



Accessibility User's Guide Interim Testing

Contact Information and Resources

Contact Information

ACT Customer Care

- **Phone:** 855.730.0400, 6:00 a.m.–7:30 p.m., central time, Monday through Friday
- **Email:** www.act.org/contact-actaspire

Calculator Policy

- **Phone:** 800.498.6481
- **URL:** <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ACT-calculator-policy.pdf>

Resources

This manual references various websites and systems. Use this list to locate the url to that website or system.

Website	URL
ACT Aspire Data Usage Policy	https://www.discoveractaspire.org/legal/data-usage-policy/
ACT Aspire Landing Page	http://actaspire.pearson.com/
ACT Portal	https://www.actaspire.org/
Avocet	http://actaspire.avocet.pearson.com
TestNav™ Support Site	https://support.assessment.pearson.com/display/TN/TestNav+8+Online+Support
Training Management System (TMS)	https://actaspire.tms.pearson.com/

Accessibility and Accommodations

The Avocet website also includes accommodations and accessibility resources. Some examples include:

- Braille (including Tactile Graphics) Notes (for the room supervisor)
- ACT-Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries

Prepare Your Students

There are two resources available for students who wish to prepare for testing:

- Student Sandbox
- Exemplar Test Question Booklets

For more information, see the Exemplar Items section of the ACT Aspire Landing Page.

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Introduction

This guide provides information about accessibility supports, tools, and options for ACT® Aspire® Periodic Interim testing.

Use this guide to:

- Ensure ACT Aspire assessments are administered in accessible and standardized ways
- Make appropriate choices for students
- Train testing staff in the administration of chosen supports
- Supplement the information provided in the *Periodic Assessment Manual*

Note: Classroom testing supports are not discussed in this manual because they are determined and provided locally. This guide can help inform test administrators about what types of locally provided supports would be best for their students.

Test Delivery and Scoring

ACT Aspire Interim testing is delivered exclusively online. All student responses are collected and scored through the online testing platform.

Test Times

Test times for Interim testing are determined and controlled locally.

The ACT Aspire Accessibility System: Levels of Support

All accessibility supports permitted during ACT Aspire testing and described in this guide are designed to remove unnecessary barriers to student performance on the assessments. All the supports fully honor the content, knowledge, and skills the tests measure.

Personal Needs Profile (PNP)

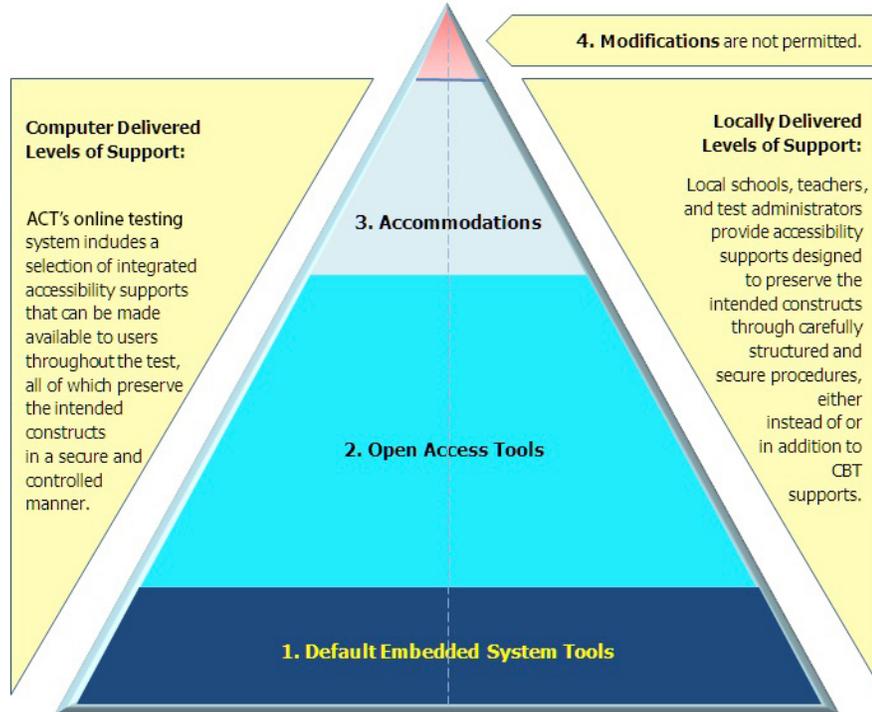
The unique combination of supports needed by a student is called the Personal Needs Profile (PNP). A PNP tells the testing system which supports to provide for the identified student.

Many students will not need a PNP. When a student's accessibility support needs are not documented in a PNP, he or she is listed as a "default user" whose needs are assumed to be sufficiently met through the default embedded system tools represented by level 1 in Figure 1.

Note: All PNPs are completed through the portal. See "How to Create a Personal Needs Profile (PNP)," page 25.

Understanding Levels of Accessibility Support

There are four levels of support that represent a continuum from minor support (i.e., default embedded system tools) to advanced support (i.e., modifications). Figure 1 shows the accessibility support levels.



The width of the triangle above shows the proportionate number of students who use that set of accessibility tools.

Figure 1. Levels of Support

Support Level 1: Default Embedded System Tools

Default embedded system tools are automatically available to all users (see “How to Create a Personal Needs Profile (PNP),” page 25) and meets the common accessibility needs of most students. Some examples include:

- Computer keyboard
- Computer screen display
- Mouse
- Cut, copy, and paste functions in a text entry box
- Browser zoom magnification
- Answer eliminator
- Highlighter
- Scratch paper
- Personal calculators for mathematics tests
- Mark items for review

Support Level 2: Open Access Tools

Open access tools are available to all users identified in the PNP (see “How to Create a Personal Needs Profile (PNP),” page 25) in advance.

Note: Documented open access tools in the PNP also function as a day-of-testing data capture for schools and classrooms to identify supports needed across a specified group of students.

These tools are slightly more intensive than the default embedded system tools. Some require the use of tool-specific administration procedures. Some examples include:

- Color overlay
- Line reader mask
- Respond on separate paper (transcribe)
- Dictate responses (scribe)
- Keyboard or augmentative or assistive communication (aac) + local print (transcribe)
- Breaks: supervised within each day
- Special seating/grouping
- Location for movement
- Individual administration
- Home administration
- Other setting
- Audio environment
- Visual environment
- Physical/motor equipment

Support Level 3: Accommodations

Accommodations are intensive-level accessibility tools. Typically, a qualified individual or team—as defined by the school or district—determines the accommodation(s) a student may use. This individual or team evaluates the student and formally documents the student’s needs. Qualified testing staff may request these tools on behalf of a student through the PNP. Some examples include:

- Text-to-speech English audio
- Text-to-speech English audio + orienting description for blind/low vision
- Word-to-word dictionary
- Human reader, English audio
- Translated test directions
- Braille + tactile graphics
- Sign language interpretation
- Abacus, locally provided
- Extra time
- Breaks: securely extend session over multiple days

Support Level 4: Modifications

Modifications are supports that are sometimes used during class instruction. These supports alter what a test attempts to measure and prevent meaningful understanding of a student’s performance. Modifications are not permitted for ACT Aspire testing.

Accessibility Supports

Tables 1–4 on the following pages identify the accessibility supports available in the Interim ACT Aspire online test delivery format.

It is strongly recommended that use of all accommodation-level accessibility supports (whether provided locally or by test provider) be chosen by the appropriate educational team (as defined by the responsible educational authority) to meet individual student need, and then planned, practiced, and documented prior to the test.

Table 1. Presentation Supports

Presentation Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
Text-to-Speech (English Audio) • Intended for user with ability to see graphics.	Accommodation*	–	–	Yes	Yes
Text-to-Speech (English Audio + Orienting Description) • Intended for user with blindness or low vision. • Requires: Response support to record responses; time for shipment of braille materials (if none available locally from prior interim administration). • Recommended: Extra time.	Accommodation*	– (then must use Braille + Tactile Graphics)	– (then must use Braille + Tactile Graphics)	Yes (with Braille + Tactile Graphics)	Yes (with Braille + Tactile Graphics)
Translated Test Directions • Allowed for all grades. • Requires: Locally provided.	Accommodation*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Word-to-Word Dictionary, ACT-Approved • Requires: Locally provided; follow procedure in Appendix D.	Accommodation*	–	–	Yes	Yes
Braille, Contracted, American Edition (EBAE) Includes Tactile Graphics (TTS Audio) • Requires: Response support to record responses; time for shipment of materials. • Recommended: Extra time.	Accommodation*	–	–	Yes	Yes

* Qualification for use of permitted accessibility supports must follow policies of your local educational authority.

Table 1 (continued)

Presentation Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
<p>Braille, Uncontracted, American Edition (EBAE) Includes Tactile Graphics (TTS Audio)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Response support to record responses; time for shipment of materials. Recommended: Extra time. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>Braille, Contracted, Unified English Braille (UEB) Includes Tactile Graphics (TTS Audio)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Response support to record responses; time for shipment of materials. Recommended: Extra time. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>Braille, Uncontracted, Unified English Braille (UEB) Includes Tactile Graphics (TTS Audio)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Response support to record responses; time for shipment of materials. Recommended: Extra time. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>American Sign Language (ASL): Directions Only (English Text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Locally provided; follow procedure in appendix C. 	Accommodation*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<p>American Sign Language (ASL) Test Items (English Text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Locally provided 1:1 administration; follow procedure in appendix C. Recommended: Extra time. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>Signed Exact English (SEE): Directions Only (English Text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Locally provided; follow procedure in appendix C. 	Accommodation*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<p>Signed Exact English (SEE): Test Items (English Text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Locally provided 1:1 administration; follow procedure in appendix C. Recommended: Extra time. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>Cued Speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires: Locally provided; follow procedure in appendix E. 	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
<p>Color Overlay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform tool unavailable; may locally provide Color Overlay using acetate overlay taped to screen. 	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Qualification for use of permitted accessibility supports must follow policies of your local educational authority.

Table 1 (continued)

Presentation Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
Line Reader Mask • Online platform tool; may be locally provided.	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Magnifier Tool • Online platform tool; may be locally provided.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Browser Zoom Magnification • Online only.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 2. Interaction and Navigation Supports

Interaction and Navigation Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
Abacus • Requires: Locally provided.	Accommodation*	–	–	Yes	–
Answer Masking • Online platform tool.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Answer Eliminator • Online platform tool.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Highlighter Tool • Online platform tool	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Browser Cut, Copy, and Paste • Online only.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scratch Paper • Requires: Locally provided.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calculator (Grades 6 - EHS) • Calculators not permitted at grades 3–5 for interim tests. • Follow ACT Aspire Calculator Policy; may use accessible calculators.	Embedded	–	–	Yes	–

* Qualification for use of permitted accessibility supports must follow policies of your local educational authority.

Table 3. Response Supports

Response Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
Electronic Spell Checker • Requires: Locally provided separate device which must meet specifications provided in Procedures for Administration in Guide.	Accommodation*	—	—	Yes	Yes
Respond on Separate Paper • Requires: Locally provided; response transcription.	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dictate Responses • Requires: Follow procedure in appendix B. • Recommended: Extra time.	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Keyboard or AAC + Local Print • Requires: Response transcription. • Recommended: Extra time.	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mark Item for Review • Online platform.	Embedded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Qualification for use of permitted accessibility supports must follow policies of your local educational authority.

Table 4. General Test Condition Supports

General Test Condition Supports	Support Level	Subject Test			
		Reading	English	Math	Science
Extra Time† • Interim test timing is locally decided, not online-controlled.	Accommodation*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Breaks: Supervised within Each Day	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Special Seating/Grouping	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Location for Movement	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Administration	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home Administration	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Setting	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Audio Environment	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Visual Environment	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Physical/Motor Equipment	Open Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Qualification for use of permitted accessibility supports must follow policies of your local educational authority.

† Extra time represents the maximum allowed within a same-day test. Session may end earlier if time not needed.

Administration Procedures for Accessibility Supports

Before the Test Session

Reading Test Directions Aloud to Students

There are two kinds of test directions:

- **Common instructions** are read aloud to all students before all tests.
- **Specific instructions** are read for each content area and grade level of a test session.

All test directions are printed in English in the *Periodic Assessment Guide*. All test directions are read aloud to all students in English by the room supervisor before the test session begins. The room supervisor may clarify or answer questions about the directions but may not answer questions about any test item. See the *Periodic Assessment Guide* for details regarding the standard reading of test directions.

Test Directions in Languages Other Than English

It is acceptable to have the standard English test directions translated locally into other languages; however, all locally provided translation of directions must be prepared in writing ahead of time and based as precisely as possible on the exact standard English directions. Slight adaptations may be used as necessary to communicate the same meaning as that found in the standard form; however, the same instructions for reading the directions are the same as those for English administrations. See the *Periodic Assessment Guide* for details regarding the standard reading of test directions.

Test directions may also be locally provided in American Sign Language or Signed Exact English. For detailed information about the use of sign language with ACT Aspire tests, including preparation and delivery of test directions, see appendix C.

During the Test Session

Presentation Supports

Text-to-Speech (TTS English Audio)

- Extra time of 300% is recommended.

Text-to-Speech (TTS English Audio + Orienting Description)

- Extra time of 300% is recommended.

Human Reader (English Audio)

- Interim test does not include a paper form but computer screen may be read aloud to student by a properly trained and prepared staff member, if carefully provided and done in conformance with Read-aloud procedures provided in appendix E of this guide.
- Extra time of 300% is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.

Human Reader (English Audio + Orienting Description)

- Interim test does not include a paper form but computer screen may be read aloud to student by a properly trained and prepared staff member, if carefully provided and done in conformance with Read-aloud procedures provided in appendix E of this guide.
- Extra time of 300% is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.

Translated Test Directions

- **Languages other than English:** Test directions support may be provided by a room supervisor locally in languages as needed by students for interim tests (see “Before the Test Session”)
- All student responses **must** be in English.

Word-to-Word Dictionary

- Available for Interim testing
- Mathematics and science
- Only ACT Aspire-approved non-electronic word-to-word translation dictionaries are allowed. See appendix D for a list of approved dictionaries. (Appendix D also includes best-practice advice regarding who should use this form of linguistic support.)
- Extra time is strongly recommended with this support but is not automatically assigned. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.

American Sign Language (ASL) Test Directions

- All grades and content areas
- Interim tests: All forms
- Required: A trained interpreter fluent in ASL and able to securely review required implementation procedures in appendix C and prepare prior to test administration.

ASL Test Items

- All grades
- Mathematics and science
- Procedure: Test interpreter, upon request of student, carefully translates into ASL all text or problematic words based on the presented text.
- Graphics and images may **not** be described, but all text labels inside graphics may be translated as needed.
- Extra time of 300% is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.
- This support may be used with the interim test if the procedures in appendix C are followed.
- **All** student responses must be in English.
- Required: A trained interpreter fluent in ASL and able to securely review required implementation procedures in appendix C and prepare prior to test administration.
- No prep notes or test materials may be taken from the secure preparation room prior to testing.

Signed Exact English (SEE) Test Directions

- All grades and content areas
- Mouth-speak may be used.
- Required: A trained interpreter fluent in SEE and able to securely review and prepare prior to the time of the actual test administration.
- Interim testing: May be locally provided (see *Periodic Assessment Guide*).
- Required: A trained interpreter fluent in SEE and able to securely review required implementation procedures in appendix C and prepare prior to test administration.

SEE Test Items

- All grades
- Mathematics and science
- Procedure: Test interpreter, upon request of student, carefully translates into SEE all text or problematic words based on the text presented in the online interim form.
- Graphics and images may **not** be described, but all text labels inside graphics may be translated as needed.
- Extra time of 300% is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.
- This support may be used with the interim test if the procedures in appendix C are followed.
- All student responses must be in English.
- Required: A trained interpreter fluent in SEE and able to securely review required implementation procedures in appendix C and prepare prior to test administration.
- No prep notes or test materials may be taken from the secure preparation room prior to testing.

Cued Speech

- Defined as a read-aloud support that provides visual phonemic access to the sounds of the words. Functions like an oral read-aloud accommodation and may be used alone or in combination with oral read-aloud.
- May be used only where TTS or local read-aloud support is also permitted; that is, during Mathematics and Science subject tests
- Must follow applicable administration procedures provided in appendix E

Braille and Tactile Graphics

As of fall 2017, two forms of braille (including tactile graphics) are available in contracted or uncontracted format:

- English Braille American Edition (EBAE)
- Unified English Braille (UEB)

This allows Interims I and III to match Interim I content, and Interims II and IV to match Interim II content.

Ordering

- Order as early as possible prior to test administration. Allow time for shipping.
- Braille (including tactile graphics) is **not** automatically shipped upon PNP entry in Interim Testing; it must be ordered by placing an additional order in the portal, under the “Manage Additional Orders” dropdown menu.
- There is **no** standard paper companion booklet or answer document provided in interim testing. Braille (including tactile graphics) orders are bundled with the online English Audio for Blind accessibility support. The student is not required to use the online English audio support but may do so if needed.

Administration

- **Extra time of 300%** is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.
- **Braille (including tactile graphics) notes** for use by the room supervisor are provided online in the “Accessibility & Accommodations” section at: <http://actaspire.avocet.pearson.com>
- **Interim test answer choices.** All answer options are recorded as A–E. There is no paper answer document; all student responses must be recorded online.
- **Response support is necessary** for braille tests; it must be manually selected in the PNP. The student will need an assigned proctor or other certified staff to transcribe responses exactly as provided by the student (using the selected response support) into the standard answer format for scoring purposes.

Line Reader Mask

- Visual tracking support tool for reading
- Online testing: Available

Color Overlay

- A locally provided color overlay using a pastel acetate sheet may be placed over the user computer monitor.

Browser Zoom Magnification

- Online **only**
- Integrated part of the local computer browser. User enters keystroke “Control +” (or “Command +” on an Apple computer) to enlarge everything on page, “Control –” (“Command –”) to reduce size of everything on page, and “Control o” (“Command o”) to return to the default font and graphic size.
- Because the browser zoom enlarges both text and graphics, it may cause reflowing of page content.
- Extra time may be needed for students with very low vision.
- Use of this support requires sufficient manual dexterity and range to hold down two separate keys at the same time.

Magnifier Tool

The magnifier tool is a movable “magnifying glass” tool that enlarges text and graphics under the selected area of the magnifying glass. This tool provides lower magnification power than the browser zoom magnification tool (see “Browser Zoom Magnification”, above).

- This tool is available to all students in the toolbar.
- Documentation in the PNP is requested, but not required. Follow your local policy.

Note: Students that use this tool may require extra testing time.

Locally Provided Magnification

- A locally provided handheld magnification tool is permitted.
- Students may use a locally provided digital scanning magnification device to produce extremely large magnification.
 - ~ Consider using other forms of magnification (for example, magnifier tool and/or the browser zoom enlargement).
 - ~ If a student uses a form of digital projection that requires answers to be recorded outside of TestNav, test staff will transcribe the responses into TestNav for scoring (see “Transcribe Original Student Responses for Scoring,” page 27).

Interaction and Navigation Supports

Abacus

- Locally provided tactile form of scratch paper for students with very low or no usable vision
- Extra time may be needed with this support.

Answer Masking

- Tool supports memory and focus and helps students eliminate distractions with selected-response questions. Controlled by a mouse click (or selection) response. Once an answer is masked, it cannot be seen unless it is clicked again to unmask it.
- Online testing: Student may use masking tool to cover up or reveal selected-response answer options.
- Documentation in the PNP is requested, but not required. Follow your local policy.

Answer Eliminator

- Online **only**
- Student may place a wide red X over an answer to eliminate it from consideration.
- Unlike the answer masking tool, the red X does not prevent the user from reading what is underneath.

Highlighting

- Interim testing: Highlighter tool is available in all forms.

Browser Copy and Paste Functions

- Windows keystrokes: “Control-C” (copy) and “Control-V” (paste)
- Apple keystrokes: “Command-C” (copy) and “Command-V” (paste)
- Use of this support requires sufficient manual dexterity and range to hold down two separate keys at the same time.

Scratch Paper

- Online testing: All students receive one page of scratch paper.
- Augmentative or assistive communication (AAC) devices (such as a braille note taker) are also permitted to do figuring or other scratch work if needed but must be selected in the PNP as “Response Supports – Keyboard, AAC with Local Print.”
- All scratch notes (notes on scratch paper or scratch notes produced with an AAC device) must be collected after testing and promptly destroyed.

Calculator

- Grades 6–EHS Mathematics **only** (not permitted for grades 3-5)
- See the *ACT Calculator Policy* on the Avocet website.

Response Supports

Students’ answers must be submitted for scoring within the ACT Aspire platform. This is true even if the student has provided his or her original responses on a separate piece of paper with the Respond on Separate Paper support. In such a case, the room supervisor or proctor **must** transcribe the student’s original responses on paper into the online platform.

Electronic Spell Checker

- A device that may be locally provided during Mathematics and Science tests
- Device must meet the following criteria. Only the following functions may be used:
 - ~ Word spelling provided with no definitions, no pictures, no synonyms or word tense forms.
 - ~ Grammar check must be turned off.
 - ~ Device may offer five or fewer word prediction choices per spelling attempt.
 - ~ Word choices must be predicted from/generated by the approximate spelling provided by the student.
 - ~ Student must independently identify and select the word he or she wants from choices offered for written response without further support.
 - ~ May be used in support of Interim Mathematics and Science tests only

Respond on Separate Paper

- Student responds on separate plain sheet of paper (common for students who have limited motor control but are able to write responses on very large or other special paper).
- Student responses on separate paper must be transcribed into the computer answer format. Provision must be made locally to provide this support in real time during the online test experience.
- Once testing is completed, these ‘separate paper’ Interim Test responses are treated as original student work and as secure test material. They must be destroyed immediately after testing.
- Extra time is recommended with this support.

Dictate Responses

- One-to-one individualized administration **required**
- Student dictates response and trained room supervisor or proctor scribes response exactly as dictated. Includes:
 - ~ spoken dictation
 - ~ use of AAC device to dictate responses without voicing (including braille note taking)
 - ~ word-predicting AAC devices, if the student independently selects the appropriate word (Spelling and grammar check must be turned off. Use of this response support requires use of the specific transcribing procedure. See appendix B for details.)
- See appendix B for scribing procedures with all tests as well as cautionary advice.
- Extra time of 300% is strongly recommended. Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.

Keyboard or AAC Plus Local Print

- Full physical keyboard response input with local printout, either via local word processing software or through local AAC device.
- Responses must be transcribed into the computer answer format. Provision must be made locally to provide this support in real time during the online test experience.
- Word spelling provided with no definitions, no pictures, no synonyms or word tense forms.
- Other spelling and grammar check functions must be turned off.
- Word-predicting AAC devices may be used if the student independently selects the appropriate word.
- Extra time should be provided with this support.

Mark Item for Review

- Allows student to mark an item for later review as he or she continues ahead with the test, planning to return later to work again on those items
- This is a default embedded system tool available to all users of ACT Aspire.

General Test Conditions Supports

Extra Time

- Extra time is not built into the online platform for the Interim Tests but may be provided locally as appropriate to the student within the local use of the test. Timing is strictly locally determined and controlled during all Interim Testing. As a point of guidance, timing units are often expressed in terms of percent of time above and beyond standard allowable time (150% standard time, 200% standard time, etc.). If a student normally receives double the normal testing time, then extra time for a 40-minute test would be 40 minutes × 2 (200%), or 80 minutes.
- Test coordinator or designee specifies extra time, and room supervisor provides appropriate supervision for the amount of extra time needed.
- Students are not required to sit for the entire extended time period.
- **Before testing**, a decision should be made regarding how much extra time a student will need. Standard time limits for ACT Aspire tests are determined using prior performance data with the goal of ensuring that at least 90% of participating students have enough time to finish within the standard time.
- Local staff **must** plan in advance a suitable location, appropriate staff supervision, and test security for those students who will need extra time.
- Students with the extra time accommodation should be tested either individually or in a group with other students receiving the same amount of extra time.

Breaks—Securely Extend Session over Multiple Days

- Room supervisor stops and secures the session to provide unsupervised breaks as needed between securely defined and supervised “mini sessions” in the administration of one test. A mini session allows the student to view and work in only small part or “chunks” of the test at a time.
- Mini sessions are meant to be used with students who have severe medical problems (e.g., seizures, severe diabetic conditions, fatigue/strength/endurance issues, or other medical issues) that only allow the student to work in a focused way for short periods of time. These sessions thus allow a student with such a medical condition to complete a test in short bursts while also keeping the test secure and the experience fair to all.
- Overnight breaks between mini sessions are allowed
- The student may not return to work on any part of the test that has already been seen and worked on.
- Extra time should be provided with this support. The maximum allowable amount of time (400% standard time) is typically requested.
- See the *Periodic Assessment Guide* for detailed information about how to restart a test session student after a break.

Breaks—Supervised within Each Day

- Test administrator or room supervisor stops the clock or pauses the test on the student’s screen (online) to provide short, supervised, same-day breaks as needed. Using this support, the student still completes the entire test session within one day.
- During a break, test materials must be properly secured and individual student supervision must be provided. Students may not interact with other students or any academic information or materials during the break.
- For online testing, see the *Periodic Assessment Guide* for detailed information about how to restart a test session student after a break.
- Extra time may be needed with this support.

Special Seating/Grouping

- Locally provided special or preferential seating or grouping
- Each testing group must have students in the same grade, take the same test, and share the same time constraints. The recommended small group size is six students or less to minimize disruption to students working at a different pace, but a larger group size may be determined locally, as appropriate to the situation.
- Appropriate security and test supervision must be provided.

Location for Movement

- Location provided so student is able to move, stand, or pace during test in a manner where others’ work cannot be seen and student is not distracting to others

Individual Administration

- Individual test administration

Home Administration

- Administration at home for homebound student or in a care facility when medically necessary with appropriate supervision by testing staff
- Requires secure handling of test materials by testing staff **only**—not parents, guardians, relatives, or family friends. It is not required that two staff be present to test a student at home.

Other Setting

- Test administered and supervised in setting identified on student’s accommodations plan

Audio Environment

- Locally provided modified acoustic/auditory environment (e.g., student whisper phone, classroom FM system, local acoustic enhancements, or noise-quieting headphones to screen out auditory distractions)
- Personal mobile devices to provide background music are **not** allowed. If the test site provides a known and controlled form of background music or white noise, this may be used if it does not permit the student to access any other resources during test administration.

Visual Environment

- Locally provided modified visual/lighting environment (e.g., special room lighting, light box under paper test, study carrel to screen out visual distractions)
- General preparation of a classroom to remove academic material from walls and desks is a general test preparation procedure, **not** a visual environment support.

Physical/Motor Equipment

- Locally provided personalized adaptive furniture; balance or positioning equipment to support student physical interaction, enhance motor control during testing, and/or reduce fatigue; or equipment to provide fine motor interaction support (e.g., large grip pencil, adaptive keyboard)
- AAC devices or procedures are **not** included as physical/motor equipment supports.
- Motor/physical prompting of any kind is **not** included as a physical/motor equipment support.

Choosing Appropriate Supports for Testing

Introduction

At specific and predictable points in all students' experience of a test question or task, accessibility is critically important. These are called **access points**. They include the initial presentation of the test question or task, interaction and navigation demands that the question or task makes, and the production of a response (see figure 2). The **general test conditions** (i.e., test setting, background

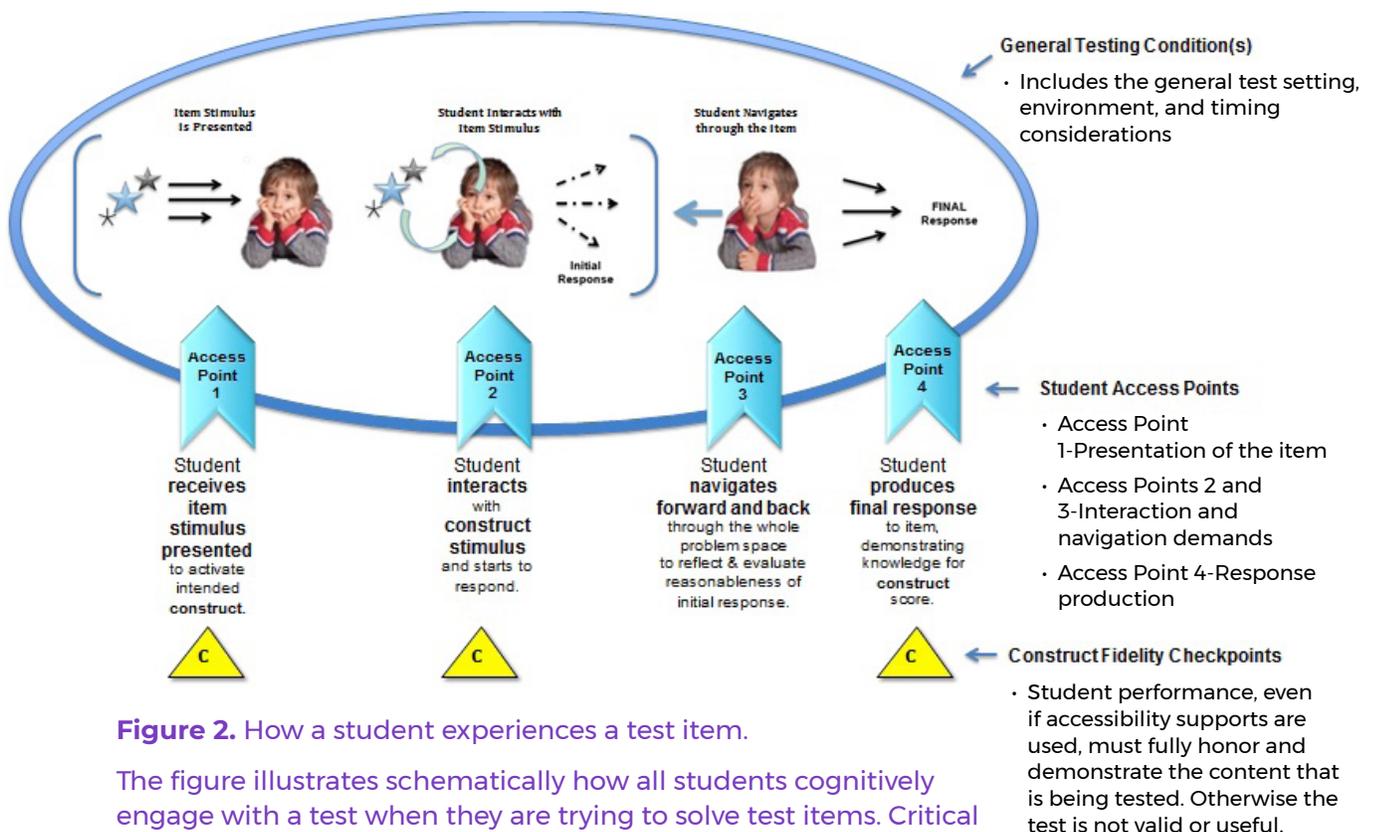


Figure 2. How a student experiences a test item.

The figure illustrates schematically how all students cognitively engage with a test when they are trying to solve test items. Critical elements in the student information processing path are shown: the general testing conditions impacting the student throughout the test, critical communication access points that occur repeatedly during the test (item by item), and construct fidelity checkpoints that must be honored to obtain a valid score.

environment, and timing conditions) serve as a kind of broad, always-present access point as well. General test conditions are illustrated by imagining yourself trying to read for an hour in a dim light, to talk in a loud and chaotic room, or to carefully write your thoughts when someone keeps urging you to write faster. Like access points, general test conditions greatly affect a student's ability to effectively engage and communicate during a testing situation. If an access point does not provide the student with a fair chance to communicate what he or she knows about the construct being tested, then the resulting score will not accurately represent the student's true knowledge.

Every access point is a critical point for ensuring that students have the chance to communicate what they know about what is actually being tested.

Construct fidelity checkpoints (sometimes called *item specifications*) provide defining information that allows us to determine the access supports that can be allowed and whether the testing experience of a student supports a fair and reasonable opportunity for the student to communicate the content that is being measured if he or she knows this material. These checkpoints are also shown in figure 2. If the construct fidelity checkpoint is violated, it means that communication support is being provided in a way that prevents a student from having any chance to demonstrate the knowledge being tested. This construct violation blocks access to the performance of the content by giving away too much information. Construct violations invalidate test scores.

When Instruction and Assessment Supports Differ

There is an important distinction between instructional accessibility supports and testing accessibility supports. Supports provided at the beginning of the instructional process are designed to help students experience, learn, and practice a new skill. The long-term purpose of instructional supports or other early supports is to help the student learn to become as fluent and independent as possible in performing that skill. For this reason, instructional supports should incorporate a scaffolded fading process that provides more support early in the learning process, when skill acquisition is just beginning. These intensive early instructional supports may at times simplify or even modify the skill the student is learning, helping to guide, shape, and successively approximate the student's behavior to ensure that the student experiences some early success while moving closer to real skill performance. However, the path to student independence must always be kept in mind when planning instructional supports. Later in the instructional process, the need for intensive support should be challenged to see how much control a student can assume.

As a student achieves increasingly high levels of skill independence, the accessibility supports the student receives should be cut back further still until either full independence or the least intrusive accessibility support—that level of support that will allow the student to demonstrate the skill in the most independent manner possible for that student—is achieved.

For example, a student with a certain type of visual processing difficulty may need to use a straightedge to guide visual tracking while reading. This requirement may also initially require that another person hold the tracking tool or read a passage aloud for the student. Eventually, however, the student should learn to perform the actual reading task with full independence to the extent of his or her capability. At the point of testing, the student no longer needs a person to hold the tool or to read the passage aloud; this has become the independent responsibility of the student. Remaining student needs for support may still be met, such as through student-controlled visual tracking support on a computer. Independent use of a visual tracking tool thus becomes the least intrusive accommodation for the student at this point.

Testing accessibility supports should be those accommodations that are the least intrusive supports possible to meet the needs of a student while allowing that student the maximum level of independence possible to give the student a chance to communicate exactly what she or he has independently learned about the content to that point. Testing supports do not necessarily represent the instructional end point, but they do represent a point in time that lies beyond the earliest phases of skill acquisition. Some skill independence should be seen if instruction has been effective.

When choosing and planning instructional supports, teams must remember to carefully consider long-term independence and thoughtfully design the process of fading the supports. The challenge is finding the right balance of supports for a given student and actively, consistently, and constructively supporting the growth of student independence.

How to Create a Local Personal Needs Profile (PNP)

For any student to have ACT Aspire accessibility features at the Open Access or accommodation levels of support, an educator must complete a local PNP for testing situations. There are several ways to evaluate a student's accessibility needs and create a local PNP. The two-step worksheet in figure 3 illustrates one such method. Use the most appropriate method for your circumstances.

Figure 3. Sample PNP worksheet

Student: Rhett Trierer Age: 11 Grade: 5
 Date: 1/23/16

1. Describe Sensory and Communication Strengths and Challenges

Review and consider recent student performance, evaluations, and observational evidence, and then document sensory and communication skills that best describe the skill level of this student.

Sensory and Communication Skills

	Visual	Auditory	Physical or motor	First language (ELL)	Reading or other language process	Attention, memory, or focus
STRENGTH Evidence suggests this skill set is a strength .				✓		
NORMAL LIMITS Evidence suggests this skill set is available within normal limits .	✓	✓	✓			
CHALLENGE Evidence suggests this skill set is a significant challenge. <i>Describe how this challenge creates a barrier to independent engagement or performance.</i>	English Language Arts and Reading					
					Very slow decoding, needs extra time, has poor visual tracking left to right across page.	Focuses better and less anxious when seated near front of room or in small group.
	Writing					
					Needs extra time to express thoughts. Poor spelling.	Same as above.
	Mathematics					
					Poor decoding interferes with math performance.	Same as above.
	Science					
					Same as math.	Same as above.

Figure 3 (continued)

2. Chart the PNP Summary for Testing Situations

For each challenge identified in step 1, decide if it applies to the specific part of the test experience listed in step 2.

For each relevant access point and content area, specify the student accessibility need in terms of an observed alternate identified strength or available skill that allows the student to work around and compensate for a challenge or barrier.

Then consult the ACT Aspire Accessibility Supports list for matching supports or supports consistent with this purpose. **Identify supports for the mode (online or paper) in which the student will be submitting all test responses.**

If the challenge does not apply in a given instance, then leave the cell blank. Blank cells represent standard accessibility needs shared by typical learners. For these access points, the student will use only the default embedded accessibility tools.

Access Point	Reading or English	Writing	Mathematics	Science
Presentation <i>Note alternate strengths or available skills the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to receiving or perceiving content presentation.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decodes more accurately and focuses longer with visual tracking support. Sometimes uses zoom to enlarge print. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs better when material is presented in auditory form along with visual. Sometimes uses enlargement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decodes more accurately and focuses longer with visual tracking support. Performs better when material is presented in auditory form along with visual. Sometimes uses enlargement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decodes more accurately and focuses longer with visual tracking support. Performs better when material is presented in auditory form along with visual. Sometimes uses enlargement.
	Accessibility Support			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> line reader mask (O) answer masking magnifier tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English audio (A) magnifier tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> line reader mask (O) answer masking English audio (A) magnifier tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> line reader mask (O) answer masking English audio (A) magnifier tool
Interaction and Navigation <i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to interacting with or navigating content.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			

Figure 3 (continued)

Access Point	Reading or English	Writing	Mathematics	Science
Response <i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to responding to content tasks, problems, or questions.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			
General Test Conditions <i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to general performance task settings, test environments or timed situations.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs better if moderate amount of extra time is allowed. If too much extra time, loses focus. Focuses better at front of room or away from visual distractions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs better if moderate amount of extra time is allowed. If too much extra time, loses focus. Focuses better at front of room or away from visual distractions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs better if moderate amount of extra time is allowed. If too much extra time, loses focus. Focuses better at front of room or away from visual distractions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs better if moderate amount of extra time is allowed. If too much extra time, loses focus. Focuses better at front of room or away from visual distractions.
	Accessibility Support			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extra time, 150% (A) special seating/grouping (O) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extra time, 150% (A) special seating/grouping (O) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extra time, 150% (A) special seating/grouping (O) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extra time, 150% (A) special seating/grouping (O)

Note: E = embedded system tool, O = Open Access tool, A = accommodation.

Bundling Supports

Typically, once the needed presentation, interaction and navigation, or response supports have been identified, some form of support for general test conditions should be bundled with them to enable the testing session to work properly and securely. Questions to ask when considering which supports to bundle include, but are not limited, to:

- Will the student also need extra time if this support is used?
- Will the student also need an individual test administration if this support is used?
- Will the student also need a small group or special seating if this support is used?
- Will the student also need specially planned and secured breaks?

Think through the whole test experience for the student. Plan for what will be needed while being careful to avoid too many supports. Seek just those few personalized supports that work for the individual student.

How to Create a Personal Needs Profile (PNP)

The PNP illustrated in figure 3 contains the information that will be used for data entry in the PNP process for ACT Aspire testing. It also represents an enduring record for local reference. The PNP should be reviewed and updated each year, as the student's needs develop and change over time.

The entry of PNP information into the portal must be completed to ensure critical supports are made active within the computer system so that the student can use them. Correct information also allows room supervisors to produce a report listing exactly which students are using which supports during a given test session.

The information below is intended as a conceptual overview to help teachers prepare PNP information for entry to the portal. If you are the person entering the data set for your test site, see the *Portal User Guide* located on the Avocet website.

Which students must have a PNP? Only those students who use Open Access or accommodation-level supports require a PNP.

Who enters the PNP into the portal? This role is locally assigned. This role is usually best filled by someone who uses the portal frequently and is comfortable with the data entry process. For training resources, see the Avocet website. The person who enters the PNP data must be able to communicate with the local educators who have put together this information and who know the student best.

The Portal PNP Page

Organization

The data entry menus are organized by access points: Presentation Supports, Interaction and Navigation Supports, Response Supports, and General Test Condition Supports. This structure is illustrated in table 5. It is the same structure used in the local PNP illustrated in figure 3 and throughout this guide.

Accessibility supports are entered in the online PNP by category. Some support features will request specific content areas be selected in the PNP. Where these checkboxes exist, you must select each content area where the support is needed. This allows a test site to provide a support feature only for those content areas where it has been identified to be needed. Features selected here may be activated *only* for those content areas where they do not violate the skills tested. If an accessibility support is not permitted to be used in a specific content area test, then, for that test session only, the online system will not activate the feature. That feature also may not be locally provided for that content area test.

Completing the PNP

Test sites may either load the student PNP information in the individual student profile or perform a PNP extract, fill it out, and import the file. For more detailed procedural information, refer directly to the *Portal User Guide*.

To complete the online PNP for an individual student, go to the student profile, then follow these steps:

1. Choose the method by which this student's responses will be submitted for scoring purposes: "Online Form" or "Paper Form." (All Interim Tests are [Online Forms](#))
2. Use the appropriate accessibility features chart to identify the supports to be used by the student who will be submitting test responses.

Note: Only enter accommodation and Open Access level supports. Embedded supports are already available and may be provided as needed to all students either locally or via the online platform.

Changing a PNP That Has Already Been Entered

To change or edit a PNP after data entry:

1. Remove the student from all test sessions to which he or she has already been assigned. To view the test sessions the student has been assigned to, click the "Test Sessions" tab on the Student Profile page.
2. Change the PNP data as needed.
3. Place the student into a test session.

Note: You may see PNP data in the portal that is not available for Interim testing.

After Each Test

Transcribe Original Student Responses for Scoring

Any time a student provides a response in a format other than within the standard online platform, the response must be copied (transcribed) exactly as it was originally provided by the student into the standard online answer format. When used during online testing, response transcription requires that the local room supervisor plan for a real-time process of transcribing the student responses during the actual online test experience. This will require careful planning coordination. This transcription is how the student work will be submitted for scoring purposes—the original student work cannot be scored in its original form. The following supports will (or may) result in a need for carefully planned and secure transcription:

- Use of Braille (including tactile graphics)
- Dictate Responses/Scribing
- Keyboard or AAC and Local Print
- Magnifier Tool (only when a locally provided digital scanning enlargement is used)
- Respond on Separate Paper

Items to Retain or Destroy

See the *Periodic Assessment Manual* for a list of items to retain or destroy.

Appendix A: Personal Needs Profile (PNP) Student-Level Worksheet

Student: _____ Age: ____ Grade: ____ Today's Date: _____

1. Describe Sensory and Communication Strengths and Challenges

Review and consider recent student performance, evaluations, and observational evidence, and then document sensory and communication skills that best describe the skill level of this student.

Sensory and Communication Skills

	Visual	Auditory	Physical or motor	First language (ELL)	Reading or other language process	Attention, memory, or focus
STRENGTH Evidence suggests this skill set is a strength .						
NORMAL LIMITS Evidence suggests this skill set is available within normal limits .						
CHALLENGE Evidence suggests this skill set is a significant challenge . <i>Describe how this challenge creates a barrier to independent engagement or performance.</i>	English Language Arts and Reading					
	Writing					
	Mathematics					
	Science					

2. Chart the PNP Summary for Testing Situations

For each challenge identified in step 1, decide if it applies to the specific part of the test experience listed in step 2.

For each relevant access point and content area, specify the student accessibility need in terms of an observed alternate identified strength or available skill that allows the student to work around and compensate for a challenge or barrier.

Then consult the ACT Aspire Accessibility Supports list for matching supports or supports consistent with this purpose. **Identify supports for the mode (online or paper) in which the student will be submitting all test responses.**

If the challenge does not apply in a given instance, then leave the cell blank. Blank cells represent standard accessibility needs shared by typical learners. For these access points, the student will use only the default embedded accessibility tools.

Access Point	Reading or English	Writing	Mathematics	Science
Presentation <i>Note alternate strengths or available skills the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to receiving or perceiving content presentation.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			
Interaction and Navigation <i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to interacting with or navigating content.</i>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			

APPENDIX A: PERSONAL NEEDS PROFILE (PNP) STUDENT-LEVEL WORKSHEET

Access Point	Reading or English	Writing	Mathematics	Science
<p>Response</p> <p><i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to responding to content tasks, problems, or questions.</i></p>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			
<p>General Test Conditions</p> <p><i>Note what alternate strength or available skill the student has used successfully to compensate for this barrier to general performance task settings, test environments, or timed situations.</i></p>	Alternate Strength			
	Accessibility Support			

Appendix B: General Response Dictation and Scribing Procedures

Characteristics of Dictate Response Users

- students with physical disabilities that impede the motor process of writing
- students who have a reduced ability to write due to pain, paralysis, loss of function or loss of endurance, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm)
- students whose handwriting is indecipherable, resulting in illegible written products (scribbling)
- students who can write but have a documented disability in the area of written expression that results in a significant interference with their ability to express their knowledge in writing

Definition of Dictate Responses

In ACT Aspire, **dictation** is the alternate communication produced by a student to create a written English message or to provide a written English response to a question (as in a test situation), when the act of writing by hand or by keyboard is not reasonably possible. In every instance of dictation, it is mandatory that the student have authorship control over both the language conventions used and the substance of the communication: the student *must* be the sole author of the communication. A designated responsible scribe transfers (“scribes”) the student’s communication into the written form exactly as originally communicated by the author. Languages other than English are not permitted. English braille is permitted.

The dictation accommodation allows students with identified need a way to access the ACT Aspire assessment through:

- dictation of verbal responses to a human scribe
- dictation to scribe through gesturing, pointing, or eye-gazing to a communication board or other specific communication target
- dictation of response to a recording device or other augmentative/assistive communication device
- dictation through an American or English braille device with scribe transcription to appropriate answer space
- dictation of responses using a speech-to-text device or application

Additional Requirements for Dictation

- Dictation (Open Access support) must be provided in an individual administration.
- Extra time (accommodation-level support) is recommended for completing dictation.

Scribes

In ACT Aspire, a **scribe** is a certified educational staff member who records precisely and exactly what a student dictates. Only a trained room supervisor or his or her trained assistant may provide this scribing support. The proper use of the dictation/scribing procedure will not invalidate constructs measured on the ACT Aspire assessments.

The scribe **should**:

- assist the student in accessing the test and responding to it
- be as familiar as possible with the method of dictation the student typically uses for instruction and assessments
- repeat test or task directions to the student as needed
- produce legible text so that the written portion of the test can be scored

The scribe may **not**:

- alert the student to mistakes during testing
- prompt the student in any way that would result in a better response or essay
- answer student questions about the test material
- influence the student's response in any way

Procedures for Response Dictation and Scribing

Selected Response During Reading, English, Mathematics, or Science Tests

For selected-response questions, the scribe should confirm the student's response before recording the student's answer within the online answer space. This must be a consistent action for every item.

Appendix C: Guidelines for Sign Language Interpretation

The following policies should be followed whenever sign interpretation of any part of ACT Aspire tests is provided. Signing is permitted in American Sign Language (ASL) or Signed Exact English (SEE), depending on the sign language chosen in the student’s PNP.

Note: These are interim procedures. They are designed to maximize the quality of content delivery and the consistency of test administration from one student to another. Fully standardized delivery of sign interpretation is forthcoming in a future ACT Aspire update.

Content Available for Signing

Test Directions

Sign interpretation of test directions may be provided for any content area and any grade.

Test Questions

Sign interpretation of test items is permitted for Interim tests during the Mathematics and Science tests **only**.

When Signing Is Permitted during ACT Aspire Testing

The following criteria should be used to determine whether a deaf or hard-of-hearing student should be tested in either ASL or SEE:

- The student’s primary language is ASL or SEE.
- The student has a history where ASL or SEE is the dominant language of instruction.
- The student knows how to effectively use an ASL or SEE interpreter.
- The student has a way to respond in English, **not** signing.

Use of Cued Speech

Cued Speech is a presentation support feature that is permitted during Mathematics and Science tests; however, it is not covered in this “sign interpretation” appendix because we define Cued Speech as a local sound-based read-aloud through sign cues for word sound. This is different than the transadaptation required for sign interpretation. Meaning is not directly conveyed by manually cued speech sounds. For more information on Cued Speech, please see appendix E: Guidelines for Local Delivery of Read-Aloud Support.

Who May Deliver Signed Test Interpretation

All sign interpreters must sign the security agreement at the end of this section.

Test Directions

Local interpretation may be provided by a single interpreter. This interpreter may be a local educator, employed by the district, who is fluent in sign, or the interpreter may be a certified ASL or SEE interpreter hired for this purpose. The interpreter is expected to partner with the room supervisor who is simultaneously reading the directions aloud in English.

Test Questions

Signed interpretation of test questions must involve at least one well trained and experienced ASL or SEE interpreter working with the room supervisor to provide support for consistency and continuity of interpretation. However, national best practice standards for sign interpretation indicate that for lengthy interpretation sessions or highly detailed, intensive sessions, two qualified interpreters are advised, both of whom work with the room supervisor. ACT **strongly** recommends this practice where possible.

Student responses may **not** be interpreted from ASL or SEE or from any other form of sign for the purpose of recording the student answer. Dictation and scribing are permitted only if the student responds in the English language, (whether providing a written, oral or an AAC English form of response), and if response dictation is also recorded in the student's PNP.

Guidelines for Sign Interpretation

- Sign interpreters may **not** include any relative, guardian, or friend of the student.
- The educational agency where test administration is conducted will be responsible for the selection of a qualified ASL or SEE interpreter(s) and must arrange as necessary to cover any expenses incurred in the hiring of these individuals.
- Test-related materials of any kind—including prep notes—may **not** be removed from the secure preparation area within the test site prior to testing. After testing, any and all prep notes must be turned in to the test coordinator and destroyed.

Preparation for Sign Interpretation

Test Directions

The staff interpreter(s) may review the standard test directions two to three days prior to the test in order to plan a signing strategy for delivering the general test directions. Test directions are available online and in the *Periodic Assessment Manual*. Interpreters working with students who have deaf-blindness and will be planning and providing tactile sign support should, two to three days prior to the day of testing, review the braille form test directions that are provided with the braille version of the test. This will require locating the form that has already been shipped for the student.

Delivery

Test Directions

The interpreter, in selecting and providing signs, must stay precisely consistent with the meaning of the written general directions that are provided to all students. Student questions regarding directions must be answered in such a way that clarification provided remains within the boundaries of the original general information provided in the written directions.

Test Questions

Note: During test administration, the student may prefer to ask for only certain parts of an item to be interpreted and may not need everything presented in sign. Make this determination as soon as possible before testing.

When two staff partners work together, one person signs (interprets) according to the plan notes as the other staff partner monitors the delivery. As necessary, one interpreter may relieve the other, but all passage-based item sets must be interpreted by the same person. Any interpreter changes must occur at natural break points in the flow of the assessment: interpreters must never change within an item or item set.

Important! All documented notes created and/or used for the signing plan must be destroyed immediately after the test session.

- Only the actual text or the printed values or labels within an item or within an item’s graphics may be signed. Graphic representations may not otherwise be interpreted for any student.
- Signs and their associated facial expressions or body postures must be carefully produced so that the student is never provided any kind of biasing cue or clue to the item.
- Elaboration or clarification of test items is **not** permitted. Only the communication of the same information found in the text of the item is permitted. Sign interpretation may only convey the specific content written within the item and no more.
- Mathematical terms for which the sign creates a picture illustrating the concept must be finger-spelled to avoid giving a visual cue or information that is not provided to other students.
 - ~ Terms that must be finger-spelled include, but are not limited to, *parallel lines*, *perpendicular*, *perimeter*, *circumference*, and shape names. If, for some students, finger-spelling is not useful, the only allowable alternative to finger-spelling such visually rich mathematical terms would be to simply point to those terms onscreen as they come up instead of signing them. Either way, the student must recognize the word—in finger-spelled form or in print.
- Interpretations may be repeated, but the interpretation must be done consistently each time.

Required Testing Environment and Other Supports

Group and Individual Administration

Sign interpretation of test directions may be done in a group setting. Interpretation of the full test (including test items) must be done in an individualized test setting.

Interpreter Appearance

Persons serving in the interpreter role should wear simple plain clothing that does not distract the viewer or interfere with the perception of the intended sign. The interpreter’s hands, facial expression and body posture must be clearly visible to the student. Jewelry can interfere with sign presentation and should not be worn by the sign interpreter. In addition:

- The interpreter should mouth-speak while signing for the student.
- The interpreter’s mouth should not be covered when speaking.
- If the interpreter has a beard or moustache, it should be trimmed so as not to obstruct the student’s ability to read lips.
- The interpreter must also voice for the partner interpreter what is signed by the student.
- The interpreter should, if needed, remind the student that his or her responses must be given in English.

Rooms

Lighting should be non-glaring and sufficient to avoid shadowing that could obscure the signs produced. The position of the sign interpreter should be such that the student has a clear, direct, and close view of the communication.

Additional Supports

When a student needs sign interpretation, consider also the likely need for certain additional supports that must be planned for and documented in the PNP and on the student's answer document. For example:

- Extended time
- Supervised breaks (to switch interpreters during a long or intense test session)
- Small Group Administration or Individual Administration
- Audio Environment (The student should be allowed to use any amplification device the student typically uses.)
- Visual Environment (Distractions should be limited.)

ACT Aspire Signed Interpreter Agreement (SEE or ASL Support)

(This document may be photocopied if multiple interpreters are needed.)

Complete this document if you are providing American Sign Language (ASL) or Signed Exact English (SEE) interpretation for a student who has been determined by the local educational authority to be qualified and appropriate for this accessibility support.

Test Site: _____

Test Date: _____ **Test Coordinator:** _____

Interpreter Name: _____

Student Name: _____ **Student Reference Number:** _____

Required procedures for signed interpretation of ACT Aspire tests can be found in appendix C of the ACT Aspire *Accessibility User's Guide*. As sign interpreter, you are required to review and comply with these procedures.

The sign interpretation support is permitted for qualified students during the mathematics and science tests only.

If ACT Aspire determines that any explanation or additional information has been provided to a student, that any test materials were not read accurately within the procedures described, or that the reader did not meet ACT Aspire qualifications for testing personnel, the student's scores will be canceled.

ACT Aspire requires both the test coordinator and the sign interpreter to provide signatures to the following statement:

I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to administer the tests in accordance with the ACT Aspire policies. I further assure ACT Aspire that the signing support provided is a precisely accurate representation of the passages and items as required by the specific signing procedures.

Test Coordinator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Interpreter Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Indicate the tests where any portion was signed by this interpreter:

Mathematics _____ **Science** _____

This document is for local educational agency use only. Do not return to ACT Aspire.

Appendix D: Bilingual Word-To-Word Dictionaries

Students at any grade level who are evaluated as able to benefit from the use of word-to-word dictionaries may use this linguistic support. The dictionary must be one from the [ACT-Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries list](#), containing only word-to-word translations and having no definitions.

See the following chart for a list of which ACT Aspire tests may be assisted with an ACT-approved dictionary.

Test	Yes	No
English		X
Mathematics	X	
Reading		X
Science	X	
Writing	X	

Responsibilities

To ensure appropriate use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries, the following roles have specific responsibilities.

ACT Responsibilities

- Produce and make available the ACT-Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries list.
- Answer questions from students or testing staff about the use of the bilingual dictionaries.

Student Responsibilities

- Bring his or her own dictionary on test day.
- Confirm that the dictionary is on the approved dictionaries list before arriving at the test site.
- Ensure the dictionary is free of writing, highlighting, notes, or other markings before arriving at the test site.

Note: Students may not write notes or make any kind of markings in their bilingual dictionaries.

Testing Staff Responsibilities

- Confirm that the student's dictionary is from the approved list prior to the start of testing.
- Check the dictionary for writing and highlighting before and after testing.

Note: If writing or highlighting is found prior to testing, inform the student that the dictionary cannot be used and instruct that it be stored out of sight.

- Monitor students for prohibited behavior.
 - ~ If a student is found using an unapproved dictionary during testing, dismiss the student and void his or her test.
 - ~ If a student is seen writing in his or her dictionary during testing or if writing is found in the dictionary before the student leaves, dismiss the student and void his or her test.

Procedure for State Authority Approval of an Unlisted Word-to-Word Dictionary

If a student is already using and is familiar with a word-to-word dictionary that is not listed in the current ACT-approved list, the governing state educational authority may choose to approve the use of that dictionary.

State Educational Authority Responsibilities

- Determine that the dictionary meets the required criteria. (See “ACT Criteria for Approval of Word-to-Word Bilingual Dictionaries” on page 2 of the [ACT-Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries list](#).)
- Provide a copy of the dictionary title and ISBN number to ACT.
- Ensure the dictionary is used according to the policies and procedures listed in this manual.
- Support a valid test result after the use of the dictionary.

Appendix E: Procedures for Local Delivery of Read-Aloud Support

Definition of this Support

For accessibility purposes, a human reader (referred to as a “personal reader”) may be allowed to assist test takers with visual or print disabilities by providing word decoding support in the English language for the printed text and, in some situations, by providing general navigation support through the test. When there is clear evidence of student need and when the specific procedures specified below are carefully followed, this support does not compromise the assessment of mathematics and science skills being tested.

Allowed Content Areas

Read-aloud of test items is permitted for Interim Mathematics, and Science tests **only**.

As standard practice, test directions are read aloud for all content areas. For specific additional information regarding the read-aloud of test directions, see:

- The *Reading Test Directions Aloud to Students* section of this guide
- ACT Aspire *Periodic Assessment Guide*

Who May Deliver Personal Reader Support

When read-aloud support is locally provided, it must be delivered by an appropriately trained educational staff member. The read-aloud support may not be delivered by a parent, guardian, other relative, or friend of the student being tested.

Individual Test Administration

An individualized test administration (1:1) is needed and very strongly recommended for the administration of all human-delivered read-aloud accommodations. Providing test support through a human reader is not preferred practice and should only be used in those rare occasions when the need is clear and there is no other choice. When read-aloud support is needed, the use of the computer audio reading support is highly preferred and recommended wherever it is possible to accomplish and reasonable for the student.

The procedures outlined in this document are **required** of the local staff to properly implement this support. These procedures require careful staff preparation using this document and significant effort to learn the proper reading procedure for each content area. Specific and detailed reading procedures for each content area are provided later in this document.

Rationale for 1:1 Test Administration

Different students work at different paces. They think about an item in different ways and have different parts of the text that they need repeated at different times. Students are distracted and often disrupted by each other when sitting in any size group where even one person is receiving a human read-aloud support.

If, in a small group, all are receiving this same support from one reader, then all are expected to process the same text stimuli at the same rate with the same number of repetitions, and thereby experience even less control than in the individual administration, where they already are fully dependent upon another person assisting them to read. In a group setting, students are unlikely to ask for or use the support they need (for example, repetition of a section that was already read aloud).

Furthermore, when any student is verbalizing his or her needs aloud for reading support and specifying which sections need to be reread, the student's needs are publicly displayed to all others—including the reader, any teacher, and all peers nearby. This creates a situation where the student who truly requires the support may be embarrassed and discouraged from asking for it or for the natural repetition needed to clearly understand the text. This is a dehumanizing situation.

Data on the use of the read-aloud support show dramatic drops with the age of the student. It is possible that these students all become strong readers as they grow older, but it is more likely that the loss of personal dignity inherent in this support may be one reason for this finding. The combination of humiliation, lack of personal user control, and loss of needed stimulus repetition (automatically available to independent readers), can significantly limit or harm the expression of reading comprehension and analysis skills that are present.

Individualized test administration of all read-aloud support is strongly recommended for these reasons.

Benefits of Online Delivery

Online delivery of read-aloud accommodation supports, when headphones are used, provides a powerful solution to virtually all of the concerns that exist with human readers. It also gives the experience of personal control back to the student, resulting in a standardized, cost-efficient, long term solution that is consistent with 21st-century social, academic, and workplace technologies. In online delivery, there is no concern about the delivery of this support to students within large groups, assuming students are using headphones. Online delivery produces a virtual 1:1 experience that is both standardized and of high quality—while providing the user privacy and dignity.

Individualized administration for all human read-aloud support is the best practice recommendation.

For your local administration of human-reader accommodations, refer to the official policy on test administration that is communicated by your governing educational authority. Readers must carefully review and follow the procedures provided in this appendix.

General Procedure for Providing the Read-Aloud Support

The human, personal reader support is not a substitute for the student interacting with the text; rather, it is a means of facilitating the student's access to the test. The read-aloud accommodation provides support only for decoding of text (word identification), and sometimes for navigation through the text. The read-aloud accommodation does **not** help the reader to comprehend any decoded words or written elements. Prior to administration, the educator should ensure that a student is familiar with the delivery method used by the personal reader. The testing situation must not be the first time the student has experienced this kind of support.

All test items must be read exactly as they are printed in the student's test. The student must be instructed to follow along in the test as the reader reads the text aloud. The student may ask for any portion of the Mathematics or Science test to be reread as often as necessary within the time allowed for that test. Each time a re-read is requested, the reader must read the requested portion of the text exactly as it is presented, with no explanation, no paraphrasing, and no additional information provided to the student through the reading.

All ACT Aspire test questions rely on the student being able to comprehend and respond to the test materials exactly as written. Any additional information, explanation, or translation could affect what the tests are designed to measure and is therefore not allowed.

These procedures are focused upon the reading of material *within* the test, after the test directions have already been read.

Cued Speech as a Read-Aloud Support

Cued speech is defined as a formal and systematic way to provide visual phonemic access to the sounds of the words. This support functions much like an oral read-aloud accommodation for qualified users and may be used in conjunction with read-aloud. Cued speech does not add interpreted meaning to the communication. It is not an interpretation but is a direct manual representation of sound. The only augmentation to the communication is the addition of phonemic (sound recognition) cues. Cued Speech as defined here is permitted **ONLY** for those content tests where read-aloud or TTS Audio support is allowed. As noted above, permitted content areas include Mathematics and Science tests. Cued speech may **NOT** be used to support the Reading or English test administration for any student, as it would invalidate one of the essential constructs being measured by these tests (decoding).

Note: If cued speech is used in conjunction with read-aloud, TTS Audio, or a signed presentation, then these supports must also be identified in the PNP to document the full context of this support. Staff who provide cued speech support must be appropriately trained and experienced in providing this support and should, just like staff who provide oral read-aloud support also sign and locally submit the security statement at the end of this appendix (where required by the local governing educational authority).

Specific Procedures for Staff Serving as Readers

To maintain test integrity, you, as reader, must understand and follow all appropriate procedures. Review the appropriate test materials and specific testing procedures prior to test administration.

The student depends on the reader to read the test questions accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice throughout the test. The testing student may require all or portions of the test to be read aloud.

Your task is to read the test passages, test questions, answer choices, and text in the graphics. Do not try to solve problems or determine the correct answer as you read test questions, as this may result in an unconscious pause or change in inflection that could be misleading or disconcerting to the student. The expression on your face should remain neutral. Do not look at the student or smile or frown to indicate approval or disapproval.

Read at a normal pace.

Pause after reading the question number and before reading the question itself.

Read each question as clearly and consistently as possible. Give special emphasis to words or phrases printed in bold or italic type, set in all capital letters, or underlined, and tell the student that the words or phrases are printed that way. Do not give your own emphasis to words not emphasized in print.

Be familiar with the specific words, terms, symbols, and signs of the test contents. If you find an unfamiliar word or one that you are not sure how to pronounce, advise the test taker of your uncertainty about the word and spell it.

If there can be any doubt about the intended word you are reading (as in the case of words with the same pronunciation but different spellings), spell the word after you have pronounced it.

Spell any words requested by the student.

Pronounce acronyms as words whenever possible (NASA), then continue by voicing the initial letters (N-A-S-A, N-E-A, U-N).

Do not get into conversation about the test questions, but respond to the student's questions by repeating the questions, words, or instructions as needed.

When reading passages, pay attention to all punctuation marks. Read the passage through once so that the student can grasp the content of the passage.

Some students may then ask for the passage to be read through a second time with punctuation marks indicated. When this request is made or if required by the item, indicate all punctuation found within those lines.

Orienting description: If the student has blindness, he or she will also have a companion braille-tactile graphic booklet to use. The student should be tracking along in this companion booklet as the item is read aloud exactly as printed. It is permissible, however, to provide a navigational orienting description to a visually impaired student if needed. Such description must have no relation to content. It functions only to name and roughly locate the parts contained in the item, as shown in the following example: "This item has a statement followed by two tables. At the end of the item there is a question followed by four answer choices for you to consider. Be sure to find these in your braille booklet." You may state the parts of the item and their physical location so long as you provide no further information.

Special Considerations for Selected-Response Tests

When reading a numbered item, say "question" and the number before each item.

If the item is a selected-response item, say "choice" and the letter before each option.

Be particularly careful to equally stress each answer option and read all answer options before waiting for a response. The student will record the answer.

If the student chooses an answer before you have read all the answer choices, ask whether you should read the other answer options.

Allow the student to pause before responding. However, if the student pauses for a considerable time following your reading of the answer choices, say: "Do you want me to read the question again or any part of it?" In re-reading questions, be careful to avoid any special emphasis on words or phrases not emphasized in the printed copy with bold or italic type, capital letters, or underlines.

Specific Procedures for Reading the Mathematics and Science Tests

It is permissible to read any text and numbers presented in graphs or tables. If necessary, orient the student to the graph or table before reading content (for orienting details, see graph and table information below). It is not permissible to describe or interpret information contained in the graph or table in any way.

Graphs

1. Read the **graph title**.
2. Read the **values** on the x - and y -axes—not the contents. Read the horizontal axis first, from left to right, and then read the vertical axis, from bottom to top.

Tables

1. Read the **table title** and indicate how many columns and how many rows are in the table.
2. Read the **column headings** from left to right.
3. Read the contents of each row from left to right.

Table E1 gives several examples of how to read mathematical and scientific terms.

Table E1. How to Read Mathematical and Scientific Abbreviations, Expressions, Symbols, and Numbers on ACT Aspire Tests

Description	Example	Read as:
Abbreviations	km, cm, ft, μg	kilometer, centimeter, foot (feet), microgram
Dashes	3–9	three through nine
Date	February 6, 1987	February sixth, nineteen eighty-seven
Ellipses	2, 4, 6, ...	two, four, six, pause, dot, dot, dot
Operations with boxes or shapes	$\Delta + 3 = 8$	Triangle plus three equals eight
Parenthesis	(3×7)	open parenthesis, three times seven, closed parenthesis
Decimal Points	0.00897	Zero point zero, zero, eight, nine, seven
Fractions*	$\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $20/35$, $1/12$	One half, three fourths, twenty over thirty-five, one over twelve
Large whole numbers	12,356	Twelve thousand, three hundred, fifty-six
Exponents	8^2 , 4^3 , 6^4 , 3^{-4} , $2^{-\frac{1}{2}}$	eight squared, four cubed, six to the fourth power, three to the negative fourth power, two to the negative one-half power
Roots	$\sqrt{8}$, $5\sqrt{8}$	the square root of eight, five times the square root of eight

Description	Example	Read as:
Symbols	°F	degrees Fahrenheit
	°C	degrees Celsius
	+	plus
	-	minus
	=	equals
	>	is greater than
	<	is less than
	≥	is greater than or equal to
	≤	is less than or equal to
	≈	is approximately equal to
	5	the absolute value of five
	#	number
	%	percent
	/	or
	×	times
	·	times
	∠	angle
	π	pi
	-7	negative seven
	\$4.89	four dollars and eighty-nine cents

* Fraction reading rule: Read common fractions (where the numerator is less than the denominator) by presenting the numerator as the number it represents and the denominator as the ordinal number using two words for the whole presentation. This rule applies to fractions that have a numerator and denominator >0 that is less than or equal to 19. Improper fractions should always be read in the format of "X over Y."

ACT Aspire Reader's Agreement

(This document may be photocopied if multiple locally provided readers are needed.)

Complete this document **if you are providing a local read-aloud of test passages or questions** for a student who has been determined by the local educational authority to be qualified and appropriate for this accessibility support.

Test Site: _____

Test Date(s): _____ **Test Coordinator:** _____

Reader Name: _____

Student Name: _____ **Student Reference Number:** _____

The ACT Aspire *Accessibility User's Guide* contains the documented set of required procedures for providing local staff read-aloud (see Appendix E). When administering the read-aloud support to a qualified student, the procedures described in this guide are required and must be followed carefully.

As a reader, you are required to review and comply with the procedures as documented in the *Accessibility User's Guide*. The read-aloud support is permitted for qualified students **only** during the mathematics and science tests.

Test Passages and Test Questions

- The *Accessibility User's Guide* contains the required local read-aloud administration procedures.

Test Directions

Specific procedural information regarding the read-aloud of test directions is found here:

- ACT Aspire *Accessibility User's Guide* section "Reading Test Directions Aloud to Students," page 9
- ACT Aspire *Periodic Assessment Manual*

If ACT Aspire determines that any explanation or additional information has been provided to a student, that any test materials were not read verbatim, or that the reader did not meet ACT Aspire qualifications for testing personnel, the student's scores will be canceled.

I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to administer the tests in accordance with the ACT Aspire policies. I further assure ACT Aspire that the reading support provided is a precisely accurate representation of the passages and items as required by the specific reading procedures.

Reader Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Indicate the tests where any portion was read by this interpreter:

Mathematics _____ **Science** _____

This document is for local educational agency use only. Do not return to ACT.

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