



Reading Test Taking Strategies

Enter the following link to have these notes:

<http://tinyurl.com/peyt36b>

A few notes about the STAAR test design

- Various reading passages addressing many different types of genres
- There are 4 single passages and one paired passages (they will ask questions that compare both of them)
- They test based on the Texas state standards (TEKS or Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills)
- 5th grade ELA (English Language Arts) objectives found here (scroll down to see 5th grade): <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110a.html>
- Objective comparison (Kinder- 12th grade) found here:

http://www.esc20.net/users/gendocs/ELAR/ELAR_Teks_K-12.pdf

How can I support the reading classroom at home?

Variety of genres

- Encourage different kinds of reading materials
- Examples: poetry, nonfiction, brochures or advertisements
- Listening to the news (this exposes them to a variety of topics)
- On the STAAR test they will have a combination of a play, poem, non-fiction, fiction and then a paired passage that compares two genres (last year they had a fiction story and a poem)

Stamina

- They need to be able to read for extended periods of time without losing focus (i.e holding concentration to the very last question)
- The goal is to be able to read 45 minutes to an hour
- This stamina is needed for the 46 reading questions on the 5th grade STAAR reading test
- Ways to build stamina: set a timer for a lower amount of time and increase it for your child as they master that time

Fluency

- Students need to read at good pace and able to pronounce words accurately (i.e. not where they are stopping at every word or guessing what the word says)
- A good pace does not necessarily mean fast, but at the same time should be fast enough
- It is important to listen to your child read aloud and see if they are reading every word, missing sentences etc.

Pacing

- Students need to learn how to pace themselves - helping them be knowledgeable about their own needs (When are they losing focus? When do they need to take a brain break? How do they get themselves back on track?)
- How do I, as a parent, know how to coach them on this? Observe a homework session and notice times they need breaks or where they lose concentration. After your observations, come up with solutions that can be used to regain focus.
- *Examples:* Do they take a break between the story and the questions? Do they take a break between sets of questions and answers?
- Remind them that it is not helpful to rush or be the first one done

Building Inner Reading Voice

- Each student needs to have thoughts in their head about what they are reading (Great readers do this automatically)
- In non-fiction encourage them to look at text features (heading, captions, subheadings) and pictures
- Then they need to talk through these text features and what are their thoughts based on these features
- With fiction, encourage them to think about what is going to happen to the characters or setting

Vocabulary

- Use unfamiliar, higher level words with your child
- Encouraging them to ask when they encounter a word they don't understand
- We got our supporting vocabulary program, Wordly Wise, in this week. Our first lesson in this book will happen after Thanksgiving break. Help students use these words in their writing or in conversation.

Being a model reader

- Read when your child is reading, this shows them reading is important.
- Discuss what you are reading together
- Encourage reading while they are waiting (i.e. planes, car repairs etc.)



Writing

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- Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam.
- Quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper.
- Suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.