

# A Parent Guide To Understanding The California Science Test (CAST)

There are many ways to measure your child's learning. Your child's teacher uses report card grades, classroom work, teacher observations, and end-of-year statewide test results to get a complete picture of your child's learning.

## Who Takes This Test?

Your child will take the CAST in grades 5 and 8. They will also take the CAST once in high school, either in grade 10, 11, or 12.



## Why Do Students Take This Test?

The results will identify where your child is doing well or needs more help, so you can better support their learning at home and teachers can better support their learning in the classroom.

## When Do Students Take This Test?

Each school selects its own testing window in the spring. You will receive additional information from your school about the specific dates and times of testing.

## How Do Students Take This Test?

This test is taken on a computer which allows your child to interact with questions in a variety of ways. For example, your child might be asked to write a short response, collect data, and analyze data from an experiment or other resources.

## What Resources Are Available?

Your child will have access to resources they need when taking the test. For example, students have access to a calculator in grade 8 and high school, as well as access to reference sheets of formulas and a periodic table. You can talk to your child's teacher about other available resources that may help your child.

## How Can I Help My Child?

- Remind your child that you and their teacher want them to try their best and that you are there to help them every step of the way.
- Visit the [Starting Smarter website](#) to better understand Student Score Reports, review sample questions, and access resources to support your child's learning.
- Take a practice test with your child from the [CAASPP and ELPAC Practice and Training Tests web page](#).

For more information about your child's scores, contact your child's teacher and/or the school office.

