

BAES

Buzzzz...

Friday, November 9, 2012



Getting from Point A to Point B Measures of Academic Success (MAP)

Elf Alert - Elf Alert - Elf Alert - Elf Alert
BAES Elves are Coming!

What's happening?

November 12-21

MAP Testing

November 15th

Tombarit

No school

November 16th

Scholastic Book Orders Deadline

November 22-23rd

American Thanksgiving

No school



November 28th

Teacher Work Day

Noon Dismissal

Maps. Where would we be without them? We'd be lost, that's where. Maps take us from Point A to Point B with guided directions that give us street names, highways, right turns, and left turns. Most importantly, maps get us back home. Which is why it's no wonder that BAES uses a test titled MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) to ascertain a child's instructional level and to measure academic growth. Just as a road map guides us to our desired location, the MAP assessment results guide our instruction by providing us with scores that give each child's individual achievement. From these scores, we are able to plan and execute lessons that better support students needs, establish small-group strategy groups, and target each child's academic strength. These scores help BAES move our students from Point A to Point B.

BAES students in Grades K-8 complete the MAP tests throughout the month of November. The MAP test is administered twice annually -- in the fall and spring. Its' primary purpose is to determine a student's "instructional level" in the areas tested (Reading, Language Usage, Math, and Science) in order to inform instruction. Specifically, scores can be used to understand a child's areas of academic strength and areas requiring attention for further academic improvement and growth. MAP tests are taken on computers and are unique in that they adapt to the child's level of learning.

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Halloween Fun was had by all last Friday! Organized by the PTO, the school community event featured a costume parade, games, music, food galore, and last, but surely not least, the infamous 'spooktacular' Haunted House. Thanks to the PTO for organizing this massive successful event.

Photos on page 2.



Getting from Point A to Point B Measures of Academic Success (MAP)

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What does MAP do?

A growth chart measures height in inches or centimeters. MAP uses RIT—or a RIT score (growth scores). When your child takes a MAP test, they will answer many questions. Some of the answers will be right, and other answers will not. The RIT score depends on two things: 1) which questions are answered correctly, and 2) the difficulty of the question.

What is the RIT Score?

Each child's report gives teachers and parents a RIT (Rausch Unit) score in each subject area tested. This score is a measure of your child's individual achievement. As students take MAP tests over a period of time, the RIT scores will show academic growth. RIT scores create an equal-interval scale. Equal interval means that the difference between scores is the same regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom or middle of the RIT scale; it has the same meaning regardless of grade level or age. One way to understand this is to picture a ruler. Each of the RIT scores can be assigned to an inch or centimeter. Any student in any grade can score anywhere along the ruler or along the RIT continuum. A second grader and a fifth grader could score the same and be prescribed the same next steps for learning.

Does Everyone Take the Same Test?

MAP provides an appropriate, challenging test for each BAES student. Instead of a traditional standardized test, the MAP tests are computerized adaptive tests. When your child sits down at the computer to take a MAP test, the computer will select and display a question that is appropriate for his/her grade level. After choosing the answer, the computer will select the next question based on the performance of the previous questions. The computer will continue to select questions until the end of the test. Students are not expected to get every question right. Some questions will be very difficult and some will be easy. Each test is dynamically "built" for the student. There is no time limit, so your child may have as much time as needed to complete each test and the score is immediately available at the end of each test.

How Important is MAP?

MAP is important because it keeps track of your child's individual learning progress and growth in Reading, Language, Mathematics and Science. By using the MAP scores, and with the assistance of teachers, your child can set appropriate learning goals from test to test. Both parents and teachers can gain an understanding of each child's academic strengths as well as areas that require additional attention for growth. Your child's testing report is designed to provide you with an overall picture of your child's performance in the areas assessed. As your child continues through BAES, the MAP reports will show learning growth over time. This is a motivating and informative way to monitor academic progress!

For more information on resources for parents, download the Parent Toolkit at www.nwea.org > Partner Support.

Help us help your child get from Point A to Point B by ensuring that during testing time your child is well-rested, eating appropriately, and has a proper understanding of the testing process.

Spooktacular Fun
at BAES



Best Practices

In this year's issues of The Buzzz, BAES teachers will share with you some of their 'best practices' in their classrooms.

"Active involvement allows them to deepen their understanding and develop their skills and their application in all areas."

Engaging Children

by Kathryn Bah, K-Grade 1 Teacher

If you walked into my classroom any day of the week, you will see the children taking part in learning experiences, with an emphasis on active involvement which allows them to deepen their understanding and develop their skills and their application in all areas. This is an exciting approach to teaching, which gives me job satisfaction every day of the week. But what a buzz I get when a child reads their first word to me, or makes a shopping list in the role-play area using the phonetic strategies that they have been taught. I have a passion for the way phonics is taught, which includes the four interdependent strands of language; speaking, listening, reading and writing. I give attention right from the start, to promote speaking and listening skills and ensure that children build a good stock of words, learn to listen attentively and speak clearly and confidently. These skills are the foundations of phonic work, for example, in building phonemic awareness. Speaking and listening, together with reading and writing, are prime communication skills that are central to children's intellectual, social and emotional development. All these skills are drawn upon and promoted by high quality, systematic phonic work. But when should it begin?



"Engaging young children in interesting and worthwhile pre-reading activities paves the way for the great majority to make a good start on systematic phonic work by the age of five. Indeed, for some, an earlier start may be possible and desirable. This is because it ill serves children to hold them back from starting systematic phonic work that is matched to their developing abilities and enables them to benefit from the wealth of opportunities afforded by reading from an early age. All that said, the introduction of phonic work should always be a matter for principled, professional judgement based on structured observations and assessments of children's capabilities." (Rose Review 2005)

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Best Practices

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When it is time to teach letter to sound, the children have already developed the skills to take part in fun, exciting planned phonics sessions, which are multi-sensory in order to capture their interest, sustain motivation, and reinforce learning in imaginative and exciting ways. Some of the favorite activities enjoyed by the children include



- 🎧 *Turn the box around, look inside and see what you have found* – the box will sometimes contain objects to practice initial sounds, single letter sounds, or words containing the phoneme from that week.
- 🎧 *Silly soup* – Children add ingredients to the silly soup again letters, words or objects.
- 🎧 *Puppets* – Puppets are a great way to introduce new sounds.
- 🎧 *Sound hunt* – Sometimes just a listening activity, or sometimes a treasure hunt following phonetically written clues.

There are many systematic programs that support the approach to teaching phonics. Regardless of the specific method used, it is important in systematic instruction where there is a deliberate and sequential focus on building and using the relationship between sounds and letter symbols to help decode new words. This means moving children through a planned sequence of skills rather than teaching particular aspects of phonics as they are encountered in texts. Because the connection between letters and sounds is not readily apparent to a new reader, modeling is an important aspect of phonics instruction. I model ways that a reader uses the sound-symbol relationship to decode unfamiliar words by reading and thinking aloud. The best texts for modeling are high interest or informational. These include nursery rhymes, traditional stories, fairy tales, songs, non-fiction books and poems with repetitive language.



Next issue of the BAES Buzzz will feature a Best Practice by Mrs Madeleine Mulaire