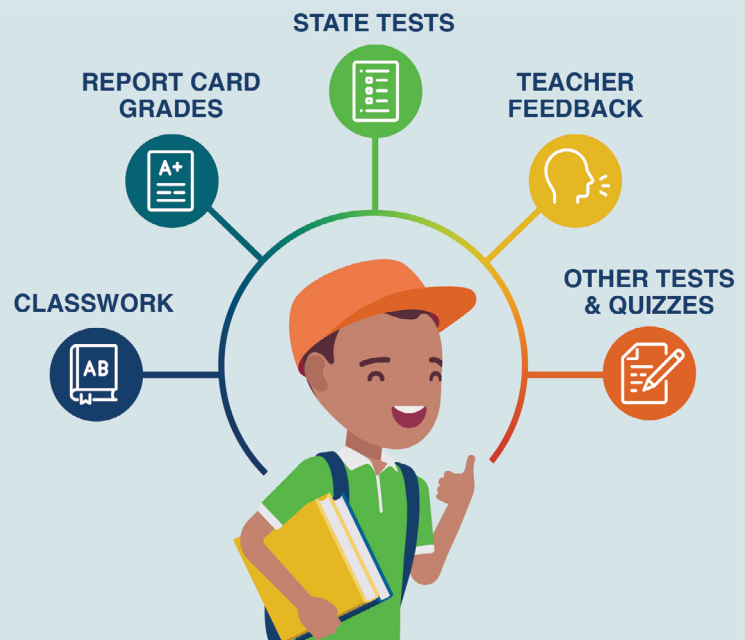




A FAMILY GUIDE TO ANNUAL STATE TESTS IN IOWA: One of Many Measures of Student Learning

There are many ways to measure academic performance, and annual state tests are only one of them. These tests are not meant to tell the whole story. They are meant to be combined with other measures, including teacher feedback, classwork and projects, and report card grades. Together, these measures can give families a more complete picture of a student's performance so they can better support learning at home and advocate for their child.



State Assessments 101

The Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA, requires students to take state tests in reading and math every year in third through eighth grade and once in high school. In Iowa, students in third through 11th grade take the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) in English language arts and math. Students in fifth, eighth and 10th grade also take the ISASP in science.

A Focus on Grade Level Skills

Unlike other tests, ISASP is focused on grade level material and is aligned to the state standards. The test questions match what students do and learn in the classroom every day throughout the year, which are the skills that are most important for students to learn in order to move on to more challenging content.

The ISASP test can be taken online or with paper and pencil. Districts decide how students will take the test, but the goal is to have all students take the test online. The test includes a variety of different types of questions, including traditional multiple choice and questions that ask students to write equations and well developed essays. ISASP was developed at the University of Iowa in collaboration with Iowa teachers from across the state.

Grade 6: Math

Abigail sells reusable bags. The table below shows the total price, p dollars, to purchase r reusable bags. All prices are before tax.

Number of Reusable Bags (r)	3	5	8
Total Price (p)	\$10.50	\$17.50	\$28.00

Part A

The equation below represents the relationship between the number of reusable bags, r , and the total price, p dollars.

Enter a number in the to complete the question.

$$p = \text{ } r$$

Part B

What is the greatest number of Abigail's reusable bags that can be purchased, before tax, with \$200?

Enter a number in the to complete the question.

reusable bags



Grade 3: ELA

[1] Gracie was eating cereal at the kitchen table when her older brother Nathan screamed.

[2] "A mouse!" Nathan shouted, jumping up and pointing.

[3] Gracie turned to look. Her mom was standing at the counter with a plastic container in her hand. She was making the kids' lunches for school that day, but now she stood as still as a statue.

[4] Nathan, looking terrified, was trying to climb onto the table.

[5] "You're twelve years old, Nathan," said Mom. "Now stop that. You're going to scare your sister."

[6] "I'm not scared," said Gracie.

Use both stories to complete this task.

Select each description below and move it to the box with the name of the character(s) that it best describes.

	<input type="text"/> Brave	<input type="text"/> Problem Solver	<input type="text"/> Supportive
Gracie	Seth	Both Gracie and Seth	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	



Useful Information for All

FAMILIES: Understanding Grade Level Performance

The ISASP report gives families information on how well their child performed on different sets of skills in each subject. Families can use this information to identify where their child is doing well and where they may need support or practice. This helps families better support learning at home. It can also help them start meaningful conversations with teachers, set goals for each student's areas of improvement and identify resources and strategies that can be used at home and in school to help students make progress.

Questions to Ask the Teacher about Your Child's ISASP Report:

- What does this mean about my child's learning?
- Is my child on grade level?
- Where does my child need more support or improvement?
- What short-term learning goals should my child meet to show progress?
- How can I support learning at home?



TEACHERS: Informing Instruction

Students take different types of tests throughout the school year. Some students take benchmark or diagnostic tests, such as MAP Growth or i-Ready. These are taken several times a year and measure mastery of important concepts and skills in reading and math. Students take a test at the beginning of the year to identify their “starting point” and again throughout the year to measure their progress. Benchmark tests help teachers identify and address learning gaps early on so students can stay on track to meet grade level expectations. While ISASP is only given at the end of the school year, it is one way of showing how much progress students made from the beginning of the year and how well they met grade level expectations.

While teachers use ISASP results to understand each student's unique needs and support them in the areas where they need extra help, they also help teachers to improve their instruction. Teachers can use the results to look for trends in their students' learning to see what skills or concepts students learned and what content they struggled with. This helps teachers identify what they taught effectively and where they need to improve or change their instructional strategies.

SCHOOL & DISTRICT LEADERS: Informing Decisions

ISASP results are critical for school and district leaders to make informed decisions about schools and students. School and district level ISASP scores show leaders how students across a school or district are performing and indicate if a certain group of students or schools need more support. This allows them to target additional support or resources to help those schools improve. District leaders can also use ISASP scores to understand what strategies and changes are working.



STATE LEADERS: Helping Schools Improve

State leaders use ISASP results to identify schools and districts that need more support and resources. They identify the schools with the lowest performance in the state, as well as schools with certain groups of students that performed much lower on the test than the rest of the students in that school. These schools receive additional funding and resources from the state to support students and teachers. For example, schools may hire more teachers or tutors or they may purchase additional instructional materials and programs, depending on the needs of their students.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- For more information, visit Iowa.PearsonAccess.com/Resources/Bulletins/ISASP_FAQsBulletin.pdf
- To see a practice test, visit Iowa.PearsonAccessNext.com/Test-Prep/?utm_source=landingpage
- For ideas on how to support your child's learning at home, visit PTA.org/FamilyGuides
- For more information about the Iowa PTA visit IowaPTA.org/

