Saint James School
Archdiocese of Hartford
NWEA Guide for Parents and Families

Who is NWEA?
NWEA™ (Northwest Evaluation Association) is a global not-for-profit educational services organization located in Portland, Oregon. NWEA partners with over 3,500 educational organizations worldwide to provide research-based adaptive assessments and professional development. NWEA's mission is partnering to help all kids learn. As a result of NWEA tests, educators can make informed decisions to promote your child's academic growth.

What are the adaptive MAP assessments?
NWEA's assessments are called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The MAP tests are tailored to each student's current achievement level. It provides each student with a fair opportunity to show what he or she knows and can do. When taking these adaptive tests, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student's achievement level.

What subjects does MAP assess?
At Saint James School, students in grades 3-8 are assessed in reading, language usage (better known as grammar) and mathematics.

When will my child be tested and how often?
In the Archdiocese of Hartford, elementary schools are expected to administer the MAP once a trimester – once in the fall, again in January, and then again in late spring.

How long does it take to complete a test?
Although the tests are not timed, it usually takes students about 25-35 minutes to complete each MAP test.

Do all students in the same grade take the same test?
No. MAP assessments are designed to target a student's academic performance in mathematics, reading, language usage, and science. The MAP tests are tailored to each student's current achievement level. It provides each student with a fair opportunity to show what he or she knows and can do. When taking a MAP test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all of the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student's achievement level. As a result, each student's testing experience is unique and tailored to meet his or her needs.

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What are MAP assessments used for?
MAP assessments are used to measure your student's progress or growth in school. You may have a chart in your home on which you mark your child's height at certain times, such as on his or her birthday. This is a growth chart. It shows how much he or she has grown from one year to the next. MAP assessments do the same sort of thing, except they measure your child's growth in mathematics, reading, language usage, and science skills. The scale used to measure your child's progress is called the RIT scale. The RIT scale is an equal-interval scale much like feet and inches on a yardstick. It is used to chart your child's academic growth from year to year.

What is the average score?
RIT scores range from about 140 to 300. Students typically start at the 140 to 190 level in the third grade and progress to the 240 to 300 level by high school. RIT scores make it possible to follow a student's educational growth from year to year.

How do teachers use the test scores?
MAP tests are important to teachers because they keep track of progress and growth in basic skills. They let teachers know where a student's strengths are and if help is needed in any specific areas. Teachers use this information to help them guide instruction in the classroom. A single test score does not define student success or effective instruction. However, assessment data can be incredibly useful to educators, parents and students alike, helping them improve their teaching, mentoring and learning.

Can I help my child prepare for a MAP Test?
No. As each test is unique and tailored to your child's instructional level, study guides are not available or recommended. Below is a link to a family toolkit that provides additional information and resources for families:

https://www.nwea.org/the-map-suite/family-toolkit/