

BE A MATH STAAR

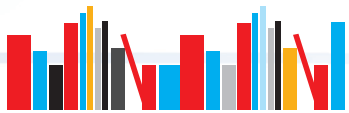
No one can score a home run—in life or on the field—without the help of a superstar team.

To help every Texas student become a Math STAAR, we talked to expert Texas educators to find out the ways that teachers, parents and students can hit a home run on this year's STAAR test.

The "Coach"

Great teachers coach their students to success by teaching them essential skills in addition to the All-Star learning strategies that lead to success. Here are our top five coaching tips to help your students master the STAAR:

1. Focus on the TEKS as you plan lessons. The STAAR test has been carefully aligned to match the TEKS for each level, so print off a list of the TEKS for your course level and check off each skill as your students gain mastery.



2. Use classroom materials that were created for Texas classrooms. While there are millions of great teaching resources available, by choosing classroom resources that focus on Texas classrooms and the STAAR test, you cater your student's learning to the assessment process.

3. Use TEKS-related academic language in class. The phrasing of the questions on the STAAR test matches the phrasing of the TEKS—so when you're in class, do your best to phrase in-class questions and assignments in a similar manner.



4. Pump up the test. When talking to your students about the STAAR test, frame it in a way that helps the students see it as an opportunity to show off their stellar skills.

5. Have a verb of the week. Post a math-related verb—like evaluate, distinguish, explain or calculate—in your classroom each week and teach your students to recognize how to solve problems that contain these words.

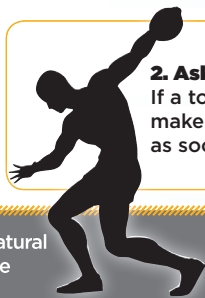
The Players

STAAR students look at the assessment process as a way to learn skills that will help both on the STAAR test and in life. Here are our top five game-winning strategies:

1. Make studying a year-long process. If you wait to study until right before the test, you're just going to end up underprepared and overexhausted. Make it a habit.



2. Ask for help when you need it. If a tough concept just doesn't make sense to you, ask for help as soon as you need it.



3. Know your strengths and weaknesses. Hone your natural strengths—whether it's writing or arithmetic—and use those to help you get a handle on the concepts that are a bit tougher for you.

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4. Take care of yourself. Getting a good night's sleep and eating a healthy breakfast can help you get a handle on long-term success.

5. Pay attention to your teacher's questions. The STAAR test questions have been written to match the language your teacher uses on your math assignments. You can assume that the wording of your STAAR questions will be similar.

The Cheering Section

When it comes to testing, parents serve not only as their kid's cheerleaders, but also as study partners, assistant coaches and snack coordinators. Here's what you can do to help cheer your kid on to victory:

1. Ask your child's teacher about at-home guides. If you'd like to help your student prepare for the STAAR test at home, ask his or her teacher to give you a list of STAAR-specific resources that your kid can use to practice at home. Here are some great ones from HMH-Riverside: <http://www.riversidepublishing.com/testprep/>

2. Encourage your student to read. Kids who have strong vocabulary skills tend to perform better on standardized testing—even in subjects like math.

3. Stay on top of homework. If you notice your student struggling on a specific concept as they work at home, immediately request tutoring from the teacher.

4. Practice healthy habits. Make sure your student has a healthy breakfast each morning and pack a healthy lunch to help get him through the day.



5. Be your kid's #1 fan. Make sure your kids know that there will always be someone in their cheering section holding a big foam finger and cheering loud.



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WE are TEACHERS