

Study Island: Frequently Asked Questions

What is Study Island?

“The Study Island Pennsylvania Standards Mastery and PSSA Preparation Program is specifically designed to help K-12 students improve performance in all skill areas tested on the PSSA, and master knowledge and skills outlined in the Pennsylvania Core Standards.

Study Island’s user-friendly interface allows students to move through the program step-by-step. Each section has a pretest and a post test, as well as topics that cover each of the standards of the Pennsylvania Core Standards. Topics consist of questions, answers, explanations, and lessons that address the specific skills required in mastering the Pennsylvania Core Standards.”

"PSSA Preparation." *Leading Academic Provider of Standards-Based Online Learning Solutions*. Edmentum, Study Island. Web. 14 Mar. 2016.

What are some key features of the program?

For key features, please follow [this link](#).

How is the program being used in my child’s classroom?

Study Island is a supplemental resource being used across the middle school campus in all math classes. Since the majority of math courses at the middle school level are written according to the PA Common Core Standards, the sessions on Study Island apply these concepts in a higher level problem solving based capacity.

How much time should my child spend on each lesson?

The requirement to move onto the next topic is 10 questions and at least a 70%. The score that appears on the students’ home page is the overall score or the average of all sessions complete. Your child should not be working for hours and completing a large number of problems just to get the overall average above 70%. *If multiple attempts are unsuccessful or your child is really struggling with the content, please let the teacher know.* If the student approaches each session with the idea of completing 20 questions, where the first 10 are practice and the next set of 10 are the actual test session, they will be in a much better mind set.

What can I do if the questions on Study Island are too hard and I can’t help them?

One of our goals is teach the students how to persevere while problem solving. Very few of the problems will be straight forward and require only one step to answer. We want to model how to dissect problems in order to determine what steps need to be taken in order to answer the question at hand. To support the students with this, pose

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questions to help guide them through the problem solving process. This has more to do with being a thorough and logical thinker and less to do with math. Suggestions may be:

- What is the question asking you to find?
- Are there any key words that lead you to a specific operation?
- Can you highlight important numbers?
- Would drawing a picture or making a table help?
- Do you need a formula?

There will be questions that are difficult to answer and may be things that the students haven't quite gotten to in their course. But we want to be positive and demonstrate how to get around difficult problems without getting discouraged.

My child is in Algebra or Geometry and this material is not in the curriculum. Why do they need to work on Study Island at all?

Each student takes the PSSA assessment based their grade level. Our goal for students in courses such as Algebra 1A, Algebra 1B, Algebra 1, and Geometry is provide them with exposure to these topics and the level of questioning that the test demands.

Are these assignments being graded?

This is up to the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Why is the school spending so much time “teaching to the test”?

Our job as educators is to prepare the students to the best of our ability for future professions, future math courses, and also mandatory state testing. The Pennsylvania Department of Education provides a detailed list of eligible content and standards for each grade level. We have aligned our courses to meet this eligible content as well as provide opportunities to educate the students on problem solving skills that will prove useful in all areas of their future. Study Island is a tool being used to apply the higher level problem solving skills as well as exposure to the types of questions that will be seen on the PSSA and Keystone assessments.

If you have any technical questions or concerns that were not addressed above, please contact your child's math teacher or Mrs. Taylor via email (mtaylor@pennsburysd.org) or phone (ext 60261).