Preparing Your Child for Standardized Tests
Bilingual Children and Standardized Tests

How to Help Your Child Prepare for Standardized Tests

Your child may take one or more standardized tests during the school year, and your child's teacher may spend class time on test preparation throughout the year. As a parent, there are a number of ways that you can support your child before and after taking a standardized test, as well as a number of ways you can support your child's learning habits on a daily basis that will help them be more prepared when it's time to be tested.

Before the Test

Help your children in areas that are difficult for them
If your children have struggled with a particular area or subject in the past, you may be able to help them overcome some of that difficulty by providing some extra practice. Many workbooks target test preparation by offering practice exercises and questions like the ones students see on the test. Focus your practice on your children's weaknesses rather than their strengths so that they don't get bored with the exercises.

Give your children a chance to practice
If your children have trouble taking tests, try practicing test questions and studying new words. Their school or the library may have some samples to use. Keep the sessions short, and set small, manageable goals so that the extra practice boosts your children's confidence.

If you have concerns about the test or testing situation, talk with your children's teacher
Discuss your concerns with the teacher and/or school administrator. If you believe that your children's difficulty with standardized tests may be the symptom of a problem such as a language or learning difficulty, speak with their teacher to learn if they qualifies for any assessment accommodations.

On Test Day

Make sure your children get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast
Many teachers report that students who don't do well on tests haven't gotten enough sleep, and haven't eaten breakfast on the morning of the test. Doing both of these things will ensure that your children are working at full capacity.

Make sure your children are prepared
Some schools may supply the tools your children need for the test, such as pencils, an eraser, paper, and a calculator. Others may require the students to bring those materials themselves. Check with your children's teacher to see if you need to provide them with any of these materials. Also, check to see whether they will be able to make up the test if they are sick on test day.

Remain positive
Staying calm will help your children stay calm. If they get nervous about the test or is likely to experience anxiety during the test, help them practice some relaxation techniques that they can try once they are taking the test.
After the Test
What about the results?
Assessments vary from test to test, but the test scores should include information that helps you interpret the results. Talk with your children's teacher if you have any questions about the test results. You may also suggest that the school offer a testing information session to parents.

Review tests with your child
Help your children review any parts of the test that they did not understand.

On a Daily Basis
In addition to these strategies, there are a number of ways that you can maximize your children's learning capabilities throughout the school year, which can lead to confident test-taking. Some of these strategies include:

- Helping them develop good study habits, thinking skills, and a positive attitude towards education from an early age.
- Ensuring that your children have good attendance at school.
- Staying in communication with their teacher.
- Encouraging your children to read as much as possible and to increase their vocabulary - even reading magazines, newspapers, and comic books regularly will help improve their reading skills.
- Looking for educational games and programs that engage your children.
- Helping your children learn how to follow directions carefully.

Finally, remember that standardized tests and grading systems are not perfect; each format has its own limitations. As you help your children to do their best on the tests they take and in all of their schoolwork, remind them that testing is just one part of their education. With your support and involvement, they will be well on their way to their own bright future.

Tips and Information for the Parents of Bilingual children
- Always indicate in the registration process whether your child is bilingual. This will ensure that it is mentioned in your child’s report. If your child is unable to fully participate in verbal tasks, the examiner can report solely on the child’s non-verbal performance.
- Also indicate that your child is bilingual on the school application.
- Most admission tests are only offered in English.
- The NYC Department of Education Gifted and talented tests, OLSAT and NNAT-2, are offered in English and in the following languages:
  - Arabic
  - Bengali
  - French
  - Cantonese
  - Mandarin Haitian-Creole
  - Korean
  - Russian
  - Spanish
  - Urdu