



## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

English Tests and Tasks – new edition	
Question	Answer
What's new?	<p>A number of reading passages and associated questions are new. Other tests have been revised. All reading tests and writing tasks are now better matched to the units of the renewed Framework for Literacy. Details of the relevant unit(s) covered are given in the mark scheme section for each test/task.</p> <p>All the tests have been reviewed by a language accessibility consultant to ensure the content is accessible and the language of the questions clear.</p> <p><i>Quick start guide</i> added at the beginning of the books (and on the CD-ROM) to give teachers a clear and simple overview of the assessment material and how to use it.</p>
Why different levels?	<p>The levels were re-standardised in summer 2008 against the QCA optional tests and Key Stage Reading Tests. We found that QCA's standards appear to be more generous so now Rising Stars' levels are also more generous (i.e. levels are easier to get).</p>
Mark schemes for writing tasks for Years 5 and 6 do not show all sub-levels. Where are they?	<p>The CD-ROMs for Year 5 and Year 6 include marking guidelines for each sub-level. There was not room to include all sub-levels in the book.</p>
I have given children the first reading test for the term and do not think the level reflects my teacher assessment of reading level. What can I do?	<p>We recommend that you give children the second reading test for the term and combine the results of the two tests for the term. This should give you a more reliable indication of the level at which children are reading.</p>

## Mathematics – brand new series

Question	Answer
What's new?	<p>All the questions and tests – now organised by block, with an end-of-unit test for each block, each term.</p> <p>All the tests have been reviewed by a language accessibility consultant to ensure the content is accessible and the language of the questions clear.</p> <p><i>Quick start guide</i> added at the beginning of the books (and on the CD-ROM) to give teachers a clear and simple overview of the product and how to use it.</p>
How good are the questions?	<p>The questions have been written by experienced authors. One author writes the optional test questions for QCA and the other author was the subject officer at QCA responsible for primary maths.</p> <p>All the tests have been reviewed by a language accessibility consultant to ensure the content is accessible and the language of the questions clear.</p>
Why is there a mental mathematics section in every unit test?	<p>To get pupils into the practice of listening well and having confidence to do mental arithmetic. It also provides good practice for the National Tests where pupils sit a mental mathematics paper.</p>
Are the five unit tests for a term all equally demanding?	<p>There is a slight increase in difficulty during the term. The last two units 'build on' the work of the earlier units.</p>
Some unit tests seem very hard – why is this?	<p>They reflect the coverage of the content of the unit; some units are more demanding than others. This is reflected in lower marks being needed to get a level.</p>
Are the tests as hard as the previous edition of the maths tests?	<p>No. The levels are easier to obtain in this new series because our standardisation process has found the optional and Key Stage National Tests seem to be more generously awarded. The tests are equated to the 2008 standards.</p>
Where can I find the pupil progress sheets?	<p>They are included as PDF files on the CD-ROM. There was not room to include them in the books. The pupil progress sheets include diagnostic profiles of each term's tests, with marks broken down into the seven strands. Also included are sets of 'I can' statements for each of the strands, which pupils tick to record the level at which they are working and what they need to do to move up a sub-level (or level).</p>

## Science – new edition

Question	Answer
<p>What's new?</p>	<p>Year 1 and Year 2 have practical investigations as an alternative to the written Test 3s. These can be marked using a generic marking guide or a specific marking guide. These two may give slightly different outcomes.</p> <p>Year 1 and Year 2 have a checklist for teachers to use before teaching a unit rather than a written prior learning test for the unit.</p> <p>All the tests across all six year groups have been reviewed by a language accessibility consultant to ensure the content is accessible and the language of the questions clear.</p> <p>The diagrams have been improved so that they are clearer and easier to use. Some photographs have been added too.</p> <p><i>Quick start guide</i> added at the beginning of the books (and on the CD-ROM) to give teachers a clear and simple overview of the product and how to use it.</p>
<p>Where are the Test 4s (in the books)?</p>	<p>All together after Tests 1–3 for each unit. This is because they are designed for use at the end of the year. On the CD-ROM, all tests for a unit are found in the section for that unit.</p>
<p>Can I use the tests with mixed year group classes?</p>	<p>Yes. The level in each unit test is controlled by the demand of the material, so every unit is independent of year group in terms of the levels that can be obtained.</p>
<p>How do I get overall levels for a mixed year group using the Test 4s?</p>	<p>Every Test 4 in a year has the same demand profile and the same set of thresholds for sub-levels. If you cover say three units in a year, then use those three tests and from the tables the thresholds are halved. Two years may then be combined to produce the overall mixed set of levels.</p>
<p><b>Version 1.0</b> Where are the Unit 1A Investigation marking hints for Year 1 Science? When I click on the link to this PDF I get the Unit 1B Investigation marking hints for Year 1 instead.</p>	<p>The PDF for this file has been misplaced, but can be found when clicking on the link for Unit 1C Investigation marking hints for Year 1. Or, it can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>). We apologise for this error.</p>
<p><b>Version 1.0</b> Where are the Unit 1B Investigation marking hints for Year 1 Science? When I click on the link to this PDF I get the Unit 1D Investigation marking hints for Year 1 instead.</p>	<p>The PDF for this file has been misplaced, but can be found when clicking on the link for Unit 1A Investigation marking hints for Year 1. Or, it can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>). We apologise for this error.</p>

## Science – new edition

Question	Answer
<p><i>Version 1.0</i> Where are the Unit 1C Investigation marking hints for Year 1 Science? When I click on the link to this PDF I get the Unit 1A Investigation marking hints for Year 1 instead.</p>	<p>The PDF for this file has been misplaced, but can be found when clicking on the link for Unit 1F Investigation marking hints for Year 1. Or, it can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>). We apologise for this error.</p>
<p><i>Version 1.0</i> Where are the Unit 1D Investigation marking hints for Year 1 Science? When I click on the link to this PDF I get the Unit 1F Investigation marking hints for Year 1 instead.</p>	<p>The PDF for this file has been misplaced, but can be found when clicking on the link for Unit 1B Investigation marking hints for Year 1. Or, it can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>). We apologise for this error.</p>
<p><i>Version 1.0</i> Where are the Unit 1F Investigation marking hints for Year 1 Science? When I click on the link to this PDF I get the Unit 1C Investigation marking hints for Year 1 instead.</p>	<p>The PDF for this file has been misplaced, but can be found when clicking on the link for Unit 1D Investigation marking hints for Year 1. Or, it can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>). We apologise for this error.</p>
<p>Where are the pupil record sheets in Year 2?</p>	<p>These are included as PDF files on the CD-ROM version. There was not room to include them in the books. They can be obtained from Rising Stars Customer Services (<a href="mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com">custcare@risingstars-uk.com</a>).</p>

## KS3 English Tests and Tasks

Question	Answer
<p>Why do reading test questions that are worth more than one mark give different levels for different marks when they are assessing the same assessment focus? (For example, within one question, 1 mark correct is level 3; 2 marks are level 4 and 3 marks are level 5.)</p>	<p>This is a feature of the Rising Stars Assessment design for the reading tests. It is based on the assumption that in one assessment focus (AF) it is easier to gain the first mark and harder to attain the full mark, so a level was ascribed to individual marks on that basis. It reflects good test design and is a fair recognition of effort. In other words, this approach is a way of offering reward within questions which might otherwise be beyond the scope of some students.</p>
<p>Why are marks not provided for the KS3 writing tasks included in <i>KS3 English Tests and Tasks</i>?</p>	<p>Marks have not been provided in the books or as part of the interactive Level Calculator on the CD-ROM because teachers we spoke to during the development process told us that they wanted levels only. They asked that these be provided as part of the mark scheme. We can provide a suggested breakdown of marks if required and some guidance notes are available on request from Rising Stars. (These are to be supplied by contacting Rising Stars, which gives us an opportunity to understand the school's needs.)</p>

## CD-ROMs (all subjects)

Question	Answer
What's new?	<p><b>All:</b> Improved mark book design.</p> <p><b>English:</b> Mark book for English combines test results to give a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• termly reading sub-level;</li> <li>• termly overall sub-level for English (reading, writing, and spelling and handwriting);</li> <li>• half-termly sub-level for English (reading and writing).</li> </ul> <p>Note that this means the mark book takes longer to convert marks to sub-levels for English than other subjects.</p> <p><b>Mathematics:</b> Audio for all mental mathematics questions and tests.</p>
How do I install the CD-ROMs?	Instructions are included in the booklet inserted in the DVD cover. Detailed installation instructions are available as a pdf entitled 'README FIRST' in the root directory on the CD-ROM. These provide step-by-step bullet points of how to install.
Does the price of the CD-ROMs include a permanent site licence?	Yes.
Does the site licence apply to use on home computers?	The CD-ROMs can be used on home computers. If purchased for school use, it is recommended that these CD-ROMs not be used on home computers or any laptops not connected to the school network as the database will not be able to access or update the database as a result. If home use is required to simply access or print PDFs, this is fine.
Do the CD-ROMs work on an RMCC3 network?	Yes, they do. Installation instructions are included in the root directory on the CD-ROM in a file called 'Rising Stars Assessment Products – RM CC3.pdf' Please let us know if you cannot find this document.
Do the CD-ROMs work on an RMCC4 network?	RM tell us they should, although the shortcuts will need to be created manually. Note, however, that the CD-ROMs have not been tested on this network. This is because RM are not making RMCC4 widely available until 2009. Please inform Rising Stars if you encounter any problems running the CD-ROMs on an RMCC4 network.
Will the CD-ROMs connect to a Windows Server 2003-based network?	Yes, they will and they will run across a local area network. Note, however, that any laptops not connected to the school network (e.g. when teachers use them from home) will not be able to access or update the database of results. The products have the ability to collect and store results on a shared network drive.
Every time we use it, the CD-ROM asks us if we would like to check for online updates. Is this correct?	This is perfectly correct. This is to make sure that you always have the most up-to-date mark books. Our software doesn't know when you are connected to the Internet, so we need to ask you every time.
When I say "yes" to online updates I get an "HTTP error". What's happening?	For some reason your computer can't access our Internet site. Close the program, run it again, and choose "No" to online updates. You will be able to use the program.

## CD-ROMs (all subjects)

Question	Answer
Can I just see the PDFs without creating a database?	No. You need to choose where the database is going to go on running the disc, otherwise you risk having multiple databases in multiple places. You don't need to enter any pupil data once you've created the database – it just needs to have a place to put the information.
<b>Version 1.0</b> I get an error "FATAL ERROR: No database at location [location]. The application will not continue". What does this mean?	The assessment CD-ROM program can't find your database of pupils and marks, but the computer has been told that there is one in a particular place. If you know there is a database on your machine or network (for example, if other people have been using assessment products on the same computer), then the database has been stored in a place which you aren't able to see (but other users of the same machine may be able to see it). You – or a colleague – will need to move the database to a place on your machine or network where <b>every</b> user of <b>any</b> of the Rising Stars Assessment products can read, write and execute. If you have put the database in a "My Documents" folder, it is highly unlikely that other people will be able to use it. For instructions on how to move your database, see the next FAQ.
I want to move my database. How do I do this?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Backup your database to somewhere safe.</li><li>2. Download a copy of the Reset Database tool, provided in the "Attachments" section at the bottom of this page as RSA_DBclear.zip. Unzip the file and run the only file in the unzipped directory. Make a note of the current location of the database when it has been located using the reset database tool. You need this information in order to move the database to the new location on your PC or network. Note: if you are using Windows Vista, you should "Run As Administrator". Contact your IT support team if you do not know how to do this or if you do not have this option. Technical users: this deletes the registry key.</li><li>3. Move your database to where you want it to go. Remember, this must be a place on your machine or network where <b>every</b> user of <b>any</b> of the Rising Stars Assessment products can read, write and execute.</li><li>4. Run any Rising Stars Assessment 2008 product and follow the prompts to link it to the new database location. You will only need to do this with one product to link all products for a machine.</li></ol>
I get the error "ERROR: _software_updates file is not present. The application will not load."	You have not copied the _software_updates.xml file to your drive from the root of the disc. Copy this file over, and all should be well.
I'm still having problems. What now?	You will also need to ensure that all users have read and write access to the registry key HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\\SOFTWARE\\RisingStars\\Assessments if they do not already have this by default. Most users on most machines will have this, but some networks tie this down. If you do not know what a registry key is or what this means, please speak to someone technical such as your IT Technician as only experienced technical users should be adjusting registry access settings. Technical users: if you need a tool to automate this setting over multiple workstations, see this Microsoft Support Article for help at <a href="http://support.microsoft.com/kb/264584">http://support.microsoft.com/kb/264584</a> .

## CD-ROMs (all subjects)

Question	Answer
<p><b>Version 1.0</b> Why can't I add more than one Year Group to a Year? Why can't I add classes?</p>	<p>The pupil information you enter into one Rising Stars CD-ROM will be shared with any others that you buy. This means you only have to enter pupil name and date of birth data once, and that we can offer you better products in the future (for example, reporting on a pupil across subjects).</p> <p>A Year Group is for all the pupils that entered a school in a particular year (for example, all the young people that entered a school in 2008). That's why there can't be more than one Year Group – all the pupils that entered the school in one year should be in one Year Group. Note: This only applies to the first releases of the CD-ROMs – Version 1.0. In later reprints – Version 1.1 and version 1.2 – we have renamed 'Year Group' to 'Intake Year' for clarity.</p> <p>We haven't allowed the entry of classes as this becomes very confusing when students are in different classes for different subjects, and may change these during the course of their studies.</p> <p><i>Technical users: all data for all products is stored in a single database, which is a single file.</i></p>
Do I have to enter pupil data for each CD-ROM?	No. Once a Year Group/Intake Year has been created for one subject you can use this for all subjects for that Year Group/Intake Year.
I add a new pupil but they don't appear in the list for that Year Group. Why not?	After adding a new pupil, you have to then select their name under 'Update or remove pupil details'. This name will then appear on the Year Group/Intake Year listing.
Can I import the names and dates of birth of pupils from our school system (e.g. SIMS)?	Yes you can. Go to ( <a href="http://www.risingstars-uk.com/assessmenttechnicalfaqs">www.risingstars-uk.com/assessmenttechnicalfaqs</a> ) and click on to follow the instructions.
Can I export marks and levels from the mark book to our school system?	Yes you can. Simply click on the 'Export' button within the mark book and choose where to save the file.
Can I print out the mark book?	Yes you can. Simply click on the 'Print' button and choose the printer you want to use.
When I print a PDF, it does not print the entire page but only the part of the page as seen on screen. How do I print the whole page?	Make sure that your printer setting under 'Print Range' is set to 'All' not 'Current view'.
<p><b>Version 1.0</b> Why does the mark book run slowly on the English Tests and Tasks CD-ROMs?</p>	The mark books in the Primary English CD-ROMs (Years 2 to 6) run more slowly than for other subjects and years because of the various ways in which the raw marks can be combined to give sub-levels for reading, writing, half terms and terms. This requires more processing time. Please be patient because the marks will be converted to sub-levels.

For any pdfs which cannot be found, please contact Rising Stars Customer Services ([custcare@risingstars-uk.com](mailto:custcare@risingstars-uk.com)). We will make sure they are added when we reprint the CD-ROMs. We apologise for any errors.