Massachusetts ABE Program

Handbook

for

Student Achievement in Reading:

(STAR) Implementation
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Introduction

STAR (STudent Achievement in Reading) is a nationally developed professional development program focused on building the reading skills for intermediate level (4 to 8.9 grade level equivalent) adult learners. Both at national and state levels, data indicate that adult learners at this grade level often struggle to develop the reading skills necessary for making learning gains and for advancing to higher academic levels.

In response, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) supported a pilot program which uses detailed diagnostic assessment as the basis for explicit reading instruction. This approach is supported by years of research in reading methodology which has concluded that mid-level adult learners struggle with one or more of the following skill areas: alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension. Since USDOE began the pilot in 2006, nineteen states have adopted this evidence-based approach. Massachusetts began training programs in 2010 and a total of eighteen programs have participated thus far.

To participate in STAR, programs must commit to six full days of training for the director/coordinator and at least one pre-ASE instructor, using the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) and to implementing Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI). Additionally, programs must be willing to make adjustments in the program design that might be required for involved classes.

To support programs, STAR produced an extensive web-based “Toolkit” that covers aspects of assessment, instruction, class management, and program design. The STAR website has detailed information at: www.startoolkit.org. Videos that model many of the instructional approaches are included. Locally, technical assistance is available from the four STAR certified trainers for Massachusetts. Program Specialists have also attended the trainings and can offer support on issues related to program design as well as provide assistance with DAR testing.

The purpose of this handbook is to guide programs in the process of implementing STAR in the intermediate GLE 4-8.9 level in Massachusetts ESE-funded programs.

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction

Evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI) integrates findings from the best available reading research with practitioner wisdom to inform instructional decisions. As stated in the toolkit,
“With EBRI, teachers use diagnostic assessment procedures to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of each learner and target reading instruction accordingly. Teachers that use EBRI help learners improve their skills in each of the four components of reading – alphabetics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension – by explaining new concepts, modeling strategies, and providing feedback when learners practice (www.startoolkit.org).”

Student Testing & Assessment

Students involved in the STAR class must have ABE Reading as their Primary Assessment and be tested in the Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test (MAPT) for Reading. If a student has an existing MAPT for Reading test from FY11 (or a MAPT for Reading test that was rolled over to FY11 from May/June 2010), the program may use this test for the pre-test. If students in the STAR class have a pre-test in MAPT for Math, they will need to be retested for reading as soon as possible.

Students need to complete pre- and post-testing in MAPT for Reading for this fiscal year.

Programs will also need to use the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) Interpretive Profile 2nd edition (score report form) to collect the data for each STAR student and provide a copy to ACLS for analysis and to capture outcomes across the STAR funded programs. Programs must enter their DAR scores in SMARTT before the data lockout date.

For the ABE STAR Programs, there are three discrete assessment processes, and each uses a distinct assessment tool:

- **Placement:** For placement of incoming students into the Intermediate, 200-Level STAR class (GLE 4-8.9), programs may use any appropriate published or program-developed assessment tool;
- **Assessment:** For assessing the reading profile of each student assigned to the STAR class, programs must use the DAR 2nd edition test;
- **Learner Gains:** For pre- and post-testing of STAR students to determine Learner Gains, programs must use the Massachusetts Adult Proficiency for Reading Test (MAPT). **For an exception, see Note 6, below.**
Below is a brief summary of each of these processes:

Assessment for Initial Placement

Programs may use any assessment tool of their choice (other than the DAR or MAPT) for placing students into a STAR class. Accurate assessment is important since the STAR Program is designed for Intermediate Readers (GLE 4-8.9). Having students in the STAR class whose GLEs are higher or lower than the established range will make effective delivery of evidence-based instruction difficult and seriously diminish the intended effectiveness of STAR. Students that are initially placed in an intermediate level class, but upon DAR testing are determined to be either below or above the DAR class groupings for alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension instruction, must be accommodated separately from the rest of the intermediate students. This accommodation might be accomplished by moving these students to a lower or higher-level class, or in planning instruction and tasks for them so they are otherwise occupied separate from the rest of the intermediate-level reading instruction groups. For more information on initial assessments, go to http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeprogram then click on “Guidelines for Effective Adult Basic Education”.

Note 1: The Diagnostic Assessment for Reading (DAR) is individually administered tests of essential areas of reading and language used by teachers and administrators to assess the reading level and plan for reading instruction. The DAR test is not designed to be a placement tool and should not be used for this purpose. For an exception, see Note 4, below.

Note 2: The MAPT is not designed as a placement tool and may not be used for this purpose.

Diagnostic Assessment of STAR Students

Once the initial placement assessment is complete and students are placed in a STAR class, these students must be diagnostically assessed using the DAR. The goal of diagnostic assessment is to determine learners’ specific strengths and needs in reading so teachers can create a learner profile for each student, select appropriate materials and teaching strategies, group students by similar profiles, and design appropriate instruction. Thus, DAR assessment and grouping of students according to their needs must be done before instruction begins. Programs must administer and score the DAR as
instructed in the STAR training. (The two areas where the STAR training differed from the DAR are in the rating system for fluency assessment and the Comprehension Interview.) For more detailed information on administering the DAR and creating reader profiles, consult the DAR Instructional Manual, the STAR Toolkit http://www.startoolkit.org/training, and notes from the Training Institutes.

Note 3: It is strongly urged that the STAR classroom teacher perform all DAR assessments. There are many nuances in students’ responses that go beyond the assigning of a “score” to determine GLE and which are invaluable to the teacher in designing appropriate instruction. Also, the process of the assessment itself creates a valuable rapport between the teacher and the student. In rare cases, the Program Director or another staff member trained to administer and score the DAR may assist in the administration of the DAR. If assessment difficulties persist, please contact a member of the Reading Research Group at ACLS; contact information is listed in the Technical Assistance section of this Handbook.

Note 4: For programs with two or more 200-Level classes, of which STAR is one, there is a great benefit to having the students in the STAR class matched closely in Reading Profiles as well as in GLE or a MAPT for Reading score between 300 – 499 that was rolled over from the previous year. In this case only, the DAR test may be used as an initial placement test to facilitate this educationally-beneficial class grouping. Also, since DAR-testing such a large number of learners might require a great deal of time for one classroom teacher, in this case only, other DAR administrators may be utilized: a Program Director, a STAR-trained staff member, a STAR-trained SABES representative, or a member of the ACLS Reading and Research Group. For assistance in such situations, programs should contact a member of the Reading Research Group at ACLS; contact information is listed in the Technical Assistance section of this Handbook.

Pre- and Post-Testing for Learner Gains

All students enrolled in the STAR class(es) must make Reading their Primary Assessment Area.

STAR students should be pre- and post-tested using the MAPT for Reading at the approved times: pre-test within 2-4 weeks of class placement and post-test after four months or 65 hours of instruction, whichever comes first depending on class intensity. Learners achieving 65 attended hours of instruction before two months elapse may be post-tested sooner than two months. MAPT scores from the previous May/June may be copied over to FY12. For more detailed instructions on administering
the MAPT, go to www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment, and download the updated document “Assessment Polices for Using the Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test (MAPT),” dated September 2011.

Note 5: The DAR test may not be used as a post-test to determine gains in Reading Comprehension or any of the reading components. The planned lessons and the graded reading materials are designed so that the teacher can easily determine when each student is ready to move to the next level in whatever component she is working (alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension). For more information on determining when students are ready to move to the next reading level, consult the STAR Toolkit at http://www.startoolkit.org/training and notes from the Training Institutes, or discuss with one of the four trainers (see page 23 for contact information).

Note 6: In STAR classes in programs for incarcerated adults or other institutions where on-line computer use is prohibited or problematic, the TABE 9/10 should be used for pre- and post-testing. For more information on using the TABE for this purpose, go to www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment, then download the updated document “Assessment Polices for Using the TABE, forms 9/10,” dated September 2011.

Please be sure to enter pre- and post-test scores as well as attendance in SMARTT as soon as is possible.

Program Changes

Managed Enrollment

For the purposes of the STAR Evidence-Based Reading Program, “Managed Enrollment” refers to the practice by which students are enrolled in a given class at the beginning of the class term, remain in that class for the duration of the term, and no new students are enrolled in that class (after a pre-determined date or not at all) for the duration of the class term. This contrasts with the common policy of "Open Enrollment," by which new students may be admitted into a given class at any time during the term.

A program may choose managed enrollment for just one class (as opposed to the open-entry, open exit model), several classes, or an entire program. Managed enrollment generally means that the program
has limited (or no) enrollment periods once the class has started and for a specified period of time. For example, a student may enroll in an instructional program or class only during specific enrollment periods, attend a specific class for the duration of the class term, continue in the same class or another class at the program for subsequent terms only by re-enrolling, and miss no more than a prescribed number of class sessions within a term. Research has shown that managed enrollment increases stability and learning in a classroom when turbulence caused by continuous in and out migration of students is eliminated.

STAR classes must use managed enrollment. Managed enrollment, like intensity, is a key component of evidence-based reading instruction. It is too difficult to have individual students entering the classroom randomly, disrupting the flow of the established groupings, and it is too difficult for the teacher to have to regroup every week. STAR trainers and teachers have found that a leveled class where enrollment is managed provides an ideal environment for successfully implementing STAR.

Typically, programs should follow these steps to build a STAR class:

- Initially, the program should administer a placement tool to students prior to the testing and orientation week.
- Students who test into the mid-range (GLE 4-8.9) on the assessment rubric are candidates for the Pre-ASE class.
- The program should determine how many open slots are available for the Pre-ASE class and over-enroll the class.
- After the number of open slots (including the over-enrolled slots) has been determined, the program should only administer the DAR to students filling open slots in the Pre-ASE class.
- If the number of students in a class drastically drops below the minimum, the program has the option to plan to assess new students with the DAR and have all new students begin class on the same day.

There are a number of ways to implement managed enrollment. Below is one example of what a managed enrollment schedule might look like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-planning week for teachers</td>
<td>8/15 – 8/19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAR Testing / Orientation</td>
<td>Week prior to class start date</td>
<td>Test on M,T,W – Teacher Determines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More information on managed enrollment and managed enrollment scenarios can be found in the *STAR Institute I, Day 1, Handout 10.*

Intensity

“Intensity” refers to the number of hours of instruction per week in a given class. For example, a class that meets six hours a week is considered to have relatively low intensity; nine-hours-a-week or above class is high intensity.

Programs involved in STAR evidence-based reading instruction are provided guidelines for creating ways in which the Pre-ASE (intermediate level GLE 4-8.9) class will offer a more intensive educational opportunity for students. Programs with less than 9 hours per week of instruction need to ensure at least 50% of class time is teaching evidence-based reading.

Optimally, Pre-ASE classes that are offered for nine or more hours per week have the opportunity to utilize evidence-based reading instruction to its fullest capacity and still have ample time to address other areas of instruction, such as math and writing. ACLS recognizes that not all programs will be able to provide nine or more hours of Pre-ASE instruction weekly in order to allow their students time to make learning gains.

Training New Staff

Any teacher who will be teaching a Pre-ASE STAR class must go through a 6-day STAR training presented by certified STAR trainers.
In order to ensure proper evidence-based reading instruction, staff involved in STAR must be trained only by the certified STAR trainers at the 6-day institute.

In the course of participation, a STAR program may experience the loss of its STAR trained instructor. In this instance, that instructor’s class will not be included in STAR data until the program has a fully trained STAR instructor in that class.

Please note: ACLS is able to compensate for “replacement” participants one time only (e.g., a teacher trained in FY10 left and his/her replacement in FY11 was compensated for $1800.) If this FY11 teacher leaves the program, ACLS is not able to compensate an FY12 replacement.

Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to participate as long as they commit to attending the full 6 days of training. Unfortunately, ACLS is unable to compensate the volunteers for their participation in the training.

Budget Implications

Programs should incorporate STAR costs into their existing budget. Prep time for STAR classroom teachers should minimally be 1:1 or 2:1.

Programs may use funds from their regular Community Adult Learning Center grant to support additional hours for assessment, prep time, academic counseling, staff development, and program development.

Adult and Community Learning Services provides an additional $2,500 per program in the second year of STAR participation, to provide continuing support. With the additional $2500, it is expected that STAR directors and teachers attend STAR support meetings. To facilitate participation at these meetings and in support of the STAR teachers and classes, the funding may also be used to support increased assessment time, increased preparation or common planning time for STAR teachers and
relevant staff, purchase of STAR-recommended reading materials, purchase of DAR consumable test booklets, lodging for an additional night at the Directors’ Meeting, travel expenses to meetings, and/or substitute teacher expenses. After the second year of participation, programs are expected to attend support meetings using professional development time and their core grant to cover any related costs.

If a program has already had “replacement” participants, it is expected that the program will use its existing budget to retrain new staff for STAR.

Integrating the Action Plan into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)

ACLS requires that each program engage annually in a formal planning process for continuous improvement. The overall goal of continuous improvement planning is to ensure that the program is offering high quality services to students to assist them in meeting their goals and making learning gains. Program development hours can be used to work with staff to develop the CIP.

Throughout the STAR pilot, programs have been working on Action Plans. ACLS strongly recommends incorporating the STAR Action Plan into the program’s annual Continuous Improvement Plan, both for efficiency and consistency. For example, if a program had the goal in their STAR Action plan “to observe teachers more,” that goal could be incorporated into the annual CIP with an overall program goal of “Improving Curriculum Development, Implementation and Instructional Methods”. One of the activities to reach that goal could be to “Observe teachers more” and the resources could be to use the observation forms in the STAR toolkit when observing the STAR trained instructor. Another example could be to “review DAR grouping of students in the STAR class;” activities to support could be a conversation with the teacher about student MAPT scores and student placement.

Data

SMARTT /Class Plan Information
To ensure that ACLS can track all Pre-ASE (GLE 4 – 8.9) level classes assigned to the teacher(s) going through the STAR training, the program plans must reflect class time spent on teaching evidence-based reading. The STAR class must be linked to another class if there is additional time spent teaching other content areas.

If the program has new teachers going through the STAR training, program plan changes should be made by 11/1/11.

Class Plan:

1. Go into “Working Plan links” on the left toolbar of the SMARTT main menu. Once you click on the link, you will note that you are in the “Working Plan” version. As you make changes in the new working plan (by clicking on the “edit” button), the rows that have been changed will be color-coded to highlight the changes.

2. End the current pre-ASE class as of 10/30/11. This will only be for the pre-ASE class(es) involved in the STAR project.

3. Add the new class with the start date of 11/1/11 through the end of the fiscal year 2012. The end date for this class should be the same as for the class that you just ended since the total class hours are the same for that year.

When ending a class and starting a new class, the hours for each will need to be adjusted according to the start and end dates for each class -- Pre-ASE and the new STAR class. When ending the current Pre-ASE class, refer to your monthly schedule in SMARTT to make sure the hours reflect the new schedule. For example, if class code 201 ends on 10/28/11, then a new class 205 is added with a start date of 11/1/11. The end date will be the same as the original end date for 201 since the total hours need to be the same as originally planned.

4. The Program should have two new classes for GLE 4-8.9. One class with a focus of “STAR” with the exact amount of hours dedicated to STAR class instruction. The STAR class should be linked with a new Core Pre-ASE class to reflect the amount of hours dedicated to other core content areas. See example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
Adult & Community Learning Services
October 2011
5. Once all changes are made, the plan needs to be submitted for approval to your Program Specialist.

Class Funding Detail:

1. Enter the number of slots and funding amount under the column labeled “Funding Details.” To do this, select the “edit” mode, and for the STAR class(es), select “340” or “345” in the drop-down menu. Make sure that this class is reconciled before clicking on the “save” button.

2. The funding for STAR should be added to the ESE Flex/Foundation sheet under “Unrestricted” with a brief description and labeled “STAR.” This is a one-time, non-class funding award for FY2012.

Class Monthly Schedule:

Review your current schedule for the month of November to determine how to break it into two classes. For example:

3 hrs/week, Monday/Wednesday class
2/1/12 – 2/15/12 = 12 hours (4 classes) – Pre-ASE
2/20/12 – 2/29/12 = 6 hours (2 classes) – STAR class

Total = 18 hours
Recording DAR Information in SMARTT

For FY12, STAR programs are required to enter the DAR data for all students enrolled in STAR class(es). Directions are as follows. Select a STAR student record and click on “Assessments.” The DAR panel is the last assessment panel. First, click on “Edit,” and enter the date the DAR was administered and the Form used (either A or B). Then using the drop-down menu, select the specific test name for each of the six subtests, and enter the student score:

1. Word Recognition
2. Fluency Mastery Level
3. Fluency Instructional Level for Rate and Prosody
4. Fluency Instructional level for Accuracy
5. Vocabulary
6. Silent Reading Comprehension

For each of the six subtests, enter the student score (e.g., 0, 1, ....9, 10, 1/12.) Enter all the scores for the six subtests but hit “Save” after the first five entered. Then add the sixth score, and select “Save” at the end. Users do not need to click on “save” after each of the six scores is entered.

Getting Data from Cognos

Planning for continuous program improvement should incorporate an ongoing process for collecting and using data, from assessing program needs and strengths and identifying goals, to evaluating the effectiveness of the plan, revising the plan, and modifying goals or identifying new goals. The plan for continuous program improvement must include a staff member to oversee the review of Cognos data (among other data). It is strongly recommended that all staff involved in the STAR project meet at least quarterly to analyze data that affect daily operations, program planning, and continuous improvement. Minimally twice per year, staff should review STAR class data, including Cognos data, specific to continuous program improvement.

In addition to analyzing and using overall program data and performance, it is important for the director to feel confident in gathering data about specific classes in SMARTT.

Below is a guide to help Directors find specific information in Cognos relating to the STAR Pre-ASE class. For additional assistance, the program can contact the Regional SABES Technology Coordinator.

a) Attendance percentage

Find this in Cognos: Attendance Cube
- Drill down to the 200 level class(es) that was a STAR class.
- View the yearly percent which is found in the last column of data labeled 2010, 2011, 2012.
b) Average attended hours

*Find this in SMARTT: Class Attendance*

- Click on Classes on the left menu and set the fiscal year filter to 2010, 2011, 2012.
- Select the Pre-ASE class(es) that was a STAR class.
- Click on Attendance and set the “Status” to “All” to list the current and exited students who attended during the year.
- View the total attendance which is found in the last column in the last row.
- To find the average attended hours, divide the total attendance by the total enrolled in (a) above.
- View the average attended hours.

c) Number of meaningful learner gains as defined in the ABE Performance Standards

*Find this in Cognos: OWL Report 2. STUDENT MAPT SCORES BY TEST NUMBER*

- Select Test: MAPT Reading
- Select Site: Your Site
- Select Class: Class Code (for each 200 level class that was a STAR class)
- Calculate the gain by subtracting the first test score from the last test score.
- Meaningful gain as defined in the performance standards for MAPT is 21 or more scale score points.
- View the number of students in the class who had a MAPT gain of 21 or more scale score points. (Corrections should list the number of students in the class who had a TABE 9/10 reading gain of 24 or more scale score points).

*Corrections Programs:*

*Find this in SMARTT: Last Year’s Site Assessment Report*

- Click on Site and then click on “Last Year’s Report” which can be found in the list of Assessment Reports.
- Review the gain data listed in the last column for the students in the 200 level class(es) that was a STAR class (You can export this report to Excel).
- Meaningful gain as defined in the performance standards for TABE 9/10 Reading is 24 or more scale score points in FY12.
- View the number of students in the class(es) who had a TABE Reading gain of 24 or more scale score points.

d) The number of learners advancing from Pre-ASE level (GLE 4-8.9) to ASE (Adult Secondary Education level (GLE 9-12)) as indicated by FY11 pre/post scores.

*Find this in Cognos: OWL Report 2. STUDENT MAPT SCORES BY TEST NUMBER* (same as in c above)

Review the report listed in # 4 above and count the number of students who pre-tested in the 300-499 range in MAPT and post-tested at 500 or above and advanced to the ASE level. View the number who advanced to the ASE level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAPT</th>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Scale Scores</th>
<th>GLE Level</th>
<th>NRS Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading &amp; Math</td>
<td>300 - 399</td>
<td>4 - 5.9</td>
<td>Low Intermediate ABE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading &amp; Math</td>
<td>400 - 499</td>
<td>6 - 8.9</td>
<td>High Intermediate ABE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading &amp; Math</td>
<td>500 - 599</td>
<td>9 - 10.9</td>
<td>Low ASE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading &amp; Math</td>
<td>600 - 700</td>
<td>11 - 12.9</td>
<td>High ASE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Corrections Programs: Number of meaningful learner gains as defined in the ABE Performance Standards*

*Find this in SMARTT: Last Year’s Site Assessment Report* (same as in c above)

Review the report listed in “c” above and count the number of students who pre-tested in the 461 - 566 range in TABE and post-tested at 567 or above and advanced to the ASE level. View the number who advanced to the ASE level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABE 910</th>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Scale Scores</th>
<th>GLE Level</th>
<th>NRS Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>461 - 517</td>
<td>4 - 5.9</td>
<td>Low Intermediate ABE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading 518 - 566 6 - 8.9 High Intermediate ABE
Reading 567 - 595 9 - 10.9 Low ASE
Reading 596 and above 11 - 12.9 High ASE

STAR Classroom Performance Standards

All data must be included in all NRS federal reports regardless of class types. The only exclusion allowed is for students who attended less than 12 hours for the entire year.

In FY12, the STAR class(es) will be included in the overall program’s performance standards.

Additional Support

Quarterly Meetings

Adult and Community Learning Services provides an additional $2,500 per program to programs in the second year of participation for continued support of STAR. After the second year of STAR involvement, programs are expected to continue their participation in supporting STAR and attending support meetings. Programs eligible to receive the additional $2,500 will be funded through an amendment to the 340/345 grants.

To facilitate participation at these meetings and in support of the STAR teachers and classes, the funding may support:

- Increased assessment time
- Increased preparation or common planning time for STAR teachers and relevant staff
- Purchase of STAR recommended reading materials
- Purchase of DAR consumable test booklets
- Substitute Teacher expenses
- Lodging for meetings that are a great distance to travel to
- Travel expenses to these meetings
Each program is expected to participate in a series of meetings that will offer technical assistance as well as time to discuss challenges and share ideas and materials that have worked well in implementing evidence-based reading instruction. Both directors and teachers are required to attend all meetings. There will be time for breakout group discussions according to roles in the program.

FY12 meetings will be:

October 28th*  Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester, MA
100 Front Street, Worchester, MA 01608
CitySquare Campus, Room 100

*Please note that only FY11 first time funded STAR programs need to attend this meeting.

January 20th  (Snow Date – January 27th)
Picknelly Center, Holyoke, MA
206 Maple Street, Holyoke, MA 01040
402/403 for all and room 400 as a breakout room.
&
World Education, Boston, MA
44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210

March 30th  Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester, MA
100 Front Street, Worchester, MA 01608
CitySquare Campus, Room 100

Technical Assistance/Contact Information

Because fidelity to the STAR model is essential for student success, ACLS and SABES are committed to ongoing support for STAR programs. Massachusetts STAR trainers will continue giving support and technical assistance to STAR programs.

Technical assistance will be provided to programs through site visits, phone, email, and conference calls as the need arises. Additionally, site visits and classroom observations will be scheduled to continue to
support progress as programs thoroughly implement STAR. Please contact your program specialist, SABES STAR trainers and/or members of the ACLS Reading and Literacy Research Committee.

**Massachusetts STAR Trainers:**

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**SABES Contact:**

Luanne Teller  
lteller@worlded.org  
617.482.9485

Site Visits

Programs participating in STAR should expect a minimum of two site visits (or more if program requests and/or trainer requests). Those involved in site visits and classroom observations might include a STAR trainer and/or the program specialist.

Additionally, the Program Director should be observing the STAR teacher both formally and informally using the rubrics from the STAR Toolkit and discussed in the training.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations from the Trainer and Program Specialist may take place during a site visit or be scheduled separately, as best meets the need of the program and individuals involved.
observations are intended to support the STAR teacher and his/her class. Programs should allow time after the observation to discuss achievements, challenges and adherence to STAR evidence-based reading instruction. In order to maximize the observation opportunity, programs must have the following documents prepared and emailed to the observation team a few days in advance of the site visit:

- A copy of the Class List of Instructional Levels (from the STAR Toolkit) and Notes from Diagnostic Reading Assessments listing the reading groups by component and the individual scores of each student in the group,
- The DAR results for each student not included in the first bullet,
- Lesson Plans from the week prior to the visit and for the lesson(s) to be taught during the classroom observation.

The observation team (STAR Trainer and Program Specialist) will confer and then debrief with the teacher and director immediately following the observation. A written summary of the observation and discussion, detailing what was observed and recommendations made, will be sent to the program and program specialist from the observation team leader within two weeks of the observation.

The observation team will continue to observe a program until all the techniques within a component have been successfully demonstrated (see Appendix 7.) When being observed, teachers should try to plan a lesson that involves more than one component.
STAR Vision

Establish structures and practices at the classroom, program, and state levels to support evidence-based reading instruction that results in increased learner outcomes.

Provide evidence-based reading instruction for intermediate level readers

• Conduct diagnostic assessment

• Group students according to instructional needs & organize an instructional reading routine

• Plan and deliver instruction in fluency, alphabetics, vocabulary, and comprehension that is:
  
  – Responsive to student needs identified through diagnostic assessment
  
  – Delivered through explicit instruction
  
  – Based on evidence-based instructional practices
  
  – Monitored and adjusted as students’ needs change
The STAR Vision was introduced at the STAR Institutes by the national STAR certified trainers.
Sample Outline of STAR.DAR Diagnostic Assessment Process for Test Administrators
Developed by the Jamaica Plain Community Centers Adult Learning Program

All page numbers listed are for DAR Response Record (RR)

A. Alphabets/Word Recognition

- Directions, p. 14 in RR

- Levels 4 – 9 pp. 16, 17 in RR. Start at Level 4

- If mastery at Level Four or below, Word Analysis (phonics) needs to be administered. Start on p. 20, with “Short Vowel Sounds”

**The Mastery Level in Alphabets will influence starting point of the Fluency and possibly other assessment areas.

B. Fluency/Oral Reading

- Use rubric from STAR Toolkit (with 0 – 3 Rating)

- Levels 5 – 9 pp. 31 – 33 in RR

- Continue moving up levels until student reaches a “1,” “2,” and “3” rating as described in the STAR Toolkit Fluency rubric. (Mastery level is highest with a rating of “3”.)

C. Vocabulary/Word Meaning

- Directions, p. 49 in RR
  (Also refer to directions from the DAR Teachers Manual.)

- Levels 5 – 9 pp. 52 – 54 in RR
D. Comprehension/Silent Reading

- Directions, p. 36 of RR
- Levels 5 - 9 pp. 39 – 43 in RR
- Comprehension Interview from STAR Toolkit
STAR Program Site / Observation Visit Record

1. Site Visit/Observation Team

2. Date of visit

3. Program Name (and names of staff included in site visit)

4. Summary of how information was gathered:
   - Class List of Instructional Levels
   - Teacher Lesson Plans
   - Meeting with Program Director/STAR Teacher
   - Review of STAR data
   - Classroom visit
   - Other

5. Summary of topics discussed, observations, decisions/conclusions and next steps

6. Specific items for future consideration

7. Follow up comments

8. Specific observations regarding the adherence to Evidence Based Reading Instruction
Appendix 3

STAR CLASS OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

I. TIMETABLE

At Institute I

- On the available sign up sheet, each Program commits to a Call Date with a Trainer.

After Institute I (but before Institute II)

- Program submits Action Plan, DAR Results, and MAPT Scores (3 copies: one to Trainer, one to Program Specialist, one to Marie).
- Trainer initiates Conference Call between Trainer, Program Specialist, and Program staff on the agreed-upon Call Date.
- No later than two weeks after the Conference Call, the Trainer will submit a written report to the Program itemizing the Action Points agreed upon in the call. (3 copies: one to the Program, one to the Program Specialist, one to Marie Narvaez)

After Institute II (but before Institute III)
• In-person class observation by Trainer and Program Specialist. (It is the responsibility of the Trainer to schedule this observation, with input from the Program Specialist.)
• Observation Priority: one fluency lesson and one vocabulary lesson

After Institute III

• In-person class observation by Trainer and Program Specialist. (It is the responsibility of the Trainer to schedule this observation, with input from the Program Specialist.)
• Observation Priority: one alphabetics lesson or one comprehension strategies lesson
• Additional fluency or vocabulary lessons if serious challenges were noted in the prior observation.

Additional observations or meetings should be scheduled if program has not resolved challenges with diagnostic assessment, instruction, or program design.

II. PROTOCOL FOR PRE-OBSERVATION DOCUMENTS

The following documents should be submitted by the Program prior to each scheduled Class Observation (2 copies: one to Trainer, one to Program Specialist):

STAR CLASS OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (continued)

• Additional DAR results/MAPT scores (if applicable)
• Student Groupings for the lesson(s) to be observed
• A completed Instructional Planning Guide for each lesson to be observed
• An inventory of instructional techniques used (past or present) for each Component to be observed

It is the responsibility of the program Specialist to give to Marie copies of all pre-observation materials for inclusion in the Star Program profiles.

III. POST-OBSERVATION FEEDBACK PROTOCOL

A. Oral Feedback

• Immediately after an observed lesson, the Trainer and Program Specialist should give informal feedback to Instructor (and Director, if applicable), touching on two or three of the major points observed during the lesson. The Trainer takes the lead in this discussion; the Program Specialist should be in a supporting role only

B. Written Feedback
No later than two weeks after each class observation, the Trainer will submit a written report to the Program (3 copies: one to the Program, one to the Program Specialist, one to Marie)

- The written report should address each of the elements in the Observation Guide for the Component(s) observed.
- The written report should conclude with specific guidelines for future lessons/planning/techniques, with special attention to expanding the inventory of instructional techniques used for the given Component(s).
- The Trainer should submit a draft of the written report to the appropriate Program Specialist prior to the completion of the final copy.
- If the Program Specialist does not respond to the draft within 48 hours of receipt, tacit approval shall be assumed.

IV. PROTOCOL FOR MAINTAINING THE STAR PROGRAM PROFILES

The above-mentioned documents given to Marie Narvaez by the Trainer and the Program Specialist will be placed into the appropriate binders in the ACLS library of Program Profiles.

Appendix 4

How to Receive STAR Training Professional Development Points (PDPs)

Through an agreement with ACLS, SABES is able to issue 48 PDPs for practitioners who successfully complete STAR Training. Please complete this form and email it with your narrative attached (see #2) to lteller@worlded.org. If you have any questions, feel free to call Luanne Teller at (617) 482-9485. Requests for PDPs will be reviewed and processed within 30 days. If you need your certificate sooner, please include your request in your email.

Please complete your name as you would like it to appear on your certificate. Name:

Please indicate the mailing address where you would like the certificate to be sent. Address:
Please indicate the phone number and email where we can reach you if we have any questions or need additional information.

Phone:          Email:

Program Name:

Your Title:

1. STAR Participants are eligible for 48 PDPs. To be eligible, you must have completed all six sessions of the STAR Institutes. Please confirm dates for the STAR Institutes you attended:

   _______Session I     _______Session III      _______Session V

   _______Session II    _______Session IV      _______Session VI

2. Please attach a short narrative (minimum of two pages) with specific examples related to your participation.
   a. What were the most significant things you learned?
   b. What did you find challenging about implementing STAR in your classroom/program?
   c. What did you need to change about your practice/program?
   d. What have been your successes so far?
   e. What additional support would be helpful?

3. Please note that SABES will provide Luanne with classroom observation notes for practitioners seeking PDPs. They will be included in your PDP file.

   SABES is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Appendix 5
We’re asking all borrowers to register with us. Please fill out the form on the lower half of this page and return it to the address indicated on the form or to your friendly SABES regional office. The information on this form will be kept strictly confidential.

**Borrowing Period**

For the SABES Library, the borrowing period is one month and you may renew items. If you can’t get to the library, we’ll happily mail items to you. You may return borrowed items to your local public or academic library and they’ll come back to SABES. (Please leave the routing slip in each item you’ve borrowed.)

**Online catalog**

Anyone may search our online catalog, but as a registered borrower, you may reserve resources online and we’ll mail them to you. (Within a resource record display, click on the "Reserve/Hold" button.) The catalog: [http://surpass.worlded.org/surpass/websafari.exe](http://surpass.worlded.org/surpass/websafari.exe)

If you’ve any questions at any time about resources, feel free to contact the library:
1-877-605-5400 (toll-free in Mass.) E-mail: sabesliteracylibrary@umb.edu

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**SABES Adult Literacy Library**

**Borrower Registration Form**

All adult literacy teachers, administrators, tutors and support staff in Massachusetts may be users of this library. Items may be checked out for one month and renewed if necessary. **Please fill in this form completely (and legibly) in order to actively borrow from the library. Thank you.**

Name: ___________________________ BIRTH Date ______________________

Home Address: ___________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _____ Zip code: ________

Home Phone: ______________ Work Phone: _______________________________

E-mail Address: __________________________

Name of ABE Program: ________________________________________________

Position: ___ Teacher ___ Director ___ Counselor ___ Volunteer Coordinator ___ Tutor ___ Other (describe): __________________________________________________________

Interest areas: _________________________________________________________

Return form to: Lou Wollrab, SABES/World Education, 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210-1209

Appendix 6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>HAVE TRIED</th>
<th>WILL TRY</th>
<th>WITH WHOM / MY NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLUENCY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Collaborative Oral Reading**    | 1. Done in small groups with teacher.  
2. Each person reads three to five lines of text and then passes the turn to another group member.  
3. Turns are short, so even less fluent readers can participate comfortably.  
4. Keep group small so each student has numerous opportunities to practice fluency. |            |          |                      |
| • Good for accuracy, rate and prosody  
• Less scaffolding                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |          |                      |
| **Repeated Reading**              | 1. The student and teacher set goals.  
2. The student performs an unpracticed reading with a short text at the target level.  
3. The student hears a fluent reading of the text.  
4. The student practices reading the text independently.  
5. The student reads the text for the teacher. |            |          |                      |
| • Good for lower level fluency—more scaffolding  
• Good for accuracy                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |          |                      |
| **Echo Reading**                  | 1. Teacher selects a text to be read aloud.  
2. The teacher reads the first sentence aloud and the learner repeats – or echoes – the sentence.  
3. Once teacher and student have read/echoed each sentence, the teacher reads the entire paragraph aloud again.  
4. The student then echoes the entire paragraph to ensure he/she is not just parroting back what was heard. |            |          |                      |
| • Good for accuracy, rate and prosody  
• Best done one-on-one for struggling reader who needs much support |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |          |                      |
| **Marked Phrase Boundaries**      | 1. Teacher prepares a text by marking it to show students where words should be grouped together to form meaningful "chunks".  
2. Teacher reads the marked text aloud while students follow along.  
3. The teacher and students then practice reading the text together.  
4. Students practice reading the marked text aloud on their own.  
5. Instruction progresses until learners can mark phrases themselves – first on texts they have practiced with, then on new material – and eventually read unmarked text with appropriate phrasing. |            |          |                      |
## VOCABULARY

| Tier 2 Instruction | 1. Teacher introduces one meaning of each new word.  
|                   | 2. Teacher gives examples of contexts for the words, then asks students for their own examples. |
| Fill-in-blank, Cloze, or Sentence Completion | 1. Teacher provides exercises where new words are used in different contexts.  
|                   | 2. May be done orally or on worksheets. |
| Read & Respond | 1. Teacher provides short articles on topics of general interest.  
|                   | 2. Teacher prepares questions about the articles that use the new words.  
|                   | 3. Learners will apply their knowledge of the word meanings when they respond to the questions. |
| Yes/No/Why | 1. Teacher prepares questions in which new vocabulary words have been paired (e.g., Is a commotion always conspicuous?)  
|                   | 2. The questions have no "right" answers, and the teacher shows students how to support their answers. |
| Quadrant Chart | 1. One chart is filled out for each new word.  
|                   | 2. Can be done on board, newsprint, and/or blank handouts.  
|                   | 3. Can be used as a follow-up, review, and/or homework activity. |

| Vocabulary Word | Meaning  
|----------------|--------  
| Examples | Opposites |

## ALPHABETICS

| Affixes | 1. Teacher provides groups of words with similar prefixes or suffixes.  
|         | 2. Students and teacher practice determining what words mean, or how they change, based on application of the affixes. |
| Base Words | 1. Teacher provides groups of words with same base word root (e.g., interrupt, disrupt, bankrupt).  
|           | 2. Students and teacher practice determining what words mean, or how they change, based on their common base words or roots. |
## COMPREHENSION

### Summarizing
1. Class reads text paragraph by paragraph; teacher asks for each paragraph, “What is the topic of this paragraph?”
2. Teacher then asks, “What is the most important point the author makes about that topic?”
3. Once important points are identified for each paragraph, teacher asks, “Is every point needed to understand the author’s ideas?”; points that are unnecessary are eliminated.
4. Class joins the remaining points to create a summary of the text.
5. Students can practice summarizing in small groups or on their own.

### Questioning
1. Teacher begins by discussing the words people use to form questions (e.g., what, why, how). Then shows them how to ask questions about a text (e.g., “Who saved Jane from drowning?”)
2. Teacher provides students with opportunities to practice questioning, in small groups and on their own.
3. When both summarizing and questioning have been taught, teacher shows students how to combine the two strategies.

### K-W-L Chart
- Useful only if students are somewhat familiar with the subject of the text
1. Teacher makes table on board or newsprint. Students make copy of their own on paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I already know</td>
<td>I want to know</td>
<td>I learned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Teacher presents topic or concept from a reading and asks the students what they already know about it, recording in K column.
3. Teacher and students identify the K information that they think will be in the text.
4. Teacher asks students what they want to know about the topic or concept, recording in W column.
5. Students read the passage and what they learned is recorded in the L column.
6. Class checks to see which column W questions are unanswered.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Text Marking</strong></th>
<th>1. Students use codes throughout a reading as follows.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Useful only if students are somewhat familiar with the subject of the text</td>
<td>✓ I knew this before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very useful for learners who have a habit of reading word by word</td>
<td>1. This was new to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>? I’m not sure what this means.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher shows students how to mark a text, describing each of the codes.</td>
<td>3. Class works together on a new text, discussing similarities and differences in the way each person would mark the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students work in pairs so that they can compare how they would mark a text with their partner.</td>
<td>4. Students to mark a text on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fix-Up Strategies</td>
<td>1. Teacher asks students to quickly summarize what they just read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teacher asks students to briefly retell what they just read.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teacher rates summary or retelling using rubrics from the Toolkit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Structures</td>
<td>1. Teacher explains that authors organize information in text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be taught to show the link between reading and writing</td>
<td>2. Teacher provides examples. Some authors want to tell a story (involving a setting, characters, actions, and consequences), explain how things are alike or different (compare/contrast), list some characteristics or facts about a topic (description), show how something operates (sequence), or explain how or why something happened in history (cause/effect).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teacher provides graphic representations of these structures and then, as a group, class discusses how to fill some in (e.g., a folk tale for a narrative, two countries for a compare/contrast, global warming for cause/effect.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Teacher gives students examples of texts that fit these patterns, and class works together to identify the text structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Students practice recognizing text structures, in small groups and on their own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multi-Year Observation Rubric for STAR Instructional Strategies

The purpose of this document is to help determine if mastery of each reading component has been observed over time. TA should continue until all components have been observed and the trainer has no further recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Component</th>
<th>Observed in FY10</th>
<th>Observed in FY11</th>
<th>Observed in FY12</th>
<th>Observed in FY13</th>
<th>Mastered? Y/N</th>
<th>Notes / Follow Up</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
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<td>Collaborative Oral Reading</td>
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<td>Repeated Reading</td>
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<td>Echo Reading</td>
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<td>Marked Phrase Boundaries</td>
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<td>Vocabulary</td>
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<td>Tier 2 Instruction</td>
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<td>Fill-in-blank, Cloze, Sentence Completion</td>
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<td>Base Words</td>
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<td>Comprehension</td>
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<td>Questioning</td>
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<td>K-W-L Chart</td>
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<td>Text Structures</td>
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</table>

Appendix 8
TRADITIONAL READING CLASS:
Silent reading of mid-level materials, often in workbooks. Checking for main idea, details, etc. Summarizing.

ASSESSMENTS:
- TABE, ABLE etc.
- GLEs for:
  - comprehension
  - vocabulary

Students A, B, C, & D are assessed as 4-8 GLE.

CLASSROOM:
Profiles for Students (4)

TRADITIONAL VS. EVIDENCE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION

STAR EVIDENCE-BASED READING CLASS:
Instruction focused on needs in four areas: alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

ASSESSMENTS:
- DAR, Sylvia Greene, etc.
- GLEs for:
  - alphabetics
  - fluency
  - vocabulary
  - comprehension

Profiles for Students (4)

CLASSROOM:

PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

Traditional: Continuous enrollment, filling in slots that come open.

STAR: Managed enrollment, students remain together for many weeks, no filling in for attrition, groups change as needs change.