Guide to Interpreting
STAR Early Literacy
and
STAR Reading Data

Written by Amy Bartell
Above shows the comparison between benchmarking periods for STAR Early Literacy for Grade 2. Increasing the number of students in the At/Above Benchmark range from 71 to 75 (from 90% to 94%), and decreasing the number of students in each of the other categories shows excellent progress.

It will be important to look deeper at the data and compare which students have moved between levels. There may be students who have regressed as well which will not be observable by looking at the graph and numbers alone. Any student who has regressed or plateaued, causing them to fall below the benchmark may need to be evaluated further, and the instructional program targeted and monitored to ensure progress is reestablished.

NOTE: The scaled score for each category has increased from beginning of the year to the middle of the year for each category (see yellow highlighted box on screening reports above).
The example to the left was run by “class”. You can see the pretest and posttest data only for each student in the class. Testing between periods will not be shown on this report.

At the end of each of these reports, you will find the summary for the class. This will show you the percent increase or decrease overall for the class.

NOTE: This will be important when comparing between groups/classes of students. If the pretest’s scaled score are approximately the same, then comparing growth between groups is appropriate. (Example: Kindergarten A’s Pretest Mean is 629, and Kindergarten B’s Pretest Mean is 633 – these groups are comparable. However, if Kindergarten C’s pretest Mean is 688, then comparing between A and C would not be appropriate at this time. Less growth for Kindergarten C would be expected, as that class scored in the higher on the pretest.)
The Annual Progress Report – STAR Early Literacy

Annual Progress Report
- Gives a visual of the student’s rate of growth in relation to the risk categories
- Can select individual students, individual classes or all classes

Comparison → Risk Category.
This will give you the “Low Risk” (indicated by green line @ 75th percentile), “some risk” (between lines) and “at risk” (red line @ 25th percentile) trend lines as well as the student’s trend line in comparison (shown in black)

Interpreting the Annual Progress Report
- If the student’s trend line is ABOVE the green line (75th percentile), the student is “Low Risk” for reading failure.
- If the student’s trend line is between the green and red lines, the student is at “Some Risk” for reading failure. In this case, the student may need targeted, evidence based instruction matched to his/her weaknesses through either Tier 1 or Tier 2 instruction.
- If the student’s trend line is BELOW the red line (25th percentile), the student is “At Risk” for reading failure. Highly targeted intervention in addition to core instruction in Tier 2 or Tier 3 is warranted.
- Multiple measures should to be utilized to assess the student’s overall reading growth and assist with instructional decision making.
Interpreting the Annual Progress Report

- Generally, no need for intervention is necessary if the trajectory is downward – provided that the student is still in the “Low Risk” (75th percentile - above the green line) category AND multiple measures do not indicate the need for intervention.
- If the student does not experience any change in core instruction and fails to respond over time, falling below the “Low Risk” category is may be projected as shown in the examples below. If the trend line has a downward trajectory or has plateaued and has dipped below the “Low Risk” green line, while not cause for an immediate red flag, consider the following:
  - Retesting the student after delivering core instruction around weak areas to determine if trend has reestablished an upward trajectory.
  - If the student is not progressing, begin to document the interventions used, frequency/duration, and progress for use within your district’s RtI framework.

What will be a necessary consideration is the discrepancy between the “Low Risk” line and the student’s performance, remembering that this green line indicates the 75th percentile and the student may still be above the benchmark threshold (40th percentile). Reestablishing a continuous trajectory of growth is the goal (see important considerations, pg. 7).
This report is very similar to the STAR Early Literacy Annual Progress Report. The differences lie in the lines drawn for comparison to the student’s trajectory. The three green lines indicate the 25th, 50th, and 75th percentiles respectively (see important considerations, pg. 7).
Important Considerations for Both STAR Assessments:

When looking at individual student data:

- For STAR Early Literacy only, the student’s age x 100 is the expected scale score (ex: The child is 7.3 years old x 100 = 730 scale score). This should be an important consideration when looking at expected rates of growth for our youngest learners.

- Students are not always consistent in taking tests. They may have peak performances in one month, but not the next month. Frequent assessment using STAR Early Literacy will provide a more dependable picture of a student’s current status and progress.

- Students generally do not progress in a continuously upward trajectory and may have growth spurts or periods when scores actually decline. This is a reflection of both the typical developmental pattern of young students and measurement error.

- Evaluation of individual changes should always include a consideration of the standard error of measurement. For example, suppose a student’s Scaled Score was 675, with a standard error of measurement of 25. Adding and subtracting 25 to the Scaled Score yields a range of scores from 650 to 700. Students hovering just over the line of benchmark should be analyzed for intervention needs using multiple measures.

- If individual student scores decline, be sure to also compare average scores for the whole class. If the average scores are increasing over time, then decreases in individual student scores are not a cause for concern. Chances are that students with declining scores will show score increases the next time the test is given.