

A Parent's Guide to Performance Series

The Catholic Schools Office in the Diocese of Arlington has adopted Performance Series[®] by Scanttron as their diagnostic and placement tool.

The Performance Series assessment makes it easy for your child's teacher(s) to identify his or her progress—and find the diagnostic information they need to place your child academically and manage his or her instruction.

Performance Series is a web-based, computer-adaptive test that your school uses to:

- identify your child's ability levels
- demonstrate academic growth over time
- place your child in the correct instructional programs



Dear Parents / Guardians,

This booklet will introduce you to the new standardized testing program for the Diocese of Arlington. During the 2015–2016 academic year, the Scantron standardized test was piloted in several of our schools. Students, parents, and teachers were pleased with the reports and the guidance provided. Now this program, the procedures, and reports will be used in all the elementary schools of our diocese, starting with the 2016–2017 academic year. The procedures and reports will be communicated to you throughout the school year. This will allow your questions to be answered in a reasonable time frame. Students in grades 3 through 7 will participate in this testing program.

Further communication about the test and the results will take place gradually throughout the year. At the parent-teacher conference in November you will receive the first set of results. As the year progresses, the next test will show your child's growth in the tested areas. This gradual approach will enable the teachers to plan instruction suited for the growth of the student and at the same time will also enable you to see how your child is improving academically.

Please read this booklet and also be aware that as the year progresses this new process will become clearer. It is our belief after years of searching, that this test and process will benefit our students by allowing for quicker testing results and instruction geared to the needs of the students.

Sincerely,



Sr. Bernadette McManigal, BVM
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Arlington



What is Performance Series®?

An exciting new assessment tool, Scantron's Performance Series, has been adopted for use as one of the tools to help identify your child's abilities. Because it is online and adapts, Performance Series adjusts to your child's abilities.

Unlike other forms of assessment, Performance Series tests are completely computer-based and adjust to each child's ability level. All tests begin in relation to your child's current grade. As your child answers each question, however, the test adapts according to his or her response. Questions get easier when your child answers incorrectly and get more challenging when he or she answers correctly. This individualizes every testing experience and more accurately measures your child's ability.

Why is this helpful to me?

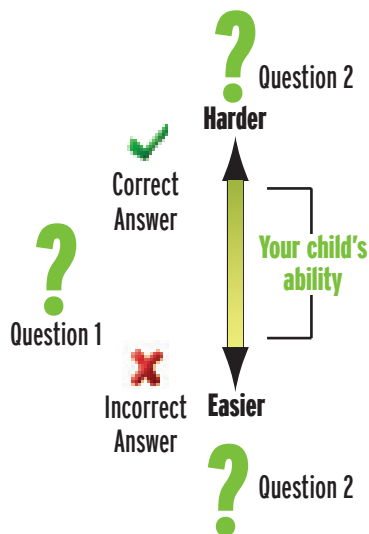
- Unique tests matched to your child's abilities more accurately determine his or her next steps in the classroom.
- Results from these tests provide information to help you understand your child's growth academically, through this year and across years.

Why is this helpful to my child's teacher?

- Immediate results mean they can adjust instruction more quickly to help your child master important concepts.
- Educational materials can be customized (based on the results for each student and group), which helps teachers improve learning.
- Detailed reports allow teachers to evaluate current or new teaching strategies and programs.

When are the tests given?

The test will be administered three (3) times per year. As a result, students will spend less total time testing than previously with paper and pencil tests that took up a week of instructional time.



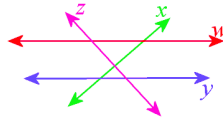
For additional information on the computer-adaptive testing model, see: http://www.scantron.com/downloads/Performance_Series_White_Paper.pdf.

What Subject Areas Are Covered?

Mathematics

Look at the diagram, then answer the question.

Which lines appear to be parallel?



Braille is one of the most commonly used systems of reading and writing for people who are blind. Louis Braille invented it in 1834, when he was only fifteen years old. Louis had been blind since he was three. He learned to read by touching letters engraved in wood. It was a very slow process and people could not use it to write. He had heard of the army using a twelve-dot system punched on cardboard to send communication to battlefields during the night. He adapted that system and created Braille, a six-dot system.



What do the following three events have in common?

1. Braille used in the United States
2. Braille officially adopted by the United States
3. Braille adopted as universal code for English

Language Arts

Which word fits best in this sentence?

I was very hungry, _____ I could not eat the squid.

- A. yet
- B. and
- C. or
- D. for



What Do the Scores Mean to Me and My Child?

Scaled Score

The Scaled Score (SS) is a reliable estimate of your child's ability* and is independent of grade level. Use this score to track progress over time, from fall to spring or year after year, as a type of educational yardstick.

The following are average score ranges for different testing sessions in the various subject areas.

Reading

	Fall	Winter	Spring
2	1781 - 2220	1900-2353	2019-2486
3	2039 - 2521	2157-2611	2275-2700
4	2276 - 2715	2360-2785	2444-2854
5	2457 - 2859	2524-2904	2590-2949
6	2589 - 2964	2640-3002	2690-3039
7	2686 - 3043	2727-3076	2767-3109
8	2778 - 3085	2810-3129	2842-3172
9	2876 - 3149	2890-3189	2903-3228
10	2894 - 3196	2912-3239	2929-3281
11	2898 - 3220	2914-3259	2930-3299

Mathematics

	Fall	Winter	Spring
2	1881 - 2127	1980-2222	2079-2318
3	2075 - 2305	2167-2393	2258-2480
4	2242 - 2456	2309-2531	2376-2606
5	2352 - 2573	2414-2653	2475-2732
6	2452 - 2701	2505-2768	2558-2834
7	2522 - 2788	2564-2840	2605-2891
8	2578 - 2874	2618-2920	2657-2965
9	2651 - 2948	2668-2977	2684-3005
10	2661 - 2969	2677-3005	2693-3041

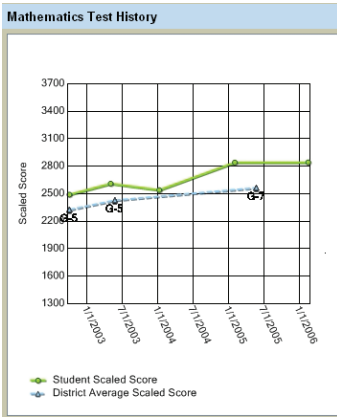
Language Arts

	Fall	Winter	Spring
2	1871-2215	1996-2299	2121-2383
3	2131-2406	2205-2466	2278-2525
4	2248-2518	2306-2563	2363-2608
5	2347-2606	2396-2638	2445-2669
6	2423-2660	2455-2687	2486-2714
7	2485-2707	2516-2742	2547-2777
8	2511-2735	2535-2765	2560-2794

* using the statistical Rasch model.

Gains

Gains are simply the number of Scaled Score points by which your child has improved over time. Through the year, this can be used to gauge if he or she is 'on track' or not.



National Percentile Ranking (NPR)

The NPR uses the SS to compare the student to members of the Performance Series National Norm Group within the same grade level. For example, an NPR of 74 means that your child's score is above 74% of his or her peers in the national norm group.

Performance Rating

The Performance Rating represents your child's rating in the context of a *diocese-defined* set of performance bands. This grouping may show your child's probable placement against national peers or another test, if your diocese has commissioned a custom research report from Scantron.

Suggested Learning Objectives (SLOs)

The scaled score (SS) works in tandem with the diocesan standards to determine where to focus the student's learning. Objectives or skill areas that the student should focus on to improve performance are shown. These are always listed in the order of difficulty, with the first being the least difficult, for immediate instructional adjustment.

What Else Should I Know?

Does Performance Series align to diocesan standards?

Yes, the Office of Catholic Schools worked with Scantron to ensure that our diocesan standards are used as the guide to assess your child.

What units are covered?

Reading

- Vocabulary
- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Long Passage

Math

- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis & Probability
- Number & Operations

Language Arts

- Capitalization
- Parts of Speech
- Punctuation
- Sentence Structure

Do all students see the same test?

All children see the same topic areas, but all children do not see the same test questions, because Performance Series is computer-adaptive—each test is unique for each child.





How many test items does each student receive?

The test is online and computer-adaptive, so each child receives a unique test and the number of items may vary. There is no set number of questions. The average number of questions in a testing session is about 50.

Are the tests timed?

No, children are allowed as much time as needed to take the test.

More **Frequently Asked Questions** about Performance Series are available online at <http://www.scantron.com/performanceseries>.

