

# STAR

## 2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

# Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2007 California Standards Tests

The California Standards Tests (CSTs) are given to students in grades two through eleven as part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Developed exclusively for California's public schools, the CSTs are intended to provide information that can be used to determine how well students are achieving state content standards. These standards describe the knowledge and skills that students should learn at each grade level. The content standards for all subject areas and grade levels tested are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

## Questions and Answers About the CSTs

### Who takes the CSTs?

All students participating in the STAR Program take the CSTs, except for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take these tests. Students with significant cognitive disabilities take the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), which is based on selected content standards in English-language arts and mathematics.

### What is done to help students with disabilities who take the CSTs?

Most students with disabilities take the CSTs along with all other students under standard conditions. Some students with disabilities may require testing variations, accommodations, and/or modifications to be able to take the tests. These are listed in the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments*, which is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tq/sr/>.

Test variations are allowed for any student who regularly uses them in the classroom. Accommodations and modifications must be specified in each student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. No below-grade-level testing is allowed.

### What is done to help students who are English learners?

English learners may use English-to-primary language translation glossaries or word lists that do not include definitions or formulas and are regularly used in the classroom. English learners may use these glossaries or word lists for all subjects on the CSTs except English-language arts. They also may have test directions translated for them and ask clarifying questions in their primary language for all subjects tested on the CSTs, including English-language arts. Students who are English learners may be tested separately if such a setting is part of the

regular classroom instruction or assessments. The variations allowed for English learners are listed on the last page of the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments*, which is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.

### **What grade levels and subject areas are tested on the CSTs?**

The following grade levels and subject areas are tested:

- Grades two, three, four, six, and seven
  - English-language arts\*
  - Mathematics
  
- Grade five
  - English-language arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  
- Grades eight, nine, and eleven
  - English-language arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - History-social science
  
- Grade ten
  - English-language arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science\*\*
  - History-social science

### **What content is tested on the CSTs?**

There are three kinds of CSTs, which are all based on state content standards. First, there are CSTs that are based on content standards from a specific grade level and subject area such as grade two mathematics and grade ten English-language arts. Second, there are end-of-course CSTs administered at the secondary level that are based on content standards from specific courses. Mathematics, science, and history-social science are the three subject areas that have end-of-course CSTs. Third, there are CSTs that cover selected subject-area content standards from more than one grade level.

### **What question formats are found on the CSTs?**

Questions for all of the CSTs, except for the writing tasks in grades four and seven, are in a multiple-choice format. Students are presented with a question and asked to select the correct answer from four possible choices. Students mark their answer choices in the test booklet for grades two and three and on an answer document for grades four through eleven. All multiple-

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\* Students in grades four and seven also complete a writing task as part of the CST in English-language arts.

\*\* Most grade ten students take two science CSTs.

choice questions are machine scored. Released CST questions from prior administrations are posted for public viewing on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

For the CST in English-language arts, students in grades four and seven respond to multiple-choice questions and write an essay in response to a writing task or prompt. The score on the writing task is combined with the results of the multiple-choice questions to produce an overall score and the performance level for the CST in English-language arts.

### **How to find out more...**

If you have additional questions about the CSTs, please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or the school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the CSTs on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. The California content standards can be reviewed at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.