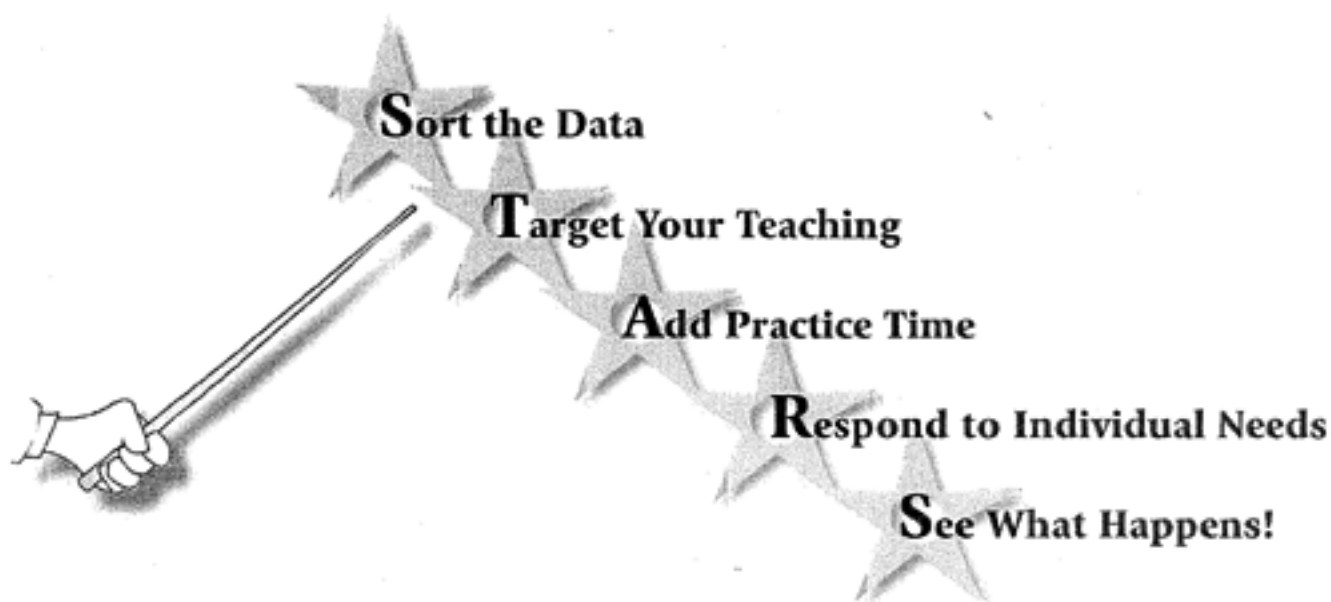


# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	5
Introduction: A Success Story .....	6
How the STARS Program Can Help in Your Classroom .....	8
The 5 Steps .....	10
Step #1: Sort the Data .....	13
Step #2: Target Your Teaching .....	22
Step #3: Add Practice Time .....	25
Step #4: Respond to Individual Needs .....	28
Step #5: See What Happens! .....	39
Activities That Reach & Teach.....	48
Reproducibles .....	64
Recommended Resources.....	69
Index .....	70



## The 5 Steps

**D**ata-driven instruction, as you know, is a term often used to describe the practice of using statistical data to focus your instruction where it's most needed. Does the theory make sense? Absolutely. Do you have time to develop your own program based on that theory? Maybe not.

That's where the STARS program comes in. It's ready to use. All you have to do is apply it—taking one step at a time over the course of the school year. This book devotes one chapter to each of the five steps.

### **Step #1: Sort the Data**

This chapter walks you through the process of charting your students' scores from last year's standardized tests. How did each individual do? Where is that student in relation to the rest of the class? At once you will be able to identify strengths and weaknesses for individuals and for the whole group. When you have that information, you can focus your instruction where it's needed.

### **Step #2: Target Your Teaching**

This chapter explains how you can use Whole-Group Instruction to address those skills the entire class needs to master. Whole-Group Instruction is what you're probably doing already, and it is an important component of any instruction. Use this grouping to introduce new concepts, review material, and address needs shared by all students. Use the whole-group setting, too, to teach test-taking skills.

### **Step #3: Add Practice Time**

This chapter tells how you can use the centers concept to set up a Station-Rotation program, in which students work in small groups to practice skills taught previously in the whole group. Since your Whole-Group Instruction has been emphasizing those areas in which the whole class is weak, Station Rotation will emphasize those areas, too. Allow about an hour for Station Rotation once a week, during which time students rotate from one station to another every 5–10 minutes. All students visit every station. Activities described on pages 51–63 can be used for this part of the program.

### **Step #4: Respond to Individual Needs**

This chapter shows you how to group small numbers of students who need help in specific areas, as shown by your analysis of the test data. These are your Focus Groups. Focus Groups meet once or twice a week for 10–15 minutes at a time. They focus on activities (again, including many described in the activities section of this book) that address individual needs. In this case, though, students are working on individual weaknesses not shared by the entire class.

## ***FOCUS GROUPS & STATION ROTATION***

On the surface, Focus Groups and Station Rotation look a lot alike. Both work from the centers concept, and the same activities can be used in both; however, they serve different functions. The key differences are summarized below.

	<b>Focus Groups</b>	<b>Station Rotation</b>
Student participates in	Activities that address his unique strengths and weaknesses	All activities
Groups meet	One or two times per week	Once a week, usually at the end of the week
For	10–15 minutes	One hour, with students rotating stations every 5–10 minutes
Goal	To boost skills in areas identified as weaknesses of the individual student	To build the skills of every student in the class, reviewing material previously taught and stressing areas identified as weaknesses of the whole group

## **Step #5: See What Happens!**

The grand finale comes when you receive the end-of-the-year test results. This chapter walks you through the process of analyzing the new scores and assessing the gains of individual students and of the class as a whole. It also explains how you can analyze your own strengths and weaknesses as a teacher, so you can better understand which strategies have worked and which you may want to adjust.

All of us have learned that every piece of a puzzle is important to the whole process. When we put a puzzle together, if even one piece is missing, the picture is not complete. It's missing an integral part, and therefore it's not the best it can be. The same principle applies to the STARS program. All of the pieces are important if you're going to meet the needs of all of your students.

Does it sound overwhelming? It doesn't need to. Remember, you're introducing one step at a time. The timeline typically goes something like what's shown in the box.

The following chapter tells you how to get started.

### **STARS TIMELINE**

<b>When</b>	<b>What</b>
Beginning of school year	Collect and record your current students' scores from the standardized tests they took at the end of the previous year. Analyze the data. Get to know your students; test scores don't always tell the whole story.
Sept.–Oct.	Introduce new material through Whole-Group Instruction. Begin using Station Rotation on Fridays to review material previously taught and skills in which the whole class is weak. Introduce test-taking strategies.
Nov.–Dec.	Begin using Focus Groups once a week, targeting specific weaknesses of individual students. Continue Whole-Group Instruction and Station Rotation.
Jan.–March	Increase the frequency of Focus-Group sessions to twice a week. Continue using Station Rotation once a week to follow up on Whole-Group Instruction. By now, students should have the routine down and the process should run smoothly.
Month of testing	Assess formally and informally to see where you need to adjust your Whole-Group Instruction, change Focus-Group assignments and activities, and offer new Station-Rotation activities to meet the needs of all your students. Reinforce test-taking strategies. With the whole group, emphasize activities that build enthusiasm and curb anxiety regarding the tests.
When test results arrive	Analyze results, decide on adjustments to your program for the coming year, and start all over again!

Now comes the "Circles, Stars, and Boxes" part of the program. You need to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and then of the whole class. Going back to Abby, you would now circle her two lowest scores and put a star next to her highest score. The result should look like Figure 5.

Chart A					
Test Scores by Subject & Student					
Yr. 1/Yr. 2 2005/	1) Reading	2) Language	3) Math	4) Science	5) Soc. Stud.
Abby	84	60	72	85*	81
Amber	78	74	66	80	76
Blair	82	78	80	56	48
Brook	62	70	62	58	50
Caritta	54	70	50	62	60

Figure 5. For the first student on the list, circle the two lowest scores and star the single highest score.

Repeat that step for each other student. You should get a chart that looks something like Figure 6.

Chart A					
Test Scores by Subject & Student					
Yr. 1/Yr. 2 2005/	1) Reading	2) Language	3) Math	4) Science	5) Soc. Stud.
Abby	84	60	72	85*	81
Amber	78	74	66	80*	76
Blair	82*	78	80	56	48
Brook	62	70*	62	58	50
Caritta	54	70*	50	62	60
David	100*	64	48	60	60
DeLawrence	90	92*	86	82	80
Eric	78	80*	66	72	70
Garratt	76	78*	72	68	60
Jennifer	72	72	80	86*	80
Jenna	92*	90	82	80	82
Lauren	92	98*	92	96	90
Meagan	82	80	80	86*	86*
Patti	60	72	62	79*	70
Razon	70*	66	50	64	58
Stephanie	48	50	50	50	60*
Tim	56	72*	48	60	42
Tony	80	86*	74	70	76
Vincent	90*	88	82	85	78
Will	86	82	76	88*	70
Class average	75.1	76.6	69.0	73.4	68.9
Change					
Total circled					
Total circled + total starred					

Figure 6. Add a star and two circles to mark each student's one highest and two lowest scores, respectively.

Circle each student's 2 lowest scores. Star each student's highest score.

## Suit the Activity to the Purpose

Activity	Page	Whole-Group Instruction	Station Rotation & Focus Groups	Reading	Language	Math	Science	Soc. Stud.
Class Chant	51	X			X	X	X	X
Pass a Card	51	X		X	X	X	X	X
Yes/No Cards	52	X		X	X	X	X	X
Tell Your Neighbor	52	X		X	X	X	X	X
Tell David to Tell Amber to Tell ...	52	X		X	X	X	X	X
Test Cut-Up	53	X		X	X	X	X	X
Dictionary Relay	53	X		X	X			
Where in the World Is ... ?	53	X	X					X
Sequencing Cartoons	53		X	X				
Vocabulary Rings	54		X	X	X	X	X	X
Spin a Tale	54		X	X				
What Does It Mean?	54		X	X	X	X	X	X
Spelling Hangman	54	X	X	X	X			
Rap It or Sing It	55		X	X	X	X	X	X
Get Ready, Get Set, Go!	55		X	X				
Cassette Stories	55		X	X				
POS Boxes (Parts of Speech)	55		X		X			
How Do You Say That?	56		X		X			
Misspelled	56		X		X			
Person, Place, Thing, or Idea?	56		X		X			
Magazine Madness	57		X		X			X
Math Puzzle	57		X			X		
Fractions with Dice	58		X			X		
Geo-board Geometry	58		X			X		
Restaurant Menus	58		X			X		
Unifix Fractions	59		X			X		
Cereal Calculations	59		X			X		