

# Content Spotlight:

## Preparing Middle School Students for Testing Season



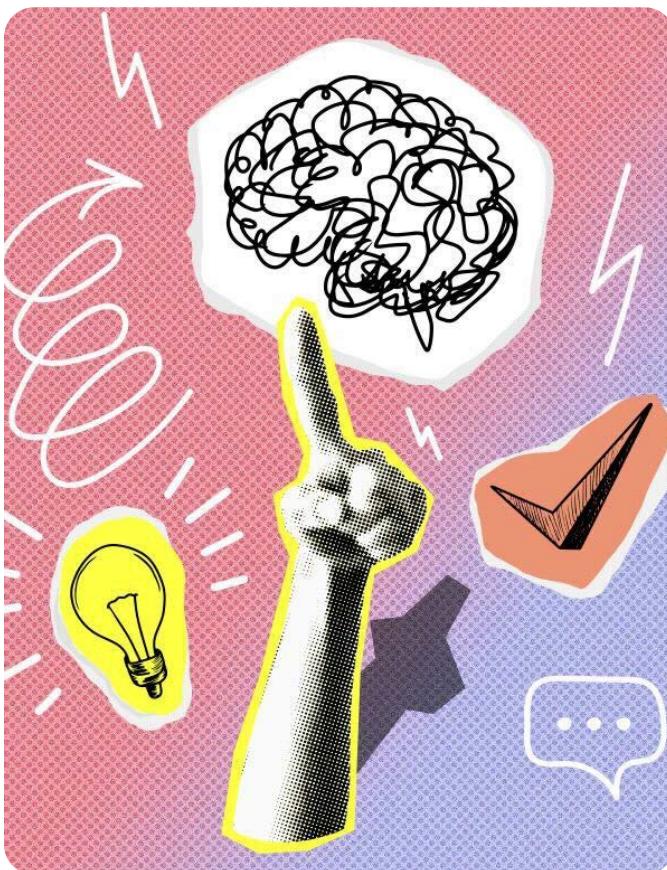
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Standardized testing plays a significant role in education today. Test results influence school ratings, funding, teacher salaries, and the academic and career paths open to students. Nationwide, the stakes are high. When looking at the performance of eighth graders from The Nation's Report Card :

- 30% reach proficiency in reading
- 31% reach proficiency in science
- 14% reach proficiency in U.S. history
- 22% reach proficiency in civics

Check out strategies from Britannica experts on how to prepare students for testing season.

Drive student success by using **Expedition: Learn!** lessons to deliver targeted, standards-aligned practice that improves retention, boosts test-taking confidence, and drives measurable gains in standardized test performance.



These scores reflect content-area deficits along with a cognitive overload due to unfamiliarity with technology-enhanced items (TEIs).

These gaps highlight the importance of preparing students to perform well on assessments while helping them to build deep, lasting knowledge of critical subjects. Access to high-quality curriculum that includes targeted practice utilizing a variety of technology-enhanced items and test-taking skills is a matter of opportunity and educational equity, bridging the digital divide and shaping students' options for advanced coursework, scholarships, graduation pathways, and long-term economic mobility.

Keep the exploration going! Discover these resources and more in **Expedition: Learn!** on [Teach Britannica](#).



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# Britannica Expedition: LEARN!

Test Readiness
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## Expedition: Learn! x Test Prep

Research shows that deliberate practice with high-quality texts and assessments positively affects student performance, metacognition, and knowledge retention. Developing skills that support content mastery and assessment strategies ensures that students can confidently interpret questions, analyze possible responses, and demonstrate subject-area knowledge.

By including a range of expert-written, technology-enhanced items with varying DOK levels, *Expedition: Learn!* replicates state exams and standardized tests, preparing students for varied testing experiences. Each assessment question allows students to practice a specific skill while applying their understanding of content-area concepts. The Skill and DOK level tags on each question, along with the Skills Reports, enable educators to implement differentiated support strategies.

Using the Teaching Tips and Britannica resources featured in this guide, teachers can help students build stamina with reading informational texts, practice test-taking strategies, and boost confidence—ultimately preparing students to excel.

### Assessment Question Skills

Social Studies ELA	Science ELA	ELA Science Social Studies
<u>Analyze Media</u> <u>Author's Perspective</u> <u>Cite Text Evidence</u> <u>Make Inferences</u> <u>Problem and Solution</u>	<u>Analyze and Interpret Data</u> <u>Claims-Evidence-Reasoning</u> <u>Construct and Interpret Models</u> <u>Engineering and Design</u> <u>Mathematical Reasoning</u>	<u>Cause and Effect</u> <u>Compare and Contrast</u> <u>Main Idea and Details</u> <u>Sequence and Patterns</u> <u>Summarize and Synthesize</u> <u>Use Vocabulary</u>

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# *In Practice* Test Prep for Soc and ELA

The Expedition: Learn! Test Prep Guide provides teachers with practical, classroom-ready guidance for all 16 skills assessed through technology-enhanced items in Expedition: Learn! lessons. Teaching tips and resources specific to each skill are designed to strengthen instruction and boost student performance across ELA, science, and social studies.

Preview some assessment skills below.

## **Social Studies and ELA**

Practice identifying key information related to a central idea or conclusion.

## Science and ELA

Analyze evidence and reasoning to support claims and scientific arguments.



## Main Idea and Detail



Main Idea and Detail questions ask students to identify the main idea of a text and determine which parts of the text support that main idea. Students learn to read closely, read a text, and analyze how the details help advance the expressed ideas. With practice, students develop their reading comprehension and deepen their critical knowledge by self-orienting within any text and analyzing its meaning.

**Teaching Tip**

Remind students that the main idea will be repeated in multiple parts of the text. If only one sentence fits, it's probably not the main idea.

Open a Text Read and Check



Read the passage below. Then highlight the story that describes Homer's heroism.

Homer was an early Greek poet known for creating the famous epic poems, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. These poems celebrate the great heroes of ancient Greece and continue to shape literature today. *The Iliad* tells the story of the Trojan War and the Greek hero Achilles. *The Odyssey* follows King Odysseus on his long journey home. These poems were spoken or sung by storytellers before being written down.

Check Answer

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### Teach Britannica Resources

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**



Column Notes

**SPILL READERS**



Spill Readers

**STANDING ROCK PROTESTS**



Standing Rock Protests

## **ELA, Science, and Social Studies**

Identify the main idea in informational texts.

**Are you ready to check out all the assessment skills?  
Download the complete Test Prep Guide!** 

