

Early Start



Early start frequently asked questions for parents

What is *Early Start*?

Children begin school from different starting points and learn at their own rate. Some children start school already recognising letters, counting or even writing their name, while others will not have yet learned these skills. Because of this, it is important that our early years teachers have a way to identify what each child knows and can do in literacy and numeracy. This information will help teachers target their teaching to individual learning needs.

Queensland state schools use *Early Start* to find out what children already know about literacy and numeracy. This information assists teachers to plan their teaching and to regularly monitor progress of all children.

The *Early Start* tasks are used by teachers across the early years of schooling, from Prep to Year 2 using four tasks: On-entry to Prep, End of Prep, End of Year 1 and End of Year 2.

Early Start is not a test. It is a series of one-to-one conversations between the teacher and your child. Both the literacy and numeracy tasks take teachers approximately 20–30 minutes each.

How will *Early Start* benefit my child?

Your child's teacher can use the information from *Early Start* tasks to assist with planning teaching and learning to suit your child's specific needs. The teacher is able to build a clear picture of what your child knows and understands and where they need to go to next in their learning.

What literacy and numeracy skills does *Early Start* monitor and track?

Early Start has been developed based on essential foundational literacy and numeracy knowledge, understandings and skills (see Table 1). The materials are aligned with the Australian Curriculum general capabilities of **Literacy** and **Numeracy**, and elements of the Australian Curriculum: English and the Australian Curriculum: Mathematics.

The teacher will look at your child's early reading, writing and comprehension skills, their phonics, word, spelling and grammar knowledge and how they recognise and work with numbers



and early numeracy concepts. Please see links below for further information about *Early Start* Literacy and Numeracy.

Table 1 – Literacy and numeracy skills monitored through *Early Start*

<i>Early Start</i> – Literacy	<i>Early Start</i> – Numeracy
Literacy data gathered using <i>Early Start</i> across Prep to Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehending texts – Reading and comprehension • Composing texts • Concepts about print (Prep only) • Grammar knowledge • Word knowledge • Phonological awareness (Prep only) • Phonemic knowledge (Prep only) • Word knowledge – Spelling knowledge • Text knowledge • Visual knowledge 	Numeracy data gathered using <i>Early Start</i> across Prep to Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers and counting • Estimate and calculate • Patterns and relationships • Measurement • Geometry • Positional language

Will my child be marked on *Early Start*?

Students are not graded. *Early Start* is used to provide information to teachers regarding what literacy and numeracy skills your child has at that time.

How will my child's *Early Start* data be used?

Your child's teacher will use the *Early Start* data to plan for the individual needs of your child. All data generated from *Early Start* is used to support your child's teacher in making decisions for planning teaching that meets the learning needs of all students.

Is *Early Start* suitable for all students in Prep to Year 2?

Early Start can be used for students with diverse needs, including students with disability, English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students requiring additional support or extension.

