

Student Guide to Preparing for the STAMP

What is the STAMP?

STAMP stands for **ST**Andards-based **M**easurement of **P**roficiency. This means that this test will assess what you can DO with the language that you are studying, not simply assess what you know ABOUT the language. The STAMP test is reported in terms that correlate with nationally recognized levels of proficiency as defined by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). STAMP will assess your **READING** ability by measuring how well you comprehend actual texts written by native speakers of the language for native speakers of the language. It will assess your **SPEAKING** ability by measuring how well you can speak about everyday situations.

Preparing for the STAMP

It is not possible to cram at the last minute for a proficiency-based assessment, because proficiency means having a broad general knowledge. This can be measured at various levels. The STAMP test will deliver test items from a number of topics across several levels. Take time to review the topics outlined below and review the vocabulary connected with each of the topics. For the writing and speaking sections, you will be asked to speak about two different prompts/topics. The best way to prepare for these kinds of tasks is to actually practice by speaking about these topics.

Topics by Level:

Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Calendar / Time Colors/Shapes Family Pets / Animals School / Classroom Self Weather / Seasons	All previous topics plus: Clothing Food / Beverage Friends Home Leisure / Activities Places / Geography	All previous topics plus: Community Daily Routines Shopping / Stores	All previous topics plus: Health Holidays Celebrations Occupations Professions Transportation Travel / Vacations	All previous topics plus: Future plans Culture / Contemporary Issues (Current events, Economics, Culture, Literature, Science, Social Science, etc.)

Logging in to take the STAMP

Your first and last names are an essential element of your login to the STAMP test. It is important that you be careful not to accidentally include any extra spaces between your first and last names, as the STAMP test will consider these to be part of your name once you begin the test. If you need to resume the test at a later time, you will need to reenter your name exactly as you did the first time, i.e. including additional spaces, characters, middle names, or initials, otherwise YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RESUME YOUR TEST.

Taking the STAMP

Your teacher will tell you how much time you have to complete the test and whether you will complete the entire test at once, or whether you will stop at the end of the period and then return on another day to complete the test. The reading section is computer adaptive meaning it will adjust the level of test questions you receive according to how well you are doing as you move through the test. Because this section is computer adaptive, each test taker may receive a different number of questions. Once you complete the reading section, you will be given two speaking prompts.

Completing the STAMP

This is very important: A common mistake students make is to think they have completed the test and to walk away from their computers before they have "submitted" their last test item. They answer the test item, but they forget to click the "Submit" button to send their last answer. This leaves their test marked as "Incomplete," and their work on that last item (either writing or speaking) is lost. To avoid this problem, you must continue taking the test and submitting items until you reach the page that reads "Congratulations! You have completed the STAMP test. Check with your instructor for results." If you don't see this screen at the end of the test, it means you haven't clicked "Submit" on the last item yet and your test will not be scored.

Test Taking Hints

In the reading section, take time to read the question and all of the answers BEFORE you actually attempt reading the passage. This will help guide your reading and you will be able to move through the test more quickly. For both the writing and the speaking items, take time to look at the scoring guide below each item, BEFORE completing the task, so that you know how your response will be evaluated. Remember that this is a proficiency test and that these items will be scored by trained graders who will evaluate your answers using the scoring guide. **Write and speak as much as you possibly can for each item.** Do not just do the minimum to "get by." The more you write or speak, the greater the possibility of scoring higher on the task. Your teacher will give you the TEST CODE and PASSWORD that you must use to take your test just before the test will begin. You will also be asked to input your school or district Student ID number on the Student Profile Page after you login to the test. Please be prepared to enter that number at the appropriate time. We hope you enjoy taking the STAMP test, and encourage you to let your teacher know how you felt about the experience.

