

Getting the Most from KeyTrain

KeyTrain contains a wide variety of tools to assist the instructor in analyzing and improving the student's performance in the basic workplace skills. By using these tools, you can help almost any student to demonstrate a higher level of understanding of these skills.

From time to time, a student may appear to perform poorly in KeyTrain, or in standardized tests such as the WorkKeys® assessments. In the majority of these situations, examination of the student's reports in KeyTrain can reveal a lack of dedication in using the curriculum or a deliberate attempt to circumvent the KeyTrain system.

To analyze the performance of a student in KeyTrain in order to determine if they have used the curriculum correctly, obtain the student's Course Analysis or Quiz Detail report. Using this, you can determine if the student has used the program diligently.

In particular, be wary of students who:

- Have a high number of attempts at pretests or posttests,
- Have low topic scores,
- Have low time recorded in the lessons, or
- Who have not completed topics before taking the posttests.

All of these are indicators that a student is either not attempting to make the most of the curriculum, or has other learning issues that are not adequately addressed by KeyTrain.

To improve student performance:

- Use the "Must complete all problems" and "Must complete lessons before quizzes" options to force the students to complete the curriculum before taking posttests. These options were designed to help prevent this situation.
- Use the reports to see how the students are doing on the practice problems in the curriculum. Look for consistency between the scores on the topics. If a student generally is in the 80-90% range and has one topic around 40% that would indicate a weakness in that topic. If all topic scores are low, it may indicate that the student is clicking through the curriculum without exerting effort. Instruct the students to look at their own topic scores before retaking tests, and seek additional help for problem areas if needed. If you are using the Flash Version 2006 of the Reading, Math and Locating lessons, look for differences between the topic scores and the corresponding topic quiz score – this may indicate that the student is skipping through the curriculum, but has repeated the topic quiz to obtain a high score.
- Request the student to not retake tests unless they have restudied the curriculum completely. The system is designed to allow the student to retake quizzes in a responsible manner, but unfortunately this opens the door for abuse. Have the instructor watch for multiple retakes, and question the student if found. Set the maximum number of quiz attempts to a low number, such as 2, to prevent students from retaking the quizzes without authorization.

- Look for at least 2 hours per level (not skill area as shown on the report) for a student who needs review to ensure a careful review of the practice problems. In other words, if the student gets through a level in 30 minutes and has low topics scores, then they probably are just guessing at the problems until they find the right answer, not trying to figure out the answer first.
- Never allow retakes of the pretest. It is designed only as an initial screening. It does not have as much randomization as the posttests, and it not designed for retakes.
- Do not allow students to skip the entire KeyTrain curriculum based solely on a KeyTrain pretest. The pretests are designed to require a small amount of time to complete; they are not detailed enough to be a comprehensive review of all learning objectives. Require each student to complete at least one level of curriculum in each skill area of interest.
- If a student really needs to achieve a given score on a WorkKeys assessment (for instance, for a hiring or promotion), have a goal to achieve one level higher in KeyTrain first.

Additional Tips

Have the teacher log-in in the teacher account, go to "Take Lessons", then show the various lessons on a smartboard or projector and use as a classroom lesson.

Have the teacher project several questions at the beginning of class and then use this as a classroom discussion in preparing for the class.

Encourage teachers to actively walk around the room while students are at the computer.

Utilize the printed material in addition to the independent online learning.

Encourage teachers to count the student's work on KeyTrain as a grade. I have seen some schools use it for a quiz or homework grade.

Encourage teachers to utilize the reports that are available on KeyTrain.

Teachers will need to become proficient with KeyTrain in order to be effective in working with their students. We offer webcasts to help teachers get better trained.

Having teachers engaged while students are working independently is an expectation that the school leadership must expect.

Implementation Times and Ideas

- KeyTrain study halls
- KeyTrain assigned in Detention

- Assigned as extra credit
- As Homework
- Workbooks printed out and assigned as supplemental material

In general, KeyTrain may not provide an exact agreement with the WorkKeys assessments, especially for the softer skill areas such as Teamwork and Observation. Recognize that the purpose of KeyTrain is to improve WorkKeys scores (vs. a WorkKeys assessment pretest) given sufficient study. It is not to replace, or even exactly measure, a WorkKeys score. However, do expect that increasing time in the curriculum will, in most cases, result in more learning, a better agreement between KeyTrain and WorkKeys, and higher WorkKeys scores.

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