GUIDELINES FOR READ ALOUD, 2026-2027

When a student cannot access text-to-speech, an embedded resource available on the Smarter Balanced and Science Assessments, the student may be eligible to work with a test reader. A test reader is a test administrator who provides an oral presentation of the assessment text to an eligible student. The student depends on the test reader to read the test questions accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice throughout the test. The test reader must follow *Guidelines for Read Aloud, 2025-2026* presented here. The guiding principle in reading aloud is to ensure that the student has access to test content, equivalent to that of students without this accommodation.

On Smarter Balanced and Science Assessments, test readers are allowable across all grades as a ***designated support*** for mathematics, science, and ELA ***items*** as appropriate (**not** ELA reading passages). Test readers are allowable for ELA reading passages as a documented ***accommodation*** in grades 6–8 (in addition to mathematics, science, and ELA items). Note that this accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students (estimated to be approximately 1–2% of students with disabilities participating in a general assessment). For more information on available resources, please see the 2026-2027 edition of the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guide (UAAG).*

QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEST READERS

- Test readers must be licensed educators familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the test content and related conventions for standard oral communication.
- Test readers must have either native fluency with reading and speaking English at a secondary or post-secondary level, or acquired fluency comparable to CEFR level B2 or higher.

PREPARATION

- Test readers must be trained in accordance with Nevada Department of Education test security and administration procedures.
- Test readers must read and sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to test administration.
- Test readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test environment and format in advance of the testing session. Having a working familiarity with the test environment and format will help facilitate reading of the test. Test readers may wish to review a ***practice*** test (https://wbte.drcedirect.com/NV/portals/nv/summ) to become familiar with the assessment.
- Test readers should have a strong working knowledge of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility and accommodations options and features available on Smarter Balanced and Science assessments.
- Test readers should be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan if the student for whom they are reading has access to additional designated supports and/or accommodations. This will ensure that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.
- In addition to a test reader, students may make use of any other approved specialized tools or equipment during the test as appropriate and in accordance with the 2026-2027 edition of the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guide (UAAG)*. Test readers

should be familiar with any assistive technology or approved supports the student requires.

- Test readers should have extensive practice in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before working directly with a student.
- The test reader should be knowledgeable of procedures for reading aloud text by content area (see the table at the end of *Guidelines for Read Aloud, 2026-2027* regarding read aloud for mathematical expressions).
- The test reader should meet with the student in advance and inform the student of the parameters of the support.
- Unless otherwise specified by a student's IEP or 504 plan, the test reader does not have a role in manipulating the test or assisting with any other support tools. Test readers should be ready with appropriate script that reinforces the parameters during the test session.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Test readers must administer assessments in a setting that prevents the interaction between reader and student from interrupting other test-takers, or inadvertently revealing test content or student answers to other test-takers.
- Read each question exactly as written as clearly as possible.
- Throughout the exam, strive to communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Avoid gesturing, head movements, or any verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words not otherwise emphasized in text.
- Avoid conversing with the student about test questions as this would be a violation of test security; respond to the student's questions by repeating the item, words or instructions verbatim as needed.
- Do not paraphrase, interpret, define, or translate any items, words, or instructions as this would be a violation of test security.
- Spell any words requested by the student.
- Adjust your reading speed and volume if requested by the student.

POST ADMINISTRATION

- The test reader (test administrator) must collect all scratch paper, rough drafts, and test tickets immediately at the end of the testing session, and return them to the school test coordinator in accordance with the school's test security plan.
- The test reader must not discuss any portion of the test with others.

ENGLISH USAGE/CONVENTIONS

- Punctuation: Read all text as punctuated (e.g., pause at periods; raise intonation for questions). Do not verbalize punctuation marks other than ellipsis and quotation marks.
- Ellipses: When an ellipsis is used to signify missing text in a sentence, pause briefly, and read as 'dot, dot, dot.'

- Quotations: Quotation marks should be verbalized as “quote” and “end quote” at the beginning and end of quoted material, respectively.
- Emphasis: When words are printed in boldface, italics, or capitals, tell the student that the words are printed that way. In order not to provide an unfair advantage to students receiving this support, test readers should be cautious not to emphasize words not already emphasized in print. Emphasis is appropriate when italics, underlining, or bold is used in the prompt, question, or answers.
- Misspellings: In some cases a test item may present a word or phrase that is intentionally misspelled as part of the assessment. In these instances the student is required to respond in a specific way. When presented with intentionally misspelled words test readers should not attempt to read the word(s) aloud as pronunciation is somewhat subjective.

IMAGES/GRAPHICS

- Before describing a picture or graphic, the test reader should determine whether the details of the picture are necessary to understanding and responding to the item(s). In many cases, an image will be used to accompany a passage or reading excerpt as a piece of visual interest that is not essential in responding to the item.
- Describe the image/graphic as concisely as possible following a logical progression. Focus on providing necessary information and ignoring the superfluous. Use grade-appropriate language when describing the image/graphic.
- Read the title or caption, if available.
- Any text that appears in the body of an image may be read to a student. Read text in images in the order most suited for the student’s needs. Often the reader moves top to bottom, left to right, in a clockwise direction, or general to specific in accordance with teaching practices.

PASSAGES

- Read the passage in its entirety as punctuated (e.g., pauses at periods; raised intonation for questions). Do not verbalize punctuation marks other than ellipsis and quotation marks as noted above.
- If the student requires or asks for a specific section of the passage to be re-read with the punctuation indicated, the test reader should re-read those specific lines within the passage and indicate all punctuation found within those lines as many times as requested by the student.
- When test questions refer to particular lines of a passage, read the lines referenced as though they are part of the item.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

- Before reading a graphic organizer, the test reader should discern the most appropriate and logical manner in which to present the information. In general, information should be presented from broad to specific as indicated by the visual components of the document. The test reader should read the terms exactly as indicated in the graphic organizer. No other information about it should be articulated. For example, the test reader should not create sentences if information is bulleted or appears in a title or label.
- Use common grade-appropriate language throughout the item and the test when referring to graphic organizers and their attributes (labels, blank cells, stems, etc.).

MATHEMATICAL EXPRESSIONS

- Mathematical expressions must be read precisely and with care to avoid misrepresentation by a student who has no visual reference. For mathematics items involving algebraic expressions or other mathematical notation, it may be preferable for the reader to silently read the mathematical notations or the entire question before reading it aloud to the student.
- Test readers must read mathematical expressions with technical accuracy. Similar expressions should be treated consistently.
- In general, numbers and symbols can be read according to their common English usage for the student's grade level.
- Numbers greater than 99, however, should be read as individual numbers.
- Additional examples may be found in the table below.
- Abbreviations and acronyms should be read as full words. For example, 10 cm needs to be read as "ten centimeters." Some abbreviations may be read differently by different readers. For example, cm^3 may be read as "cubic centimeters" or "centimeters cubed."

Test Reader Guidance for Mathematics

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Decimal numbers	0.056	"zero point zero five six"
	4.37	"four point three seven"
Fractions – common	$\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{4}{5}$	"one half, one fourth, two thirds, four fifths" (other common fractions include "sixths, eighths, tenths")
Fractions - not common read as "numerator over denominator"	$\frac{14}{25}$	"fourteen over twenty-five"
	$\frac{487}{6972}$	"four eight seven over six nine seven two"
Large whole numbers	632,407,981	"six three two comma four zero seven comma nine eight one"
	45,000,689,112	"four five comma zero zero zero comma six eight nine comma one one two"
Mixed numbers - read with "and" between whole number and fraction	$3\frac{1}{2}$	"three and one-half"
	$57\frac{3}{4}$	"fifty-seven and three fourths"
Percent	62%	"sixty-two percent"
	7.5%	"seven point five percent"
	0.23%	"zero point two three percent"