

## TAKS Testing

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge Skills test and other state assessment tests can be extremely useful for school districts, teachers, parents, and even students. The results of these tests indicate how students across the state are doing, and if the techniques implemented by Texas educators are working in the classrooms.

### What is the TAKS Test?

TAKS was established in 2003 as the statewide assessment test. Texas state law requires that students in grades three to eleven complete a yearly reading and math assessment. Writing assessments are completed by fourth and seventh graders; science is required for the fifth, tenth, and eleventh grades. Social studies tests are implemented in the eighth, tenth and eleventh grades. TAKS is designed to see how well a student is able to acquire, learn, and use the specific skills and goals outlined in an instructional unit or year-long curriculum that is taught according to state educational standards.

### What Do The Results Mean?

After the TAKS are scored, parents have access to the results. Guides have been created to help parents understand their child's scores. Additionally, the state of Texas has produced informational booklets to help educators, parents, and students understand the various aspects and ideas behind TAKS. Your child's school should be able to provide you with this information, or tell you where to find it. The Texas Education Agency has also created a family study guide so students are able to sharpen the skills they will need for each test. Additionally, past tests are available online, so students can use actual tests for practice in preparation and to evaluate their own progress in school.

### Helping Your Child Prepare for the TAKS Test

Create a study routine and schedule. Chances are students will not study unless they know that it is expected of them. By scheduling a regular, mandatory study time you will also know when you should be available to answer your child's homework questions.

### Tutoring

If you notice that these study sessions are not helping your child improve, you may want to look into professional educational services or a tutoring program. Tutoring has helped thousands of children across the nation catch up with their peers in academic subjects such as math and reading, two of the subjects tested by the TAKS. A good program will identify the areas where your student needs help most. Some tutoring centers now implement assessment tests before creating your child's lesson plans. They then create personalized lesson plans from the results. A tutor will give your child individual attention and work with your child's particular learning style.

Finding the right tutor for you can be tough. When looking for someone to help prepare your child for the TAKS, make sure the tutor is state-certified. State-certified tutors are licensed and are up-to-date on Texas's educational standards.