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**HARCOURT ASSESSMENT LAUNCHES ONLINE VERSION OF STANFORD
DIAGNOSTIC TESTS FOR READING AND MATHEMATICS**

MORE FULL-COLOR TESTING FROM HARCOURT

SAN ANTONIO – Harcourt Assessment announced today that it has launched online versions of its Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT 4) and Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test (SDMT 4).

Teachers have long relied on Harcourt’s Stanford diagnostic tests to evaluate students’ strengths and weaknesses in reading and mathematics. The tests give teachers important information they need to make decisions about student placement and instructional planning.

Using the power of the Internet to deliver these tests online, teachers can now get immediate results and make those decisions more quickly, ensuring that students get appropriate intervention as soon as possible.

The online version of each assessment includes a practice test, a short screener and a full-length diagnostic test.

The paper and online versions contain the same test questions, but the online versions incorporate many of the design elements of Harcourt’s Stanford 10 achievement test that the company launched earlier this year. Like the Stanford 10, the SDRT and SDMT online tests use full color and interesting illustrations to capture children’s attention. What children see on the computer screen closely resembles what they see in classrooms and on the Internet.

“Our goal is to design tests that engage students and enable them to show us what they know and can do,” said Margie Jorgensen, Harcourt’s vice president of product management. “Our studies clearly show that children are able to do their best when test materials have a familiar look and feel, appealing art work and visual clarity.”

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Jorgensen also noted that students today are computer savvy and displayed no difficulty navigating the online tests during recent company trials.

“Today’s children grew up with computers. They use them at home and at school, so taking a computer-based test seems completely natural to them. They think it’s cool,” Jorgensen said.

The company recently conducted research to determine if taking the tests by computer makes a difference in how well a child performs.

“Our research shows that there is no difference,” Jorgensen said. “Children perform virtually the same, whether they take the paper-based or computer-based version of the tests.”

With SDRT and SDMT online testing, students can say goodbye to number two pencils -- everything a student needs to take the test is built right into the software, including some familiar tools of the trade. For example, students use the computer’s mouse to manipulate an online ruler to take measurements in inches and centimeters. There’s also a calculator built in to some levels of the mathematics test.

SDRT and SDMT online tests provide teachers with easy-to-understand reports for each student, and pop up windows that explain the scores. Reports for the full-length reading test include a Lexile measure – an indication of the student’s reading level – that is hot-linked to a customized list of books appropriate for that student’s reading ability.

Harcourt’s Stanford diagnostic tests are proven measures of competence in basic reading and mathematics skills. The main purpose of the tests is to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty for each student. Unlike a broad-range achievement test – like Harcourt’s Stanford 10 – these diagnostic tests place more emphasis on the lower achiever who likely needs help in specific areas. Therefore, the diagnostic tests emphasize basic reading and mathematics skills and contain a greater number of easy items.

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Based in San Antonio, Harcourt Assessment is a leading provider of high-quality assessment instruments and testing programs. Its educational products include the Stanford Achievement Test series and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test[®]. It also offers a wide variety of clinical products, such as the Wechsler[®] family of tests, which includes the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children[®].

The company is a unit of Harcourt, Inc., which is a global publishing and education company serving students and teachers from pre-kindergarten through grade 12, adult learners and readers of all ages. Harcourt is a member of the Reed Elsevier Group plc (NYSE: RUK and ENL) -- a world-leading publisher and information provider operating in the science and medical, legal, education and business-to-business industry sectors.

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