

Introducing Starting Points Listening

What is Starting Points Listening?

Starting Points Listening is one of two online, adaptive assessment options designed for learners who are at or below koru/step one of the Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy. (Note: the second option, Starting Points Reading, will be available early 2016).

Starting Points Listening assesses a learner's ability to understand basic, everyday words in spoken English. The main focus is listening. It is suitable only for **beginning English language learners (ESOL)**, particularly those new to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Starting Points options are intended to be accessible for learners with limited language, reading, and computer skills. A key feature of the Starting Points options is that the learners listen and respond to spoken language. In a group situation, learners may need to use headphones so as not to disturb others.

What do we need to know?

- **Starting Points Listening** assesses a learner's ability to understand basic, everyday words of spoken English. It is therefore only suitable for learners who are at very early to early stages of learning English. A learner's score on **Starting Points Listening** is likely to provide an indication of their readiness to engage with **Starting Points Reading**, which is due to be released in the first quarter of 2016.
- **Starting Points Listening** assessments are available online only. They are designed to be completed in a supported, one-to-one situation, ideally using a tablet, although the assessments can be completed on a desktop or laptop computer and could be completed independently by more confident learners.
- The web address for the Starting Points assessment homepage is <https://assess.literacyandnumeracyforadults.com/StartingPointsLogin.aspx>
- Starting Points assessments are created via the link on the Home and Assessments tabs.
- **Starting Points Listening** assessments have a new 'Discontinued' feature that will end the assessment after seven incorrect or skipped questions.

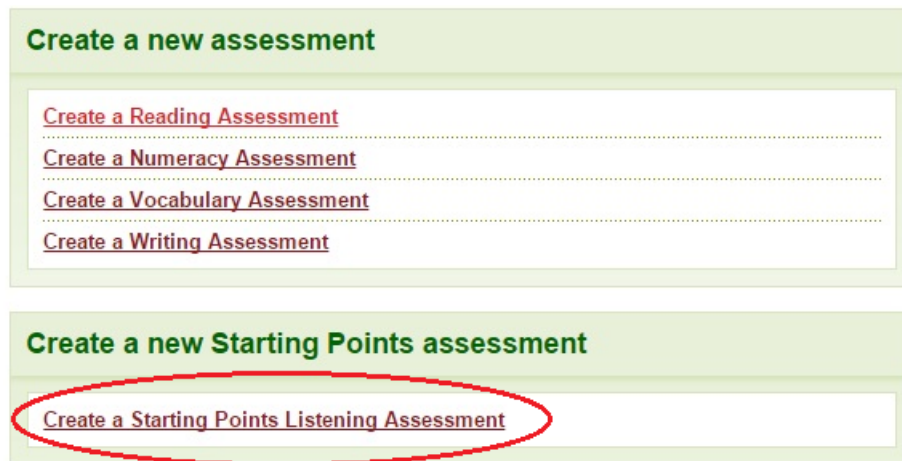
- **Starting Points Listening** assessments allow the learner to advance without answering a question. The response is treated as incorrect but reported as 'not answered' to differentiate it from genuine incorrect responses.

Creating a **Starting Points Listening** assessment

Starting Points Listening assessments are created in a similar way to vocabulary assessments and are only available online.

To create a **Starting Points Listening** assessment, click on the appropriate link on either the Home or Assessments tab.

Fig.1



Assessments are then created in the usual manner. Note: Audience, Assessment Type, and Assessment Status are fixed values.

Fig.2

The image shows a form for creating a 'Starting Points Listening Assessment'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for Home, Assessments, Learners, Educators, Groups, and Administration. The title of the page is 'Create a Starting Points Listening Assessment'. The form contains the following fields and options:

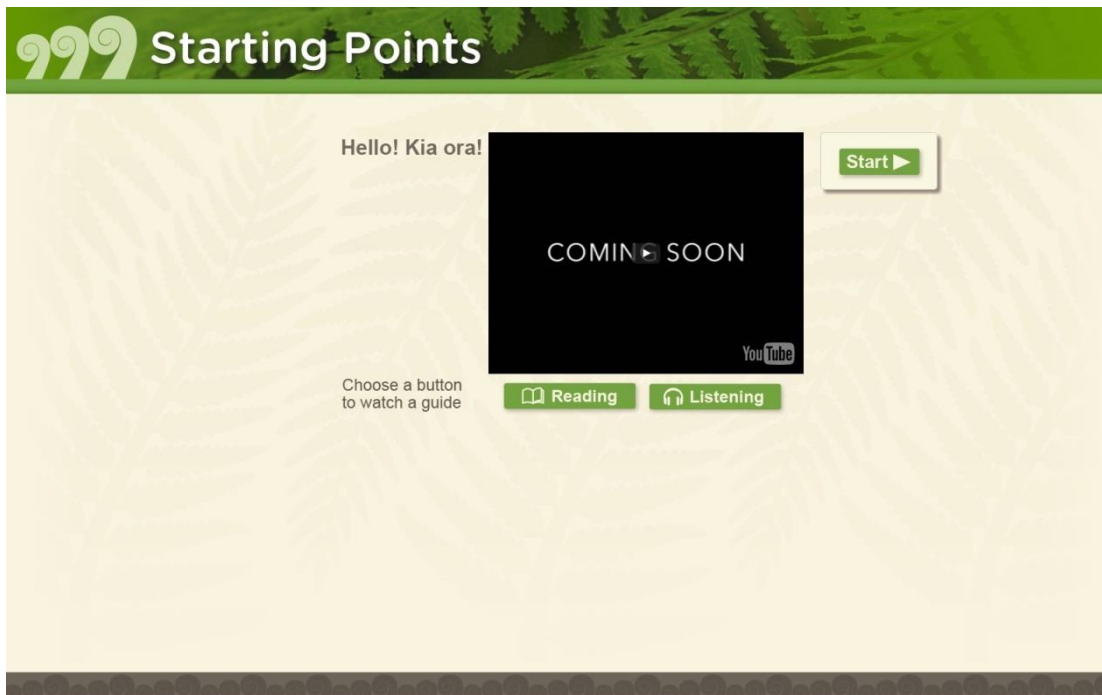
- Assessment Name (Required)**: A text input field.
- Audience (Required)**: A radio button selected for 'Starting'.
- Assessment Type (Required)**: A radio button selected for 'Adaptive'.
- Assessment Strand (Required) (See Note)**: A radio button selected for 'Listen with Understanding'.
- Your Notes**: A large text area for additional information.

At the bottom of the form, there are three buttons: 'Cancel', 'Add more Learners (You can do this later) or', and 'Save Assessment'.

Sitting a Starting Points Listening assessment

Learners will sit their assessments online using a six digit alphanumeric code. When they enter their code into the Assessment Tool they will be taken to the Starting Points homepage (see below). 'How-to' videos will be uploaded to the embedded YouTube video player in 2016.

Fig.3



Once the learner clicks 'Start' they will be prompted to confirm their name and then start the assessment. Starting Points assessments do not use practice questions.

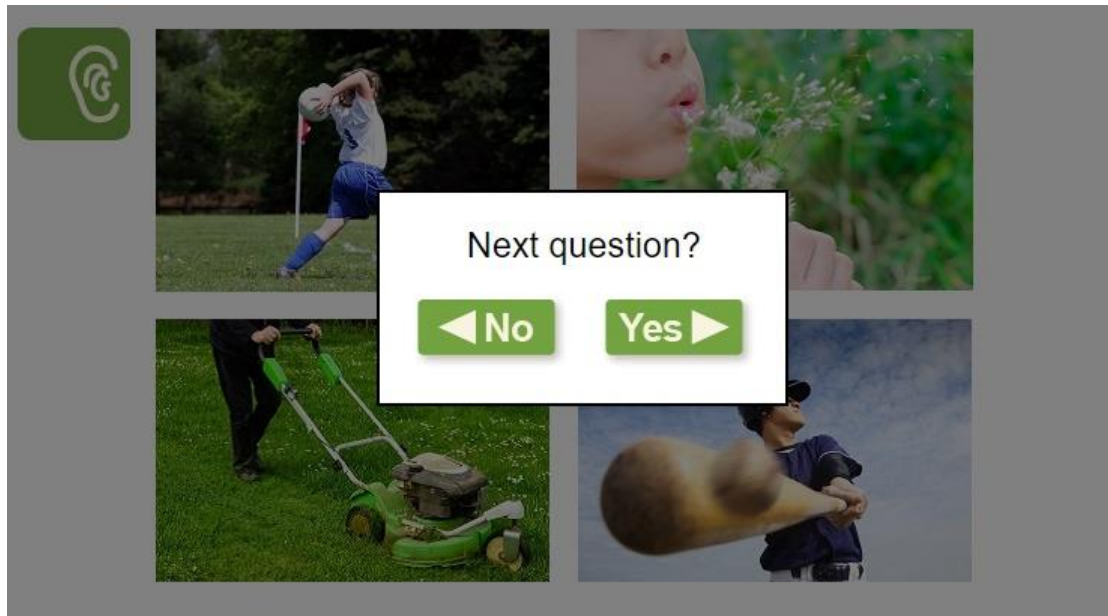
For each question the learner will be required to click on the ear icon to play the sound file associated with that question. They then choose one of the four answer options by touching it (tablet) or clicking on it (PC or laptop).

Fig.4



When sitting an assessment the learner (or educator) can select the 'Next >' button without entering a response. This causes a pop-up message to appear asking the learner (or educator) to confirm they want to move to the next question (Yes>) or stay on the current question (<No). Skipped questions are treated as incorrect for the purposes of generating a scale score; however, they are tagged as 'Not Answered' on the learner's end of assessment report.

Fig.5



At the end of a **Starting Points Listening** assessment the learner will see a "Ka pai! Well done!" screen instead of the usual learner assessment report. The learner report will only be available to the tutor/educator and organisation administrator.

Fig.6



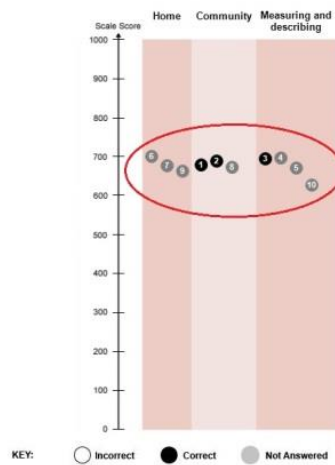
Discontinued Assessments

Starting Points Listening assessments are discontinued if the assessment encounters a sequence of seven incorrect and/or skipped questions. This feature has been included to support beginning English Language learners who find the content too challenging.

It also offers the tutor/educator a means to finish the assessment early if, in their opinion, the content is too challenging for the learner or if the learner is finding the assessment experience distressing. When seven incorrect and/or skipped questions occur in a row, the assessment will terminate with the 'Ka pai! Well done!' screen in Fig.6. The learner will not see that their assessment has terminated early.

A discontinued assessment is labelled as such in the assessment reports (see below). Note the addition of 'Not Answered' to the response key. All questions that were presented to the learner will be displayed below the graphic in table form. The table lists the items chronologically, so it is easy to identify the incorrect or skipped items that led to a discontinued result.

Fig.7

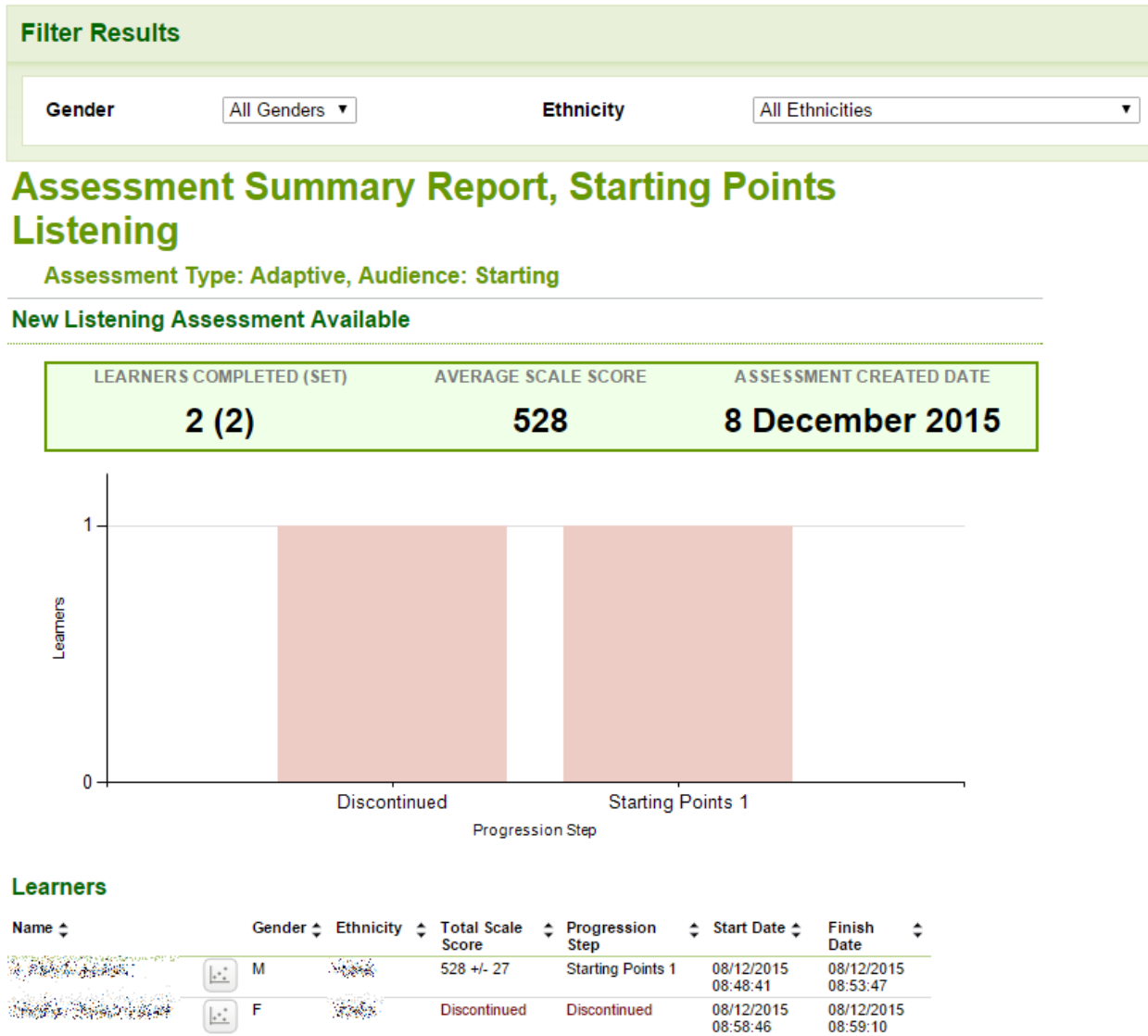


Assessment Questions

No.	Question	Intent	Progression	Result
1	<u>children</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to people	Community	Correct
2	<u>kai</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to food (te reo)	Community	Correct
3	<u>colours</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to colour	Measuring and describing	Correct
4	<u>twenty</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to numbers	Measuring and describing	Not Answered
5	<u>hundred</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to numbers	Measuring and describing	Not Answered
6	<u>carrot</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to food	Home	Not Answered
7	<u>bathtub</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to housing	Home	Not Answered
8	<u>Aotearoa</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to places	Community	Not Answered
9	<u>fridge</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to furniture and appliances	Home	Not Answered
10	<u>warm</u>	Identify the meaning of a common word relating to temperature	Measuring and describing	Not Answered



Fig.8



If you have any questions about **Starting Points Listening** please contact us at assessforadults@nzcer.org.nz