

Putting Assessments in Their Place

Taking standardized testing, such as Iowa Assessments (IA), is optional for Iowa students homeschooled under CPI Option 1 in the Ames HSAP. As a staff, we think these assessments are beneficial for both parents and their students. As you consider whether or not to have your student in grades 3-12 take these assessments, please take the following into consideration.

Benefits to students

- ❖ Iowa Assessments help students get acquainted with standardized testing in a low-stress environment. By having students take the tests beginning in mid- or upper-elementary, students can associate testing with a relaxed atmosphere with snacks and friends.
- ❖ Many of our homeschooled students are not used to taking tests, much less timed-tests. Iowa Assessments help students learn to manage time during standardized testing when the stakes are lower than ACTs and SATs.
- ❖ Our staff works with students on test-taking skills including how to tackle questions they don't know the answer to (eliminate answers, skip it and come back, etc.).

Benefits to parents

- ❖ Identify gaps in curriculum to supplement with other resources, if desired
- ❖ Identify areas of strength and weakness in your child
- ❖ Scores can be used to monitor progress year over year
- ❖ Scores may be used to qualify for Extended Learning Program (ELP), honors courses, and advanced learning opportunities either through the HSAP in middle school or through dual-enrollment at one of the public schools.