SCHOLASTIC

rSkills Tests

rSkills Tests
Software Manual

For use with *rSkills* Tests Enterprise Edition version 2.2 or later,
READ 180 Enterprise Edition version 2.2 or later,
and Scholastic Achievement Manager version 2.2 or later

rSkills Tests

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rSkills Tests Overview

rSkills Tests enables teachers to assess *rBook*® skills and track students' reading and writing progress in the *READ 180* classroom.

rSkills Tests consist of five computer-based assessments for each *READ 180* stage and two difficulty levels for each assessment (either grade level or below grade level). Teachers may preview the tests before assigning them and customize test-taking options for individual students in SAM. Teachers may also review, comment on, and grade Open-Response questions and Writing Prompt exercises in SAM.

rSkills Tests include the following features:

- Audio directions that students can replay at any time during the test (teachers can disable this function in the Program Settings in SAM)

- Directions in Spanish, Cantonese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, or Vietnamese if language support is selected in SAM

- Untimed questions, so students are not pressured to answer quickly

- Assessment items that correspond to the skills taught in the *READ 180 rBook* Workshops and prepare students for the *rBook* Wrap-Ups

- Multiple-choice questions, two optional Open-Response questions, and one Writing Prompt exercise (numbers of each type of question vary by stage; see Taking an *rSkills* Test, *page 12*) that measure reading comprehension, vocabulary, word study and grammar, usage, and mechanics skills

- Options for students to review and change responses prior to submitting

- Questions that students may skip and return to later (though students must answer all test questions before it can be graded)

Teacher Tip
Administer an *rSkills* test after every two workshops and at the end of the *rBook*.

Student Accessibility

rSkills Tests provides accessibility features that can enable some visually impaired students to use the application. The contrast setting, for example, will help a student who has trouble reading black text on a white background.

rSkills Tests requires students to view images and videos, speak into a microphone, and use a mouse. Students who have difficulty with these requirements will need assistance when using the program.

rSkills Tests does not provide textual equivalence to bitmap-rendered content. Students who are dependent on a Braille or text-to-speech device will be unable to use the application. Also, though closed captions are available for the hearing-impaired, the application does not provide a description of the video, nor does it provide the closed-caption text in text format (it is only available as a display).

Browser-based accessibility features, such as screen and font magnifiers, are not tested by Scholastic and may not be compatible with *rSkills* Tests. Even in cases when the features may work with the program, the input focus is not set to allow students using screen magnifiers to follow the onscreen changes. Similarly, changing display settings may render the program unusable. Students needing to see larger text should use an external screen magnifier rather than changing display settings or using a feature of the browser program.

Mac OS X and Windows operating systems, as well as Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari browser programs, offer a range of accessibility features that may enable users with disabilities to, among other things, perform basic navigation with a keyboard instead of a mouse by using the Tab key.

Logging In

Student Access Screen

Students are enrolled in *rSkills* Tests through Scholastic Achievement Manager (SAM). See *Enrolling and Managing Students Using Scholastic Achievement Manager* for detailed instructions on enrolling students.

Once students are enrolled in *rSkills* Tests, they may log in to the program through the Student Access Screen on the student workstation. To open the Student Access Screen, open the workstation's browser program and use the Student Access Screen bookmark (see the *READ 180 Installation Guide* for help with bookmarking the Student Access Screen).
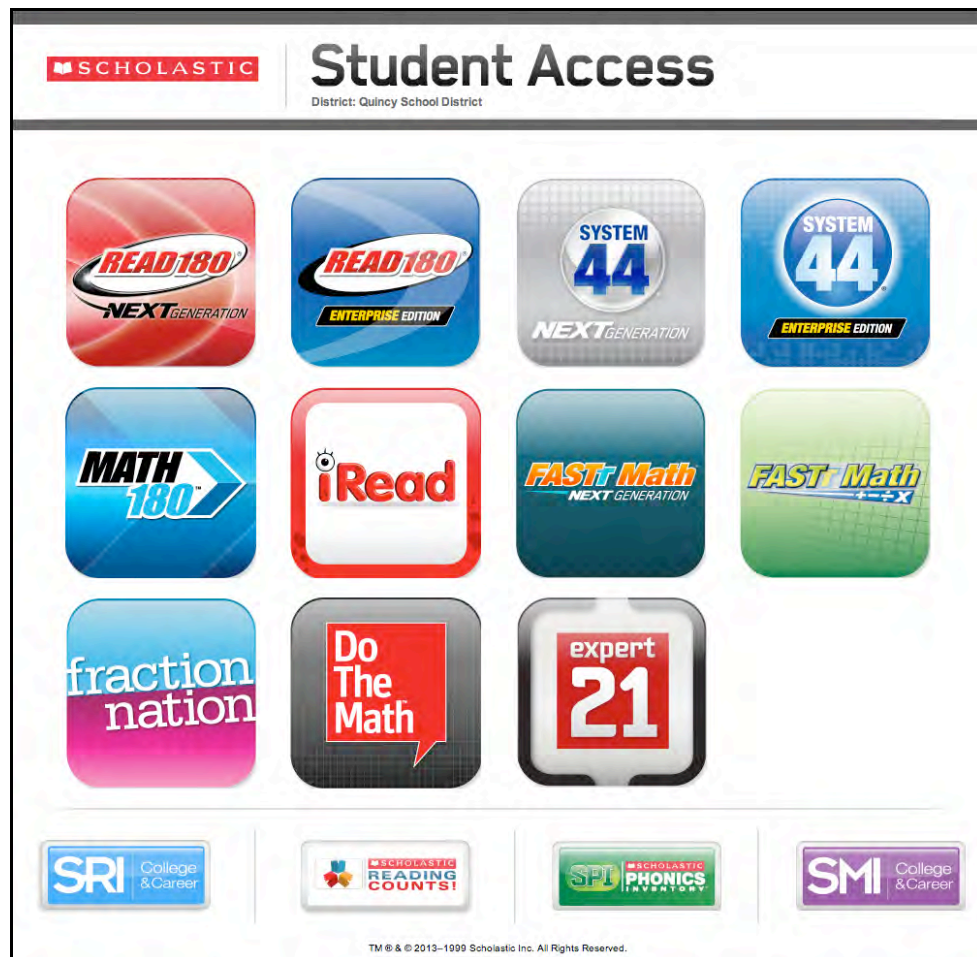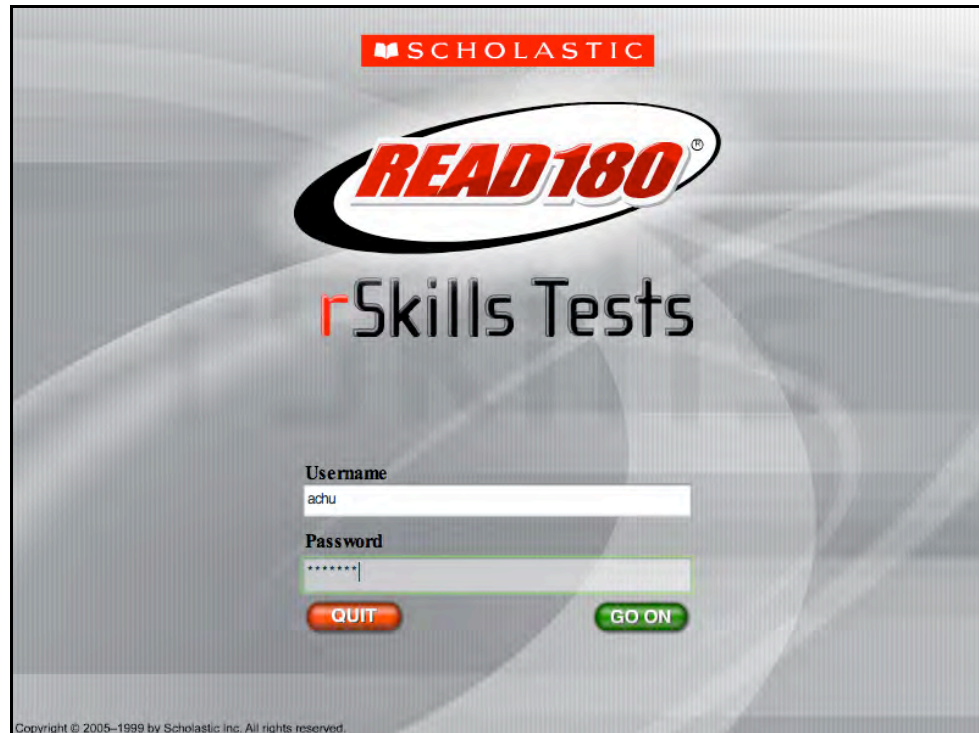
The Student Access Screen displays icons for all Scholastic programs installed on the server. To open the *rSkills* Tests Login Screen, click the *READ 180* Enterprise Edition icon to open the access screen for the *READ 180* Enterprise Edition Suite.

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Click the *rSkills* Tests icon to go to the *rSkills* Tests Login Screen.
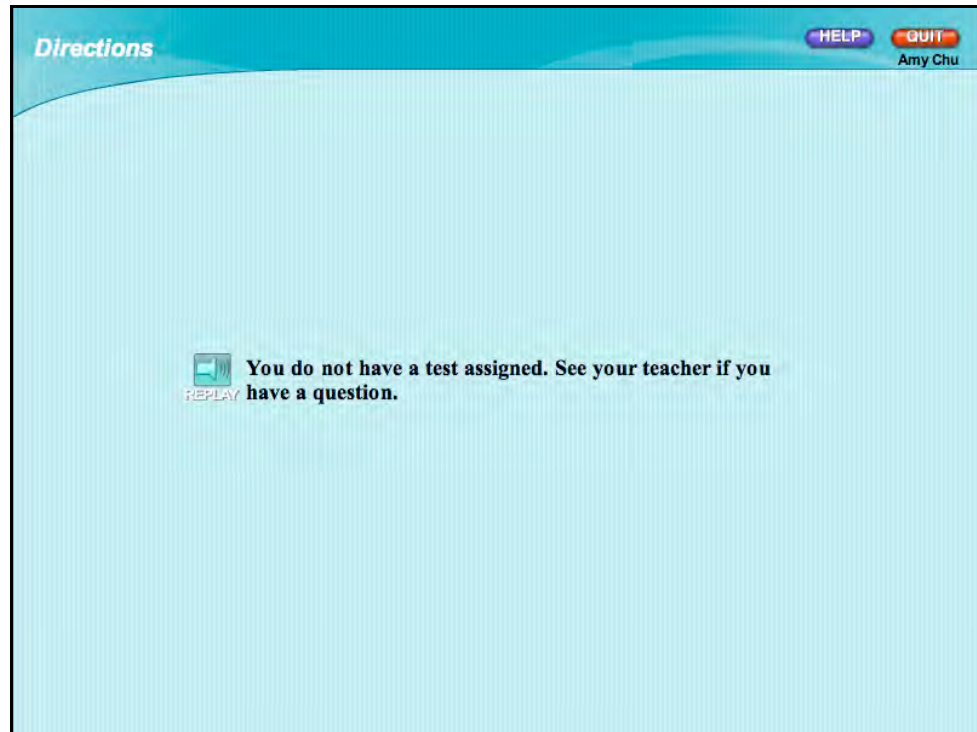
rSkills Tests Login Screen

From the *rSkills* Tests Login Screen, students enter their username and password (the same username and password they use for *READ 180*). After three unsuccessful tries at logging in, students are prompted to ask a teacher for help.

When the username and password are correctly entered, click **Go On** to enter the program, or **Quit** to leave the program.

Teacher Tip
Keep a master list of usernames and passwords handy in case students forget their passwords. Find students' passwords in the students' Profile Screen in SAM.

Students who do not have tests assigned to them by their teachers will see a screen indicating that a test has not been assigned. If students see this screen, perform the following steps:

1. Ask students to click **Quit** to exit *rSkills* Tests.

2. Go to the Program Settings for *rSkills* Tests in SAM and assign a test to students (see *SAM Settings and Reports for rSkills Tests* for instructions on setting students' Program Settings).

3. Have students log back in to *rSkills* Tests and advance to the directions for the sample questions.

Teacher Tip
Audio directions are translated into five languages to support English language learners. Enable this support in the Program Settings for *rSkills* Tests in SAM.

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Answering Sample Questions
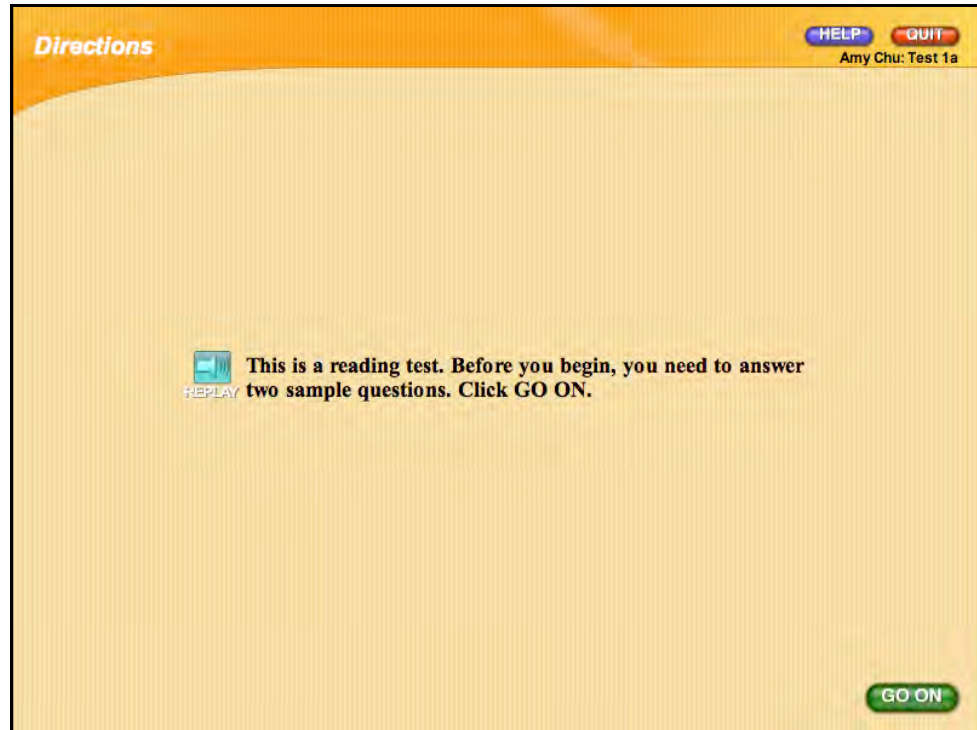
When students log in and are enrolled in a test, they see the Directions Screen, which provides instructions on-screen. Students may also hear the instructions by clicking the **Replay** button. Before students take an actual test, the program requires them to answer two sample questions. This familiarizes students with the test format and makes sure they understand the test-taking directions.

Students must answer at least one of the two sample questions correctly in order to begin the actual test. The program instructs students who answer both questions incorrectly to ask a teacher for help.

Sample questions are not counted in a student's test grade. To answer sample questions, students click one of the multiple-choice selections.

Once students select their answer, they click **Go On** to proceed to the next question.

Students may click the **Replay** button to play the audio directions again.

After correctly answering at least one of the two sample questions, students read or listen to the directions for the actual test.
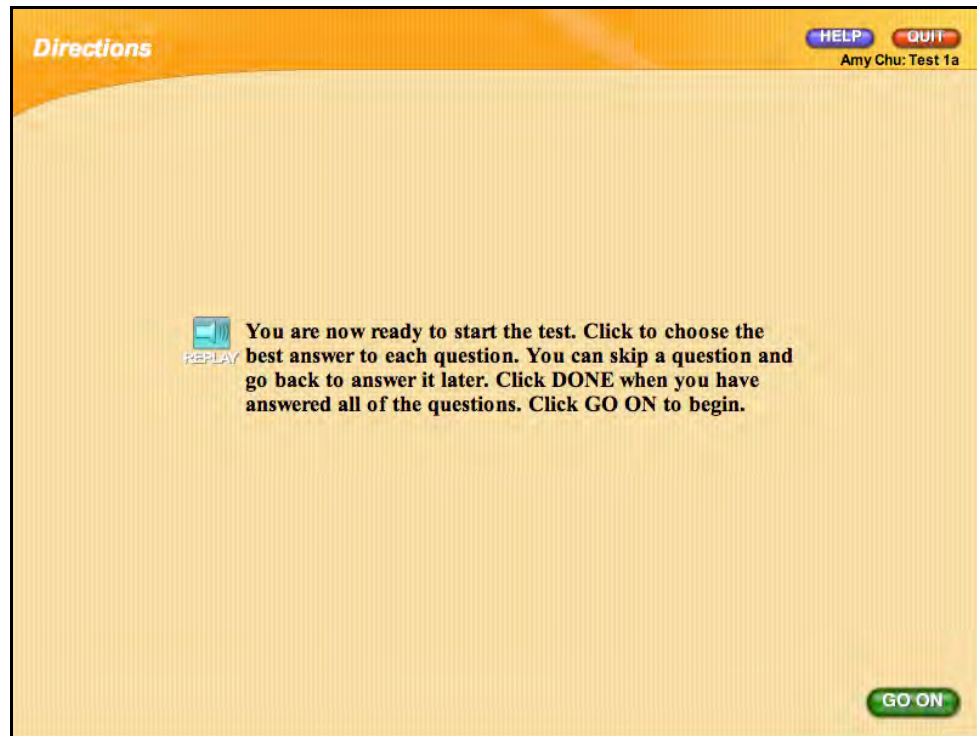
Once students read or listen to the directions, they click **Go On** to begin the test.

Teacher Tip
Students who quit in the middle of a test skip the Directions Screen the next time they log in and go immediately to the last unanswered question.

Taking an *rSkills* Test

Students may take the *rSkills* Test assigned to them once they have finished the sample test.

Using the Test Screen
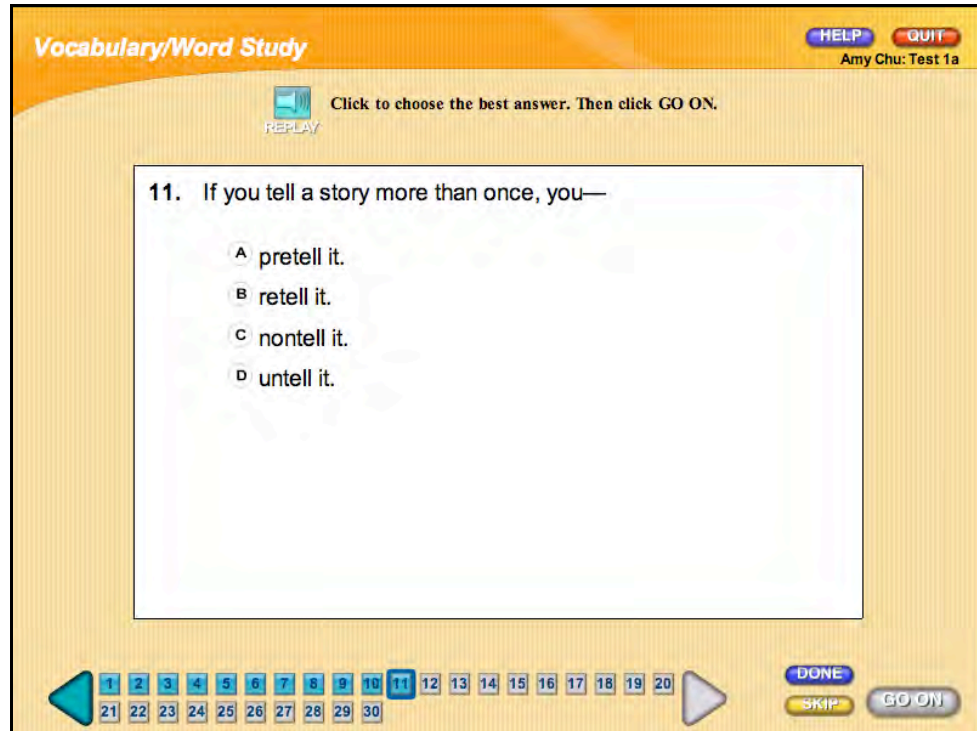
The Test Screen is the main screen of the *rSkills* Tests program. It is organized into three main sections. The top shows the type of question on-screen (comprehension, vocabulary/word study, grammar, or open response). The middle shows the directions for answering the question; students may click **Replay** to hear the directions again.

The bottom of the screen shows the Progress Bar, which students may use to move through the questions on the test. They may click the right arrow to advance to the next question or skip questions, or click the left arrow to return to previously viewed questions.

From the Test Screen, students may also:

- Select their answer to a question

- Click **Help** to receive audio assistance

- Click **Skip** to answer a question later

- Click **Go On** to proceed to the next question

- Click **Done** when they have answered all the test questions

- Click **Quit** to exit *rSkills* Tests

Teacher Tip
The answer order for each question is randomized for each student. Students taking the same test see their answers in a different order.

rSkills Tests

Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

Questions 1–30 of every Stage A and Stage B test are in multiple-choice format. The first ten questions assess reading comprehension skills, the next ten (questions 11–20) assess vocabulary/word-study skills, and the last ten (questions 21–30) assess grammar, usage, and mechanics skills.

Twenty-question tests for Stage C and Flex are made up of ten questions for reading comprehension skills (questions 1–10), six questions for vocabulary/word-study skills (questions 11–16), and four questions for grammar, usage, and mechanics skills (questions 17–20).

To answer a multiple-choice question, students:

- Select an answer by clicking **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**.

- Click **Go On** to proceed to the next question.

For a comprehension question, remind students to read the passage, using the scroll bar to continue their reading.

Students stuck on a particularly difficult question may skip that question and come back to it later by clicking **Skip**. Students must either choose an answer or click **Skip** to move off the question.

Answering Open-Response Questions

Teachers may use the *rSkills* Tests Program Settings in SAM to enable Open-Response questions for individual students or the whole class. These additional two questions allow students to practice their writing skills by having them answer questions with short responses.

To answer an Open-Response question, students should:

1. Read the text passage on the left side of the screen, using the scroll bar to see the text for longer passages.

2. Type their response directly into the text box on the right. A scroll bar appears if the answer goes beyond the size of the text box.

When students are finished with their responses, they click **Go On** to proceed to the next question or **Done** when they have answered all the questions on the test.

Teacher Tip
Speak to students before they start their Open-Response question. Give them guidelines and tips, such as how long their answers are expected to be, or suggest that they write their answer out on paper first before they type it into the text box.

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Answering Writing Prompt Exercises

Activating the Writing Prompt option in the Program Settings Screen for *rSkills* Tests in SAM gives students one Writing Prompt exercise on their tests. The Writing Prompt exercise allows students to practice their writing skills and hone their creativity by providing them an opportunity to write on a subject in their own words.

To answer a Writing Prompt, students should type their response directly into the text box. A scroll bar appears if the answer goes beyond the size of the text box.

When students are finished with their responses, they click **Go On** to proceed to the next question or **Done** if they have answered all the questions on the test.

If students complete their response on paper only, they still need to enter text in the Writing Prompt box to complete the test. Students may enter "see written response."

Finishing a Test
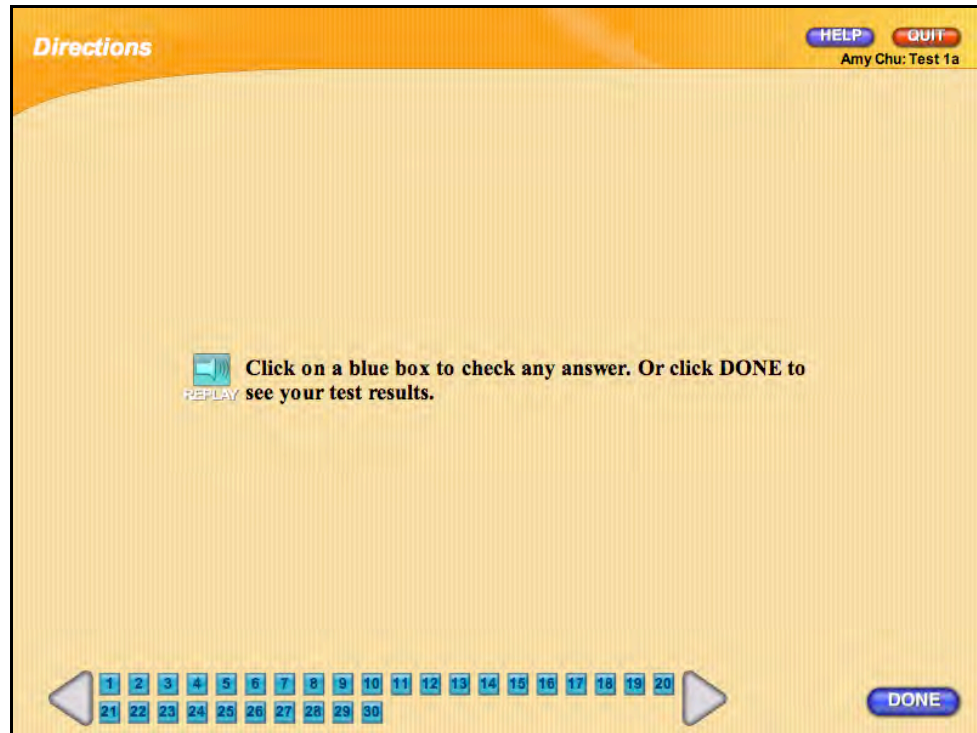
When students click **Done**, the *rSkills* Tests program checks to make sure they have answered all of the questions. Students are prompted to answer questions they skipped and to review their work. The Progress Bar indicates unanswered questions in yellow and answered questions in blue.

Tests are not finished until students answer all questions. Once students have answered all skipped questions, they may click **Done**.

After completing all the test questions and then clicking **Done**, students have one more chance to double-check their answers before submitting the test for grading. Students may take a few moments to carefully review their answers and may use the Progress Bar to move to any question that they want to check or change.

When students finish their final review, they click **Done** again to make the test final and view test results. All responses are recorded as final and the test is evaluated. Students may not do any further work at that point.

Teacher Tip
Have students print the Results Screen to track their progress by comparing current results to those of their last test.

Viewing Test Results
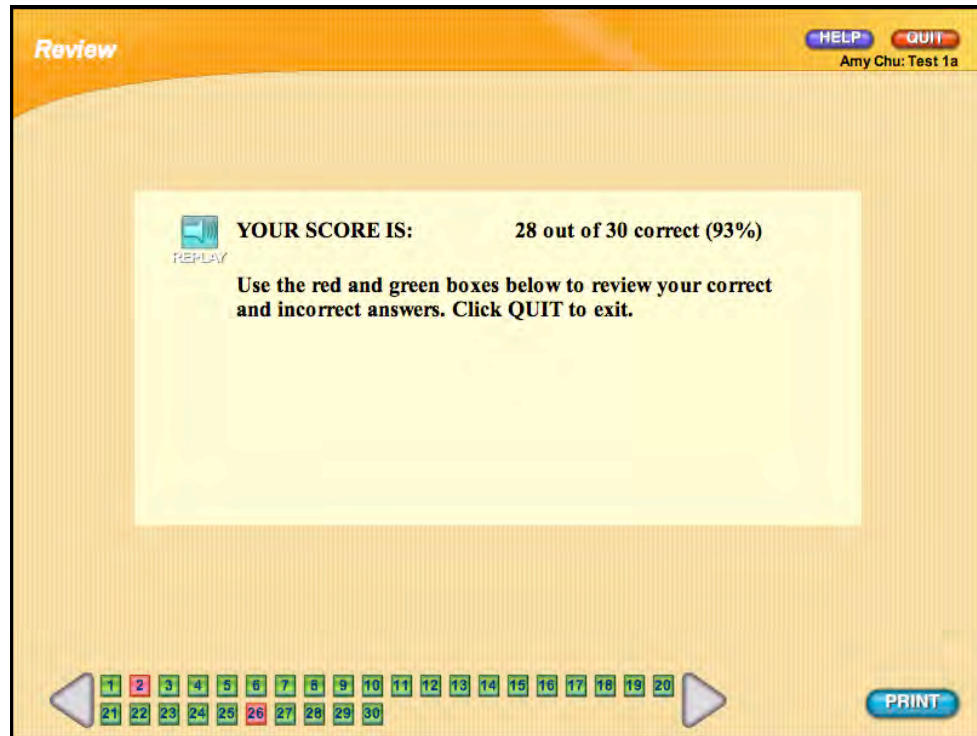
The Results Screen allows students to see how well they performed on their current test and to compare the result to their last test.

Results appear as a raw score (e.g., 13 out of 30 correct) as well as a percentage (e.g., 43%). Results of Open-Response questions and Writing Prompt exercises are not included in these tabulations.

Students may click **Print** to print out the Results Screen. When they are finished viewing the results, they may click **Quit** to exit *rSkills* Tests.

Teacher Tip

After grading and commenting on students' Open-Response questions and Writing Prompt exercise using the *rSkills* Tests Grading Tool in SAM, run the Student Test Printout to view the answers, scores, and comments to test questions.

Teachers may adjust the Program Settings for *rSkills* Tests in SAM for whether students may view corrected tests. If this setting is enabled, students may use the Progress Bar on the Results Screen to return to any question.

On the Review Screen, a green check appears next to the correct answer. A red "X" appears next to an incorrect answer. After reviewing their test results, students click **Done** to return to the Results Screen or **Quit** to exit *rSkills* Tests.

If Open-Response questions or a Writing Prompt exercise were included as part of the test, students will not be allowed to see the results immediately because all answers will not yet have been graded.

Technical Support

For questions or other support needs, visit the Scholastic Education Product Support website at www.scholastic.com/read180/productsupport.

At the site, users will find program documentation, manuals, and guides, as well as Frequently Asked Questions and live chat support.

For specific questions regarding the Scholastic program suite, contact customer service to speak to a representative for each Scholastic Education technology program at:

- 1-800-283-5974 (all Scholastic Education technology programs)
- 1-800-927-0189 (other versions)

For specific questions about using SAM with your Scholastic programs, click **Help** in the Quick Links along the top of any screen in SAM.