

Taylor's Elementary School
Expecting Excellence in Achievement, Actions and Attitudes

DesCartes: A RoadMAP to Success



“One size never fits all, one size fits one.” - Tom Peters

The whole purpose of giving an assessment is to receive data that you can use to make a difference for the students in your class. With DesCartes teachers are able to address the instructional needs of all students no matter if their proficiency is well above, below or at grade level. *The most powerful component of MAP is DesCartes.*

Vaughan E. Overman, Principal
Melodie White, Instructional Coach

To Access DesCartes:

- Go to <http://www.nwea.org/>
- Left click Log on to the Reports Site>
- Fill in this information:

User Name	Password
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- A screen with school, term, teacher and class will appear. Left click submit.
- On the left **side** of the screen, scroll down to Instructional Resources
- Left click on Class by Rit
- Click on the student's name to retrieve a PDF file containing the Learning Continuum list of skills that corresponds to the goal RIT range for the associated goal.
- Click on the Goal name to retrieve a PDF file that contains the Learning Continuum pages for each RIT range for that goal.
- Click on <all students in cell> link to get a PDF file listing all the students within cell and corresponding Learning Continuum pages for that RIT range and goal.
The score in parentheses by the student's name (i.e. Name (219)) represents their overall RIT score for this subject.

DesCartes gives teachers the ability to start where students are.

Subject: Reading Goal Strand: Word Meaning RIT Score Range: 191 - 200		
Skills and Concepts to Enhance 181 - 190	Skills and Concepts to Develop 191 - 200	Skills and Concepts to Introduce 201 - 210
Phonetic Clues, Decoding, and Context Clues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies words with the same long vowel sound • Identifies words with r-controlled vowels* • Uses vowel digraphs to decode unknown words (e.g., aw, ea, igh)* • Divides words into syllables • Uses phonetic and structural analysis, the syntactic structure, and/or the semantic context to decode words • Understands and applies the concept of syllables* • Identifies the number of syllables in a word 	Phonetic Clues, Decoding, and Context Clues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses phonetic and structural analysis, the syntactic structure, and/or the semantic context to decode words • Identifies words with similar vowel sounds • Understands and applies the concept of syllables* • Identifies the number of syllables in a word • Divides words into syllables correctly • Recognizes meaning of words from context • Uses knowledge of word order (syntax) and context to support word identification and confirm word 	Phonetic Clues, Decoding, and Context Clues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divides words into syllables correctly • Divides multi-syllabic words into syllables • Uses multiple cueing systems (e.g., phonetic and structural analysis, syntactic structure, semantic context)* • Uses context to identify the correct meaning of words with multiple meanings • Determines meaning of words from context • Uses knowledge of syntax and context to support word

Student responds correctly to test item **75%** of the time



Student responds correctly to test item **50%** of the time

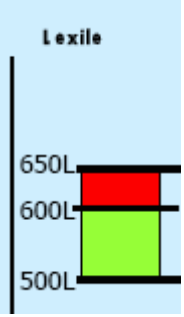


Student responds correctly to test item **25%** of the time



The column on the left, Skills and Concepts to Enhance , includes those skills and concepts that students may need continued reinforcement, support, and enhancement to maintain.	In the center column, Skills and Concepts to Develop , are those skills and concepts the students are ready to learn. These include skills and concepts that teachers may want to include in current classroom instruction.	The column on the right, Skills and Concepts to Introduce , includes skills and concepts that students might be ready to learn if the appropriate groundwork is laid or if a task is presented in a more structured format.
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MAP Vocabulary

<p>RIT</p> <p>RIT scores are INDEPENDENT of grade levels.</p>	<p>The student's overall test score; Rasch unit</p> <p>THINK ABOUT... What score does the lowest performing child have? Now look at the highest performing child in the class. This is an example of the type of academic diversity in this class. This is an indicator that if I, as a teacher, always try to teach the same thing to all students in a given lesson, in a given day, I may not be very effective with some of these students.</p>		
<p>DesCartes</p>	<p>A document listing skills and concepts to enhance, develop or introduce based on student MAP responses</p> <p>THINK ABOUT... · In the content you must teach, what is it that you want all of your students to know? · How can a student best learn this content in ways that are appropriate to their specific needs? · How can a student most effectively demonstrate what he or she has learned?</p>		
<p>Goal Performance</p>	<p>Indicates how students performed in various goal areas of the test</p>		
<p>Mean</p>	<p>The Arithmetic Average</p>		
<p>Median</p>	<p>The middle score received by a group of students; half of the scores are above, half are below this score</p>		
<p>Lexile</p> <p>www.lexile.com</p>	<p>A unit for measuring text difficulty</p> <p>Approximate Lexile Range Related to Grade Level Reading:</p> <p>BR = Below first grade</p> <p>Grade 1 200-400</p> <p>Grade 2 300-500</p> <p>Grade 3 420-700</p> <p>Grade 4 600-830</p> <p>Grade 5 800-920</p> <p>Grade 6 850-1010</p>		<p>Lexile Range:</p> <p>*instructional reading</p> <p>*independent reading level</p>
<p>Differentiate</p>	<p>To mark as different, a distinctive feature or attribute or characteristic; develop in a way most suited to the environment; become distinct and acquire a different character</p>		

Look at the standard deviation of the goal strands on your **Class Report by RIT Score**. If you have double-digit standard deviations, you may consider differentiated instruction. Higher standard deviations mean that your students have a wide variety of academic capability in that performance goal area. If you have a single digit standard deviation, whole group instruction may be appropriate.

SPECIFIC WAYS TO USE DESCARTES

with special emphasis given to differentiated instruction

The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process. DesCartes helps with differentiated instruction by providing a blueprint of specific learner needs.

_____ *Realize it would be overwhelming to try to differentiate everything for everyone everyday. Use DesCartes to target goal areas where differentiated instruction would address your largest areas of standard deviation.*

- Select moments in the instructional sequence to differentiate, based on formal and/or informal assessment.
- Designate a time in your lesson plans to differentiate by interest so that students can link what is being studied to something that is important to them.
- Provide options that make it natural for some students to work alone and others together, for some to have a more hands-on approach to making sense of ideas and for others to arrive at learning in a visual way.

_____ During conferences show DesCartes information to your students and their parents. Provide parents and students with specific strategies for enhancing and developing concepts and skills.

_____ Use DesCartes to plan for specific areas where you can differentiate homework assignments for identified students that target specific skills.

_____ Help set-up a resource center to house materials developed using RIT scores. The purpose of this area is to have resources and lesson plans that address RIT bands.

_____ Start by selecting one goal area. Use RIT ranges to divide students into 3 or 4 groups. Target specific skills these students need by working with these groups once or twice a week.

_____ Use a MAP planning form to set specific, measurable goals with students.

_____ Set up learning stations to reflect RIT bands and targeted skills. Assign students to centers based on the information provided by DesCartes. Using stations involves setting up different spots in the classroom where students work on various tasks simultaneously. These stations invite flexible grouping because not all students need to go to all stations all the time.

_____ Use Agendas to address student needs. Agendas are personalized lists of tasks that a student must complete in a specified time, usually two to three weeks. Student agendas throughout a class will have similar and dissimilar elements.

_____ DesCartes and Blooms can be used to adjust questions in group discussions or with written assignments. Direct higher level questions to students who can handle them and adjust questions accordingly for student with greater needs. All students are answering important questions that require them to think but the questions are targeted towards the student's ability or readiness level. Think about posting key words from each stage of Blooms as a visual in class discussions and for when students develop their own questions. Different students may be referred to different posters at certain times depending on ability, readiness or assignment requirements.

_____ Based on DesCartes, create a list of Anchoring Activities for students they can do to at any time when they have completed present assignments. These activities may relate to specific needs or enrichment opportunities, including problems to solve or journals to write. They could also be part of a long-term project that a student is working on. Students can work at different paces but always have productive work they can do. *These activities must be worthy of a student's time and appropriate to their learning needs.*

_____ Sign up for the MAP newsletter, *The Assessment Standard*, at <http://www.nwea.org/forms/newsletter.asp> The newsletter is published in the spring and in the fall. This newsletter communicates views on current issues in education and how they relate to assessment. Learn about practical examples of how NWEA partners are using assessment data to overcome the day-to-day challenges in education. Back issues are also available.

_____ Remember that differentiated instruction is worth the time and the effort. If there is any one secret to an enduring great teacher, it is the ability to manage *continuity* and *change* at the same time - a discipline that must be consciously practiced.

_____ Use the information from DesCartes and the data from MAP scores to help prepare students for PACT. Use the "Probability of Students Scoring" to help decide target areas for differentiated instruction.

_____ Identify appropriate vocabulary using DesCartes. From the home page of DesCartes on the bottom right side of the screen click on Vocabulary by Subject Area and RIT Range under *Appendices*

The RIT Score Range here indicates when the corresponding group of words may need to be introduced into the curriculum for this subject area based on all NWEA data.

Reading

RIT Score Range: 141–150

- ABC order
- beginning sound
- vowel

RIT Score Range: 151–160

- advertisement
- business letter
- ending sound
- fable
- journal
- legend
- list
- opposite

- outline
- rule
- short story
- synonym
- thank-you note

____Identify appropriate Signs and Symbols using DesCartes. From the home page of From the home page of DesCartes on the bottom right side of the screen click Signs and Symbols under Appendices.

Real Life

- Think ahead in team planning
- Plan ahead when developing units
- Know what your learning objectives are
A fuzzy sense of the essentials results in fuzzy activities, which, in turn, results in fuzzy student understanding.
- Know student level of readiness
- Know student strengths and deficits
- Assess learning