

Overview: STAMP 4S (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency 4 Skill)

What is STAMP 4S?

- STAMP 4S is a web-based test that assesses language proficiency
- The STAMP 4S test has four sections – reading, writing, listening and speaking
- STAMP 4S informs test takers and educators about learning progress and program effectiveness
- Test items are based on real-world, every-day situations

How does STAMP 4S assess proficiency?

STAMP 4S measures a test taker's language ability according to Benchmark Levels that are based on national standards. Test results will indicate the level of proficiency achieved for each section of the test.

Preparing for the STAMP 4S Test

- The STAMP 4S test is not a test that you study for, but can be prepared for by practicing writing and speaking
- Take the STAMP Practice Test (at <https://stamp4spractice.avantassessment.com>) to familiarize yourself with the layout of the test and the types of prompts that you can expect
- Read the STAMP 4S Benchmarks and Rubric Guide if you want information about the skills you need to demonstrate to achieve a certain test level

The Rules

- The STAMP 4S test must be taken in a proctored environment, with a proctor who is authorized by the organization sponsoring the test
- No paper, pens, pencils, cell phones, PDAs, etc. are allowed in the testing area
- No additional applications (e.g., Word, email, chat) or browser windows are allowed to be open during testing
- No outside resources, such as dictionaries, textbooks, friends or other support materials are allowed
- Avant graders review all written and spoken responses and any inappropriate responses (vulgar, violent, etc.) will not be scored and will be reported to your test administrator

Logging into STAMP 4S

- Your teacher or proctor will provide the URL for the STAMP 4S login page
- Your teacher or proctor will provide the Test Code (Username) and Password right before you start the test
- You will also enter your name on the login page
 - Unless your teacher or proctor suggests a different format, provide your First Name followed by one space, then your Last Name
 - Capitalize the first letter of your first name and the first letter of your last name
 - Add your middle initial if there is a chance of duplicate names
 - Be sure you remember how you entered your name because if you need to resume the test at a later date, you will have to re-enter your name exactly as you did the first time
- After you log in, the Student Profile screen will appear
 - A student ID number is required on this screen
 - Follow directions from your teacher or proctor for entry into this field

Taking the STAMP 4S Test

Your proctor will let you know what section of the test to start first. Reading and Writing sections are usually taken together (the Reading section is a prerequisite for the Writing section). Listening and Speaking sections are also usually taken together (the Listening section is a prerequisite for the Speaking section).

The test will provide helpful instructions at the beginning of each section. Please read the instructions carefully.

To complete the test, you must finish all sections that are presented to you.

Reading and Listening Sections

The Reading and Listening sections of the test are multiple choice. These sections are computer-adaptive, meaning that each new question is selected based on previous responses. You may see easier or more difficult questions based upon your earlier answers. Each test taker will follow a unique path as he/she moves through the test. You will see approximately 30 questions in each of these sections. The Reading section typically takes 20-30 minutes to complete and the Listening section typically requires 25-35 minutes.

Here are some tips:

- Read the question and answers before you attempt to read or listen to the passage (this will help guide your reading/listening and help you move through the test more quickly)
- Do not translate each word that you read or hear – translating each word is not reading or listening for comprehension and it will take more time that you can better use in later sections.

Writing and Speaking Sections

- Provide your response using the target language
- Write or record at your highest possible level
- Provide all of the information requested in the prompts, and stay on-topic
- Pace yourself
 - Do not spend so much time on the first item that you do not have time for the remaining items
 - Complete responses for **all** items are needed to accurately determine your proficiency level
- In these sections, test takers need to click **NEXT** to submit the response and move to the next screen
- For each item, be sure to click **NEXT** within 30 minutes, otherwise the system will time out and you will lose your work

Writing Section

The Writing section consists of one or two samples and three test questions. Plan to spend 5-7 minutes on each Writing item.

- For some languages, a “floating keyboard” appears for use in selecting special characters associated with the language
- For writing in character-based languages, select the correct language for input from your computer’s taskbar or desktop (your teacher or test proctor can show you how to do this)
- Click **NEXT** to submit the response and move to the next item or screen

Speaking Section

The speaking section consists of one or two samples and three test questions. Plan to spend 5-7 minutes on each Speaking item.

- To record a response, click **RECORD**
- Click **STOP** when done recording
- After recording, click **PLAY** to listen to your recording
- You can then do one of the following:
 - If you want to add to the recording, click **RECORD/ADD TO RECORDING**
 - If you want to delete the recording and start over, click **START OVER**
- When the recording is complete, click **NEXT** to move to the next test question

THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT:

For the speaking section, click **PLAY** after recording to verify that the response was recorded properly.

- If the response is inaudible or of poor quality, do **NOT** click **NEXT**
- You can try recording again, but should contact the test proctor or teacher if there are headset issues, or if a problem persists
- Never click **NEXT** to bypass the test item – if the problem cannot be resolved during the current testing session, click **STOP TEST** (and resume the test after the problem is resolved)

Following these procedures will prevent speaking responses that cannot be graded. Keep in mind that Avant graders hear exactly what you are able to hear.

Completing the STAMP 4S test

- If you are not completing the test in one session, follow the instructions from your teacher or proctor about when to click **Stop Test**
- You have not completed STAMP 4S until you see a screen that says “**Test Complete.**”
- If you need to finish the test, plan to do so within 14 days of starting the test (or within the timelines specified by your teacher or proctor)

Resuming the STAMP 4S test

To resume a test, log in exactly as you did the first time. The test should restart at the point where you left off. If the Student Profile screen appears instead, **STOP** the test. This indicates that the name entered in the **Full Name** field this time is different than it was originally entered. Try logging in again or contact your test proctor or teacher for assistance.

We hope you enjoy taking STAMP 4S and encourage you to let your teacher or proctor know how you felt about the experience. Thank you!