

*A Little Information to help you prepare your child for the AZ Merit Testing. These are scheduled to be taken by Third Grade in the month of April.*

**All students at the Kyrene School District will take the computer-based version of AzMERIT this year.**

**Top 8 Tips for Helping Your Child Prepare for AzMERIT**

Spring has arrived, which means we're already nearing the end of another school year in Arizona. It's time to measure what students have learned and if they are on track and prepared for the next step in their education. This year, Arizona students will be taking a brand new test, called AzMERIT.

Think of the test as an academic checkup. Just as you would want your doctor to share an honest assessment of your child's health, AzMERIT will give you the most accurate information about your child's academic ability.

We know that taking tests can be stressful and students can experience every emotion from panic to apathy. It is important your child is mentally and physically prepared and there are simple ways to alleviate anxiety and stress.

**1) Talk to Your Child's Teacher**

Teachers are an excellence resource for details about the skills your child has been working on this school year and what support you can give your child at home to help him prepare for the test.

**2) Reinforce Critical Thinking Skills**

Your child has been preparing for the new test since the school year began. All of the projects, assignments and discussions have reinforced critical thinking and problem solving skills. However, you can reinforce those skills at home by reading with your child and asking her to talk about the central idea or theme of book or article. Ask her to explain something she has written. Have her explain the steps she took to solve a math problem.

**3) Practice At Home**

You can support your child by learning about the skills being assessed on the test, as well as what sample questions might look like and talking with him about it. If your child will be taking the test on a computer, it would useful to go through some sample questions so he is familiar with the platform.

**4) Keep Track of Test Days**

If you know when the tests are coming, you can make sure other activities are kept to a minimum. Ensure school takes priority over practices, appointments and trips.

**5) Serve a Healthy Breakfast**

Research has shown the impact eating breakfast has on academic performance. Focus on foods that are healthy and a source of energy, like eggs and whole grain toast, or oatmeal packed with fruit and nuts. Less healthy choices such as donuts and sugary drinks can leave your student feeling tired and hungry just an hour or two later. A nutritious breakfast will help your child stay focused and alert.

**6) Safeguard Sleep**

Make sure your student gets enough sleep the night before exams and in the days leading up to tests. Enforce a “tech curfew” – no phones, tablets, video games, or TV for 30 minutes prior to bedtime. This will help your child wind down and prepare to get a good night’s rest.

**7) Don’t Stress**

Your stress can carry over to your student. By keeping your own stress levels down, you can help your child succeed. Try to emphasize to your child that she doesn’t have to be perfect, and that you’ll support her no matter what.

**8) Stay Positive**

Your child can be influenced by your reaction to testing time. Give him a positive send-off in the morning and tell him he has the needed skills, he just needs to relax and pace himself.

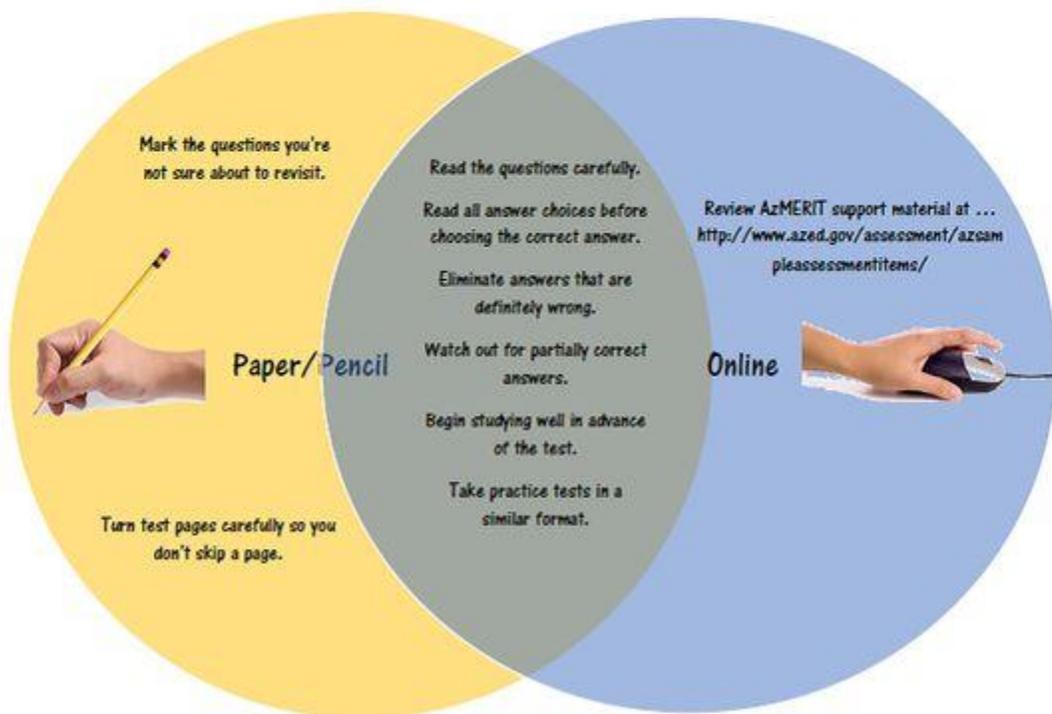
Remember, AzMERIT and other standardized tests are not the finish line. They simply serve as check points along every child’s educational journey. With very few exceptions, testing results should be used to determine areas of strength and weakness so students can monitor and adjust. Set goals for any skills that need work and celebrate when your child reaches each goal.

To learn more about the test and what your child needs to know to be successful, visit [ArizonaAimsHigher.org/AzMERIT](http://ArizonaAimsHigher.org/AzMERIT).



### Test-Taking Strategies... ONLINE!

As the AzMERIT approaches, some teachers may be prepping students for a traditional paper pencil assessment, while others brace themselves for the electronic version of the test. Whether your school will be adopting the online test this year or next, eventually we must all make the switch. So when it comes to test-taking tips and tricks, what should we tell our students?



**What will the tests be like?**

- **Math:** The math portion will be administered in two parts over the course of one to two days. This will ensure students have ample time to read and answer questions. The test will ask questions that check a student’s conceptual understanding of math, as well as their procedural skills. *Students will be taking the math portions of AzMERIT from [date range]. Each part of the test will take students an average of 50-85 minutes to complete.*

*Sample tests are available online for the math portion of AzMERIT. For more information view the Guide to the Sample Tests at <http://azmeritportal.org/>.*

Grade 3		
Domain	Minimum	Maximum
Measurement and Data & Geometry	26%	30%
Number and Operations - Fractions	18%	22%
Operations and Algebraic Thinking & Numbers in Base Ten	49%	53%

- **Writing:** The writing portion will require students to read a few passages and then write about them. This type of task requires students to think deeper about topics and use evidence to support their thinking. *Students will be taking the writing tests from [date range]. It will take an average of 45-90 minutes to complete the writing portion.*
- **Reading:** The reading portion will be administered in two parts over the course of one to two days. This will ensure students have ample time to read and answer questions. The test also contain editing tasks to measure student understanding of fundamental skills like spelling and grammar. *Students will be taking the reading portions of AzMERIT from [date range]. Each part of the test will take students an average of 45-75 minutes to complete.*

Grade 3		
Strands	Min	Max
Reading Standards for Literature	26%	35%
Reading Standards for Informational Text	26%	35%
Listening Comprehension (Informational)	0%	13%
Language	13%	19%
Writing	17%	19%

## Online Resources

- **AzMERIT Information**

Use this link for any questions regarding the AzMerit test.

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>

- **ADE Practice Tests**

These short practice tests are from the Arizona Department of Education Website.

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azsampleassessmentitems/>

- **AzMerit Practice Test**

*This website allows students to take practice tests that are similar to the AzMERIT.*

1. *Here are instructions to access the tests:*
2. *Everyone signs in as "guest".*
3. *On the page that says "Is This You?", select the grade level you want to work with*
4. *Click "YES" and you will be on the: "Select a Test" page. Here you select either writing, reading, or math.*
5. *After that, "Choose Settings" screen appears. Just click "Select" and move on.*
6. *Finally, you are on the page "Is This Your Test?" then click on "Yes. Start My Test".*
7. *Then you will get the "Test Instructions and Help" screen. On that screen, click on BEGIN TEST NOW.*

*You should jot down your answers so that when you are done you can find the answer key on the same starting page to see how you did*

<http://fsassessments.org/training-tests>

- **Typing Practice**

The AzMerit test is computer based. Our students will be required to answer all math, reading, and writing questions on the computer. These games help students practice their keyboarding/writing skills. The two most beneficial games on this website are the Chameleon and the Olympic Games. These games require students to type sentences, letters, and punctuation marks.

<http://www.sense-lang.org/typing/tutor/keyboarding.php>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr>

**Arizona Department of Education – AZMerit Resource Sites**

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmeritsupportmaterials/>

[http://azmeritportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Sample-Test-Guide\\_Final\\_022615.pdf](http://azmeritportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Sample-Test-Guide_Final_022615.pdf)

**Various other sites that may be of help:**

**Math**

[http://www.mathplayground.com/grade\\_3\\_games.html](http://www.mathplayground.com/grade_3_games.html)