Accessibility within the STAAR Program

Educator Guide

2020–2021
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# Resources

## Online Resource Materials

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020–2021 District and Campus Coordinator Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://txetests.com/dccr/">http://txetests.com/dccr/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>LPAC Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/lpac/">http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/lpac/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online testing technology</td>
<td><a href="http://TexasAssessment.gov/administrators/technology/">http://TexasAssessment.gov/administrators/technology/</a></td>
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<td>STAAR and STAAR Spanish Released Test Questions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAAR Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/">http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAAR Spanish Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/State_of_Texas_Assessments_of_Academic_Readiness_(STAAR)/STAAR_Spanish_Resources/">http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/State_of_Texas_Assessments_of_Academic_Readiness_(STAAR)/STAAR_Spanish_Resources/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Assessment Division</td>
<td><a href="http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/">http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Purpose of This Guide

This guide is provided to familiarize educators with features and supports that increase the accessibility of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) for all students. Accessibility features are available to any student who regularly benefits from their use during instruction. Accommodations, or designated supports, are changes to assessment materials or procedures that are intended to allow test takers to demonstrate their knowledge of the content being tested without the format of the assessment, the non-tested language, or the type of response needed to answer the questions being barriers. General information outlining the updated accommodation policies is available in this guide. In addition, specific examples of the online features and supports offered on STAAR, including STAAR Spanish, are provided. All information in this guide, as well as additional resources about accessibility on STAAR, can be accessed online through the resources on the previous page or using the hyperlinks embedded in the text.
Understanding STAAR Accessibility

The goal of STAAR and STAAR Spanish accessibility is to ensure that each student can interact appropriately with the content, presentation, and response modes of the state assessments. In order to meet this goal, the STAAR accessibility features and designated supports are designed to allow all test takers to demonstrate their knowledge of the content being tested without the format of the assessment, the non-tested language, or the type of response needed to answer the questions being barriers. The various accessibility features and designated supports made available on STAAR paper and online tests are also designed to be the same or similar to those accommodations commonly used during classroom instruction.

STAAR is available on paper and online as indicated for the grades and subjects listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Paper Available</th>
<th>Online Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>3–8 and EOC</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAAR Spanish</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAAR Alternate 2</td>
<td>3–8 and EOC</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accessibility Within the STAAR Program

For STAAR and STAAR Spanish, accessibility falls into three categories: accessibility features, locally-approved designated supports, and designated supports requiring Texas Education Agency (TEA) approval. It is important to refer to the individual designated support policy documents on the Accommodation Resources webpage for comprehensive information about the procedures and materials within each of these categories.

Accessibility Features

Accessibility features may be provided to students based on their needs. In general, these procedures and materials are available to any student who regularly benefits from their use during instruction; however, a student cannot be required to use them during a state assessment. Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that test administrators understand the proper implementation of these procedures and use of these materials. In some cases, a student may need to complete the test in a separate setting in order to eliminate distractions to other students and to ensure that the security and confidentiality of the test are maintained.
Locally-Approved Designated Supports

Locally-approved designated supports include accommodations that may be made available to students who meet eligibility criteria. The decision should be based on the eligibility criteria and aimed at addressing a student’s consistent academic struggle in a specific area even after intensive instruction and remediation. The appropriate team of people at the campus level as indicated in each policy document determines eligibility. The decision to use a designated support during a state assessment should be made on an individual student basis and should take into consideration the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the support during classroom instruction and classroom testing. This does not mean that the support must be used every day during instruction. Routine accommodation, or designated support use, as defined by TEA, means that the student has used the support often enough during classroom instruction and testing that the student is able to use it independently during the state assessment. (Independent use is applicable to some designated supports [e.g., Calculation Aids] but may not be to others [e.g., Oral Administration].) In addition, the support has been proven to be effective in meeting the student’s specific needs as evidenced by student scores or teacher observations with and without support use. For more information on designated supports, access the TEA’s Accommodation Resources webpage.

Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval

For designated supports requiring TEA approval, districts must submit an Accommodation Request Form found on TEA’s Accommodation Resources webpage. Accommodation Request Forms must be submitted to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in a timely manner to allow committee members the ability to process and review requests, as well as communicate to districts the appropriate procedures for administering a TEA-Approved Designated Support. Requests should be submitted no later than one week prior to the individual student’s test administration window. For circumstances that require an accommodation request but occur after this time (e.g., newly enrolled student, medical emergency, updated admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee decision) the district testing coordinator should contact TEA’s Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536 and ask to speak to a member of the Accommodation Task Force for further instructions. This type of support must be documented in the student’s paperwork as “pending TEA approval.”
Considering Paper Versus Online

A student may take STAAR on paper for one subject and online for another. The mode of testing should not be documented in the student's paperwork and should be determined closer to testing once the student has been given the opportunity to practice online.

Due consideration should be given to the mode in which various designated supports can be offered. A braille assessment of mathematics or science can be provided only with a paper form; a braille assessment of English language reading, writing, or social studies can be provided online using a refreshable braille display.

Content and language supports are embedded online supports. Paper versions of these accommodations are available only to a small population of students who have applied for and received a TEA-approved special administration form designed for students who cannot access computers or technology.

Other supports, such as mathematics manipulatives or oral administration, can be provided to students taking either an online or paper test.

District testing coordinators must review completed special administration request forms for STAAR with Embedded Supports (English and Spanish), Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) reading, and TELPAS listening and speaking, and verify that the information provided meets the criteria for a special administration. Refer to the Special Administration of an Online Assessment section of the Coordinator Resources for more information. A complete list of all accessibility features and designated supports, including availability on paper or online, can be found on the following page. Set up instructions for embedded online designated supports can be found on the Set up Student Online Designated Supports webpage.
## Accessibility Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accessibility Feature</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amplification Devices</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Dictionary</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Overlay/Color Setting</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Reminders to Stay on Task</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighter, Colored Pencil, etc.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Administration</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnifying Devices/Zoom</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize Distractions (e.g., stress ball, headphones, music)</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopying or Enlarging Non-Secure Test Materials</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Marker/Guideline</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection Devices</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Aloud Writing Prompt to Student</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Test Aloud to Self</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Assistance for Grade 3 Math</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scratch Paper/Notes Tool/Sticky Notes</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing Test Directions</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating Test Directions</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing Assistance for Grade 4 Writing</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Designated Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated Supports</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Transcribing</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braille/Refreshable Braille†</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculation Aids</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and Language Supports</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Time</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Structured Reminders</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Print</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulating Test Materials</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics Manipulatives</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Administration/Text-to-Speech</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed Administration/Signed Videos</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling Assistance</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Aids</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
<td>✓ ✓*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complex Transcribing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Day</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics Scribe</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These features and supports are embedded within the secure browser application. All other accommodations are administered independent of the online system.

†Refreshable Braille is only available on English versions of grades 3–8 reading, grades 4 and 7 writing, grade 8 social studies, English I, English II, and U.S. History.

§Content and language supports are available on paper via approval of a special administration request.
Online Accessibility Features

Accessibility features are available to all students taking STAAR and STAAR Spanish on paper or online. Some of these features are embedded in the online system, while others (e.g., individual administration, general reminders to stay on task) are not. The following figures describe the accessibility features embedded in the online system and provide their associated icon. These features are automatically available on all STAAR assessments (i.e., mathematics, reading, writing, science, and social studies) and do not need to be activated in the online system.

**Figure 1. Zoom**
(available in English and Spanish)

The student can click on the Zoom icon at the top of the screen to enlarge or reduce the size of the screen.

When the Zoom tool is activated, the student can change the screen size and use the arrows to move the screen.

**Figure 2. Color Setting** (available in English and Spanish)

The student can click the Color icon at the top of the screen to select from 12 different color schemes.

The Default button allows the student to reset the presentation back to the original white background with black text.

When a color scheme is selected, the option will apply to the screen for the entire test. The student may change a selection at any time.
Figure 3. Guideline (available in English and Spanish)

The Guideline tool helps a student focus attention on specific lines of text.

When the Guideline tool is activated, a tinted bar appears at the top of the screen. The student can move the bar up and down the selection.

If the student wants the guideline to remain on one line, the lock must be turned on (locked). The student must turn the lock off to move the guideline again.

NOTE: On certain tablet devices, the guideline is locked as soon as it appears. Instead of moving the guideline, students scroll content through the guideline as they read.

Figure 4. Highlight (available in English and Spanish)

Clicking Highlight in the menu highlights the text. Clicking the highlighted text and choosing Erase Highlights removes the highlighting.

To show the Highlight menu, the student will click and scroll with the mouse to select the text. Once specific text has been selected, the Highlight menu appears.
When the student activates the Pencil tool, a menu appears that allows students to choose options. The Pencil tool allows a student to make marks and annotations. The Pencil tool works best for noting important concepts in test questions. However, there is a limit on the number of marks allowable per question and per test. If a student reaches this limit, that student may receive an error message and will have to delete some marks. The student should use scratch paper for drafting text or solving equations. If a student navigates to another question and then returns to a previously seen question, the pencil marks will be available for the student to review on previous questions.

NOTE: The Pencil tool functions differently on certain tablet devices. Students should practice using the Pencil tool prior to taking the test.

The Sticky Notes tool allows a student to make notes about what the student is reading. There is a 500-character count limit for each sticky note. Many sticky notes can be activated at the same time. There is a limit of 15 sticky notes per panel. The question panel, on the left, and the answer panel, on the right, are treated separately and can hold 15 sticky notes each. If a student navigates to another question and then returns to a previously seen question, the sticky notes will be available for the student to review on previous questions.

A student can minimize the Sticky Notes tool to keep it from blocking the test content.

Clicking and dragging on the lower right-hand corner of the sticky note can resize the sticky notes window.

Once activated, the Sticky Notes tool can be filled with notes and can be moved to different places within a screen.
Online Designated Supports

Designated supports are available to students who meet the eligibility criteria as determined and documented by the appropriate team of people at the local level. Some of these supports are embedded in the online system, while others are not. More specific information can be found in the individual policy documents on the Accommodation Resources webpage.

Supports not embedded in the online system may be made available to students testing online as well as to those testing on paper. The test administrator will provide the supports to the student on the day of the test. For example, a student needing supplemental aids will need to use the type of assistance he or she uses in the classroom (e.g., grade-appropriate grammar and mechanics rules, mnemonic devices), as supplemental aids are not embedded into the online system.

Some designated supports available to students taking a paper test are also available as embedded online accommodations. For example, a student needing reading support can receive an Oral/Signed Administration of the paper test booklet from the test administrator or can take the test online using text-to-speech, speech-to-text or American Sign Language (ASL) videos.

Content and language supports are available only as embedded online accommodations. In order to receive these supports, a student must test online. The delivery of an online assessment offers an opportunity to provide these types of supports in a standardized way to students who use similar accommodations in the classroom and find this type of assessment to be the most appropriate and accessible for them. Content and language supports have accommodations in the form of pop-ups, rollovers, supplementary materials, and prereading text. These supports are only applied to particular selections and test questions based on expert judgments about which supports are likely to make a question more accessible to students.

The following figures describe those designated supports embedded in the online testing system.
Clicking on the Basic Calculator tool will open a calculator that can be placed anywhere on the screen.

Basic Calculator is a four-function calculator that the student can use to help with math and science calculations only. It must be set as a personal needs and preferences (PNP) in the Assessment Management System for grades 3–7; it is automatically available for grade 8.
Figure 8. Text-to-speech (available in English and Spanish)

When the student selects a specific group of text, a menu appears. The selected text is read aloud when the student clicks the Speak icon at the top of the screen to open a panel of audio controls, including the Play button and the Click Word button.

The student can click the Speak icon at the top of the screen to open a panel of audio controls, including the volume and speaking rate.

The student can click the Audio icon at the top of the screen to open a panel of audio controls, including the volume and speaking rate.

When the Play button is activated, the question and answer choices are highlighted as they are read aloud in their entirety or until the student stops playback.

The rate at which the audio is read can be increased or decreased by moving the Speaking Rate slider.

The student can increase or decrease the volume of the audio by moving the Volume slider.

Districts should test the device audio setting prior to launching the application to ensure the sound is on and working as expected. The volume can be adjusted as needed by using the volume navigation.

The Click Word button allows the student to hear only one word at a time.
Upon clicking the Microphone icon, the student will see the microphone icon highlighted and the word “Listening” indicating that speech-to-text has been activated. Automatic punctuation is turned off. Students should speak any necessary punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point, etc.) via voice command on English version of the tests only. Students should speak clearly and at a normal volume and pace. If the tool is not picking up words, students may need to speak more slowly.

Test administrators should ensure that the microphone on the device used for testing is turned on and configured properly, prior to launching the test with a constructed response entry.
ASL will be present in the upper right corner of a question when this PNP is chosen.

Closed-captioning (CC) and Replay buttons are provided as part of the video screen.

ASL videos will allow students to play, rewind, and fast forward signed videos. Specific chapters, or parts of the question, are marked by dots that appear along the video track. These dots, or chapters, will allow students to go back and review specific parts of the video (e.g., answer choices) as needed.
Figure 13. Rollovers (available in English and Spanish)

Darren drank 3 glasses of water every day for 6 days. Each glass contained 12 fl oz of water.

Which equation represents $w$, the total amount of water in fluid ounces that Darren drank during these 6 days?

A. $3 + 6 + 12 = w$
B. $12 \times 6 = w$
C. $3 \times 6 \times 12 = w$
D. $3 \times 12 \div 6 = w$

For students who are eligible for content and language supports, certain test questions include a small arrow pointing towards words or phrases. Clicking this arrow opens a rollover that has simplified the text.

Figure 14. Rollovers (available in English and Spanish)

Darren drank 3 glasses of water each day.

- He did this for 6 days.
- Each glass had 12 fluid ounces of water.

For students who have text-to-speech as an embedded support, text in the rollover can be read aloud. The student can click the Speak icon at the top of the screen to open the audio controls. When the Play button is activated, the student can hear the entire question and answer choice, including text in the rollover, read aloud. However, text speech may not be able to read aloud some text, such as labels.

A rollover covers the original text. Clicking the Rollover icon again closes the rollover.
For students who have text-to-speech as an embedded support, the Speak icon will appear in all pop-ups. The student can click the icon to hear the text in the pop-up read aloud. However, text-to-speech may not be able to read aloud some text, such as labels.

For students who are eligible for content and language supports, certain words and phrases appear with a dotted underline or dotted box. This indicates that the word or phrase has been simplified in a pop-up.

When a pop-up is clicked, a window appears above or below the dotted underline or dotted box. Clicking the “X” closes the Pop-up window.
Figure 16. Additional Content and Language Supports Features (available in English and Spanish)

Prereading text prior to reading and writing selections is a content and language support. For students who also have text-to-speech as an embedded support, prereading text can be read aloud by clicking the Speak icon at the top of the screen.

For students who have text-to-speech as an embedded support, the Do Not Read icon indicates to the student that text-to-speech is not available for that portion of the assessment. This icon will appear on reading selections, editing selections, and editing test questions since reading aloud these portions of the test is NOT allowed.
Figure 17. Supplementary Materials and Spelling Assistance (available in English and Spanish)

For students who are eligible for spelling assistance as an embedded support, a red underline will show below a word or words that are misspelled within the open response entry section. The student can click the underlined word to see suggestions for replacements.

Supplementary materials are content and language supports. The student can click on the Writing Checklist tool and use as needed. Punnett squares are available for the Biology test.

Clicking on the suggested word or words will replace the misspelled word.
Figure 18. Refreshable Braille (available on English versions of grades 3–8 reading, grades 4 and 7 writing, grade 8 social studies, English I, English II, and U.S. History only)

Help for JAWS and Braille Users

Before starting the test, please read these instructions. They will provide you with information about the way this test is organized and how to interact with certain areas of the test using JAWS and refreshable braille. Once you enter the test, this information will be available through Help. These instructions assume you are using the default JAWS settings.

Although you are encouraged to read through all the instructions, you may use the following links to jump to a specific topic. Press Tab on a link to activate it. Skip these links.

Prior to beginning a test using a refreshable braille display, a JAWS Help screen is provided to orient the test taker to the regions within the test.

Streamlined selections and test questions display all elements within a single column and frame. As students navigate to specific elements or regions, the screen reader says the element or region name aloud, simplifying navigation and increasing comprehension.

NOTE: A refreshable braille display will not function with all devices supported for testing. Refer to section 5 of the STAAR Online Testing Platform Technology Guide for supported systems and requirements.

Touring Cenotes

(1) My parents and I traveled to Mexico to visit my grandparents last summer, and we visited the cenotes (say-NO-tays), the natural swimming holes located on the Yucatan Peninsula. (2) The term “swimming hole” might make you think that cenotes are just average, everyday lakes, but cenotes are truly spectacular. (3) I had the most exhilarating experience of my life exploring these wonders of nature.
Additional Information on Content and Language Supports

Content and language supports, in the form of pop-ups, rollovers, prereading text, and supplementary materials, are available on STAAR and STAAR Spanish online tests only. (They are not available on the optional Algebra II or English III tests.)

Content and Language Supports Guidelines

The guidelines specify how STAAR selections and test questions are accommodated for content and language supports. Designated supports are done in a standardized manner while maintaining the integrity of the knowledge and skills being assessed. Although STAAR Spanish uses the same guidelines for content and language supports as the English version of STAAR, some of the designated supports in the pop-ups and rollovers may not be identical due to linguistic differences.

Pop-ups:

- isolate specific information in a question that corresponds to each answer choice
- isolate specific text or information in a selection that is referenced in the question or answer choices
- isolate specific information in a graphic or list that is referenced in the question
- define literary terms
- apply an allowable supplemental aid (e.g., graphic organizer, place-value chart, t-chart, graphic of scientific concept, timeline, map) to specific questions or answer choices
- include the formula from the grade-specific Reference Materials when the question specifies the measure or conversion to be performed
- direct student attention to parts of the grade-specific Reference Materials
- provide clarifying information for a graphic organizer, political cartoon, or map
- provide a visual representation in the selection, question, answer choices, or in the writing prompt by adding graphics, photographs, or animations
- define or clarify construct-irrelevant words, phrases, and sentences using plain language, synonyms, definitions, examples, and consistent language

Rollovers:

- bullet or separate steps in a process (e.g., multi-step problem, sequence of events)
- reword complex questions or answer choices to condense text
- reorganize and simplify historical excerpts

Prereads:

- offer text prior to the selection (for grades 3–8 reading, grades 4 and 7 writing, English I, and English II only)
Supplementary Materials:

- blank Punnett squares (Biology only)
- writing checklists (for grade 4 English and Spanish writing, grade 7 writing, English I, and English II only)

Classroom Designated Supports and the Link to Content and Language Supports

The use of designated supports occurs primarily during classroom instruction as educators use various instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of students, thus allowing those students to maximize their academic potential. Content and language supports available online on STAAR offer opportunities for students to meaningfully access the required state assessments.

Decisions about designated supports used during a statewide assessment should

- be made on an individual basis,
- consider the needs of the student, and
- be routinely used during classroom instruction and testing.

Although it is unlikely that students will routinely use the computer-based content and language supports during classroom instruction, they may use variations of them as illustrated in the table on the next page. This list is not exhaustive; it includes examples of classroom designated supports that may correspond to the embedded online content and language supports on STAAR.

Educators, parents, and students must understand that designated supports provided during classroom instruction and testing might differ from designated supports allowed for use on state assessments. Instruction comes first and can be customized to meet the needs of each student. Unlike instruction, state assessments are standardized to provide a reliable comparison of outcomes across all test takers. Certain designated supports used in the classroom would invalidate the content being assessed or compromise the security and integrity of the state assessment. For this reason, not all designated supports suitable for instruction are allowed during the state assessments. However, the policies for accessibility on state assessments do not limit an educator's ability to develop individualized materials and techniques to aid student learning.

To make accommodation decisions for students, educators should have knowledge of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and how a student performs in relation to them. Educators should also collect and analyze data pertaining to the use and effectiveness of designated supports (e.g., assignment/test scores with and without the accommodation, observational reports) so that informed educational decisions can be made for each student. By analyzing data, an educator can determine whether the designated support becomes inappropriate or unnecessary over time due to the student's age or changing needs. Likewise, data can confirm for the educator that the student still struggles in certain areas and should continue to use the designated support.
Classroom Accommodation Examples that Link to STAAR Content and Language Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher introduces a new book to a struggling reader prior to reading it aloud or independent reading. The topics discussed might include major concepts, difficult words, setting, characters, or prior knowledge of the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a dictionary or thesaurus, the teacher points out the meaning or synonym of a word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher isolates specific information to focus the student on the core concept being taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher acts out or has the students role-play newly introduced vocabulary or difficult concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher simplifies difficult vocabulary and then reformats complex word problems by bulleting or spacing out each step required to solve the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides the student with a specific supplemental aid (e.g., chart, table, graph, checklist, map, timeline) applicable to the question being posed, the assignment, or the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides the formula(s) needed to solve a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to identify people and/or places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to define or clarify vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During classroom discussions, the teacher clarifies or rewords complex text or questions using simpler language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher directs the student (e.g., highlight, bold, point to, flag the information) to the specific part(s) of the selection, diagram, map, or figure that is being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher presents parts of a complex concept one at a time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Situations for Content and Language Supports

Because content and language supports are embedded designated supports presented in an online format, replicating these features in a paper or braille version is not always possible. Technology-based supports enable most students to test online; however, in instances in which the use of an embedded support is not feasible, or if the administration of an online test is inappropriate due to a student’s particular disability, a special request may be made to TEA for approval to use a paper test booklet. Instructions for requesting permission for a Special Administration can be found on the Special Administration of an Online Assessment section of the Coordinator Resources.

For students who take a braille test (including students who use screen reader support for refreshable braille displays) and are eligible for content and language supports, districts should contact the Texas Assessment Support Center to request a paper version of STAAR with embedded supports. Once materials are received, the test administrator will use the instructions in the Paper Administration Guide to provide access to the content and accommodations in the specific test being administered. The guide will provide picture descriptions of content and language support images and graphics (e.g., charts, tables, graphs) that may be reproduced for accessibility (e.g., brailling graphics, pairing graphics with tactile symbols, texts, or objects, enlarging or projecting).

Students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and eligible for oral/signed administrations and content and language supports need to take STAAR online to access these embedded supports. However, since these students are unable to access the text-to-speech function, a signed administration is allowed for those parts of the test that can be read aloud. ASL videos are offered as an online option for a signed administration.
ASL videos allow a student to independently select and change the level of signing support during the test administration by selecting chapters to review specific parts of the videos as needed. However, it is important to note that ASL videos are only available for test questions and revising selections in English, and are not offered on Spanish tests or for content and language supports (i.e., pop-ups and rollovers). In these instances, test administrators may sign test content in the same way they do for paper tests. Test administrators should be trained using the Oral/Signed Administration Guidelines and should also read the specific guidelines for signing test content included in the General Instructions for Administering State Assessments to Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing document. Both of these documents can be found on TEA’s Accommodation Resources webpage. In addition, proctor code tickets will be available to district testing coordinators in the Assessment Management System to download and distribute to test administrators providing a signed administration of an online STAAR test. For instructions on locating the proctor tickets, refer to section 7 of the STAAR Assessment Management System User’s Guide.

Planning for Testing

Careful review of the state accessibility policies is required so that students receive only those accessibility features and designated supports that are allowed or approved by TEA for use on state assessments. Testing coordinators, test administrators, and other campus personnel involved in state testing must consider these questions related to ensuring accessibility for students on test day.

- Which students receive accessibility features or designated supports on test day?
- What special arrangements need to be considered for students who will use accessibility features and designated supports on test day? For example, ensuring that calculators and other equipment have sufficient batteries or choosing separate settings for students who use certain supports requires advance planning.
- What staff training is needed to properly provide certain designated supports? For example, transcribing a student’s response onto an answer document or providing an oral/signed administration of a paper test requires advance training.
- What campus and district procedures are in place to ensure test security, especially if the student is using technology as a support? Please refer to the Technology Guidelines for the Texas Assessment Program page in the Texas Assessment Program Highlights section of the Coordinator Resources and the Technology Use Guidelines Presentation on the Accommodation Resources webpage.
- What procedure is in place and who is responsible for recording designated supports on the answer document or in the Assessment Management System for online tests?
■ Have students taking STAAR online had the opportunity to practice interacting with the tools and features in the online testing system? It is important that students have used the online tutorials and released tests to become familiar with selecting answers, using the online tools, moving through the test, submitting the test, etc.

■ What special arrangements need to be considered for students taking different versions of STAAR with different designated supports? For example, should students taking STAAR online without designated supports be grouped with students taking STAAR online with designated supports? Should students taking STAAR on paper and STAAR online be grouped together?

■ Are computers prepared for online testing according to the STAAR Online Testing Platform Technology Guide?

■ If your students are using the refreshable braille embedded online support, are the computers prepared for online testing according to the STAAR Online Testing Platform Technology Guide?

For additional information, contact TEA's Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536 or assessment.specialpopulations@tea.texas.gov.