other students in the same grade. If you see an asterisk (*) for any goal, it means that the goal score could not be calculated due to too many questions answered incorrectly.
6. Lexile Range – This range appears when your child has taken a reading test and allows you to identify appropriately challenging books, periodicals, and other suitable reading materials.

Results Table Legend

7. Growth Comparison Period – The terms that define the time frame for which the RIT Growth, Growth Projection, and Student RIT Projection value(s) are calculated.
8. Term/Year – The test term (FA=fall, SP=spring, WI=winter, SU=summer) and the year when the student took the test.
9. Grade – Grade of the student when the test was taken.
10. RIT – The middle, bold number is the student's RIT score. The numbers on either side of the bold RIT score define the RIT range. If retested soon, the student's score would fall within this range most of the time.
11. RIT Growth – This shows the student's growth in RIT points made between tests in the Growth Comparison Period. For example, if the Growth Comparison Period (see #7 above) is fall to fall, this will show the growth between consecutive fall tests.
12. Growth Projection – The average growth of students who were in the same grade, tested in the same subject tested in the same initial term, and began with a similar RIT score.
13. Percentile Range – The number in the middle is this student's percentile rank, or the percentage of students in the same grade that had a RIT score less than or equal to this student's score. The numbers on either side of the percentile rank define the percentile range. If retested soon, the student's percentile rank would be within this range most of the time.

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