STEP Online Progress Monitoring

Frequently Asked Questions

What is STEP Online Progress Monitoring?

STEP Online Progress Monitoring (OPM) supports on-demand measurement of individual student's reading progress between STEP assessment cycles. It provides teachers with valuable data that allows them to more frequently evaluate and adjust instructional practices.

While progress monitoring is not a new concept, STEP Online Progress Monitoring is a new system. It is located in the STEP Data Management System (steptool.org) and provides teachers with a cohesive, streamlined platform for scoring and analyzing results. Also, because OPM looks and functions very much like the STEP Assessment, current STEP users will find it intuitive and user-friendly.

STEP OPM has been designed with distance-learning in mind. However, it may be used in-person, remotely, or in a hybrid format. No matter the modality in which it is operated, OPM enables teachers to easily collect and use formative reading data while facilitating instruction.
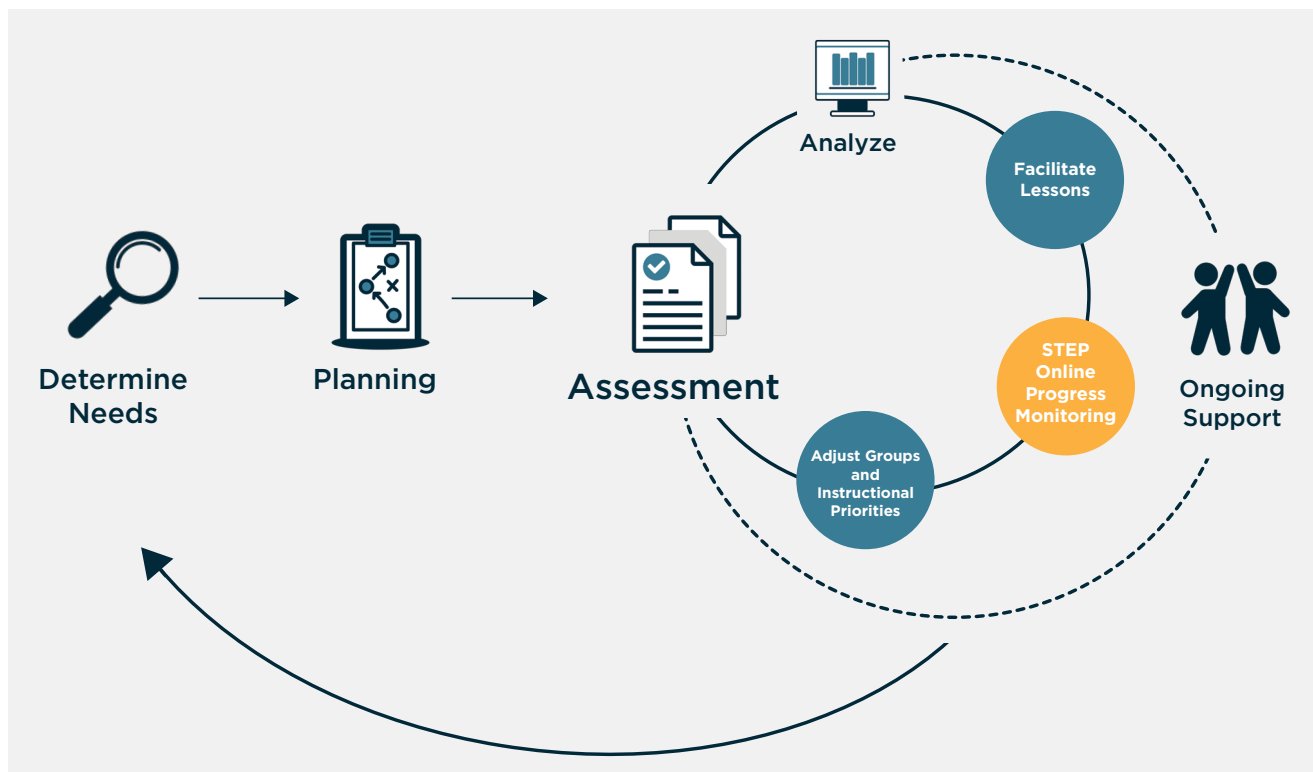
How does STEP OPM work?

STEP OPM allows teachers to isolate and monitor a singular reading skill or set of skills aligned with each student's needs. Users answer initial configuration questions that prepare the progress monitoring test to align with that student's needs. The teacher then proceeds through OPM by following directions and entering data into the DMS as they would with a typical STEP assessment.

Unlike the assessment, OPM allows the teacher to select any STEP level or component to monitor. As such, the teacher is able to monitor for progress above or below a student's achieved STEP level. This functionality helps the teacher have a sense of the student's academic performance below, at, or above the child's current STEP level.

Where does STEP OPM fit into the assessment and instructional cycle?

OPM is designed to help teachers monitor student progress between STEP Assessment cycles. The following graphic visualizes the STEP Process.

The Role of Online Progress Monitoring in the STEP Process

How much does Online Progress Monitoring cost?

All schools using the 2nd Edition of STEP will have free access to OPM for all students currently rostered in the Data Management System. This is a unique opportunity to trial OPM during the 2020-2021 school year for no charge. To discuss specific pricing for the 2021-22 school year, contact katieboylan@uchicago.edu.

How often and how long will it take to monitor for progress?

Each OPM STEP level is set up with multiple narrative reading passages and measurable components appropriate for that level for both the English and Spanish versions of the assessment. A teacher may monitor as often as they want in between rounds, keeping in mind there are currently only four reading passages for the English version and two passages for the Spanish version. Additional reading passages will be added to STEP Español as data is collected during the assessment's continued pilot.

Progress Monitoring is more time efficient than giving the assessment. This is because a teacher does not need to monitor all components in a STEP level. Rather, a teacher is able

to pinpoint the specific components within a STEP level they would like to monitor. Each text has been crafted to mimic the same level of rigour as the assessment, although the texts at STEPs 8-12 are purposefully shorter than the formal assessment books to expedite data gathering.

Will OPM impact a student's achieved STEP level?

Online Progress Monitoring does not influence the student's overall achieved STEP level. Data gathered from OPM is available to help teachers have concrete data to determine if their current instruction to a student is meeting that child's academic needs. It is designed to help teachers inform instruction. A student will still need to be given the STEP assessment in the next assessment window to determine their growth and achievement on STEP.

What reports exist in OPM?

All data gathered within the OPM System will reside in the Data Management System alongside your school's assessment data. After administering OPM to a group of students, the component level data will be available for each student's most recent OPM via a downloadable excel report. Additional reporting functionality will be built out during the 2021-22 school year.

Which video-conferencing platforms are compatible with OPM?

Any video conferencing platform that allows for screen sharing, such as Zoom or Google Meet, is compatible with STEP OPM.