

Accessibility within the STAAR Program

Educator Guide



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Resources

Online Resource Materials	
Resource materials available online	Located at
Accommodation Resources	https://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/
<i>2020–2021 District and Campus Coordinator Resources</i>	http://txetests.com/dccr/
L PAC Resources	http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/lpac/
Online testing technology	http://TexasAssessment.gov/administrators/technology/
STAAR and STAAR Spanish Released Test Questions	http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/STAAR_Released_Test_Questions/
STAAR Resources	http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/
STAAR Spanish Resources	https://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/State_of_Texas_Assessments_of_Academic_Readiness_(STAAR)/STAAR_Spanish_Resources/
Student Assessment Division	http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/

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.

Program	Grade	Subject	Paper Available	Online Available
STAAR	3–8 and EOC	all	√	√
STAAR Spanish	3–5	all	√	√
STAAR Alternate 2	3–8 and EOC	all	√	

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.

NOTES

	Paper	Online
Accessibility Features		
Amplification Devices	√	√
Bilingual Dictionary	√	√
Color Overlay/Color Setting	√	√*
General Reminders to Stay on Task	√	√
Highlighter, Colored Pencil, etc.	√	√*
Individual Administration	√	√
Magnifying Devices/Zoom	√	√*
Minimize Distractions (e.g., stress ball, headphones, music)	√	√
Photocopying or Enlarging Non-Secure Test Materials	√	
Place Marker/Guideline	√	√*
Projection Devices	√	√
Read Aloud Writing Prompt to Student	√	√
Read Test Aloud to Self	√	√
Reading Assistance for Grade 3 Math	√	√
Scratch Paper/Notes Tool/Sticky Notes	√	√*
Signing Test Directions	√	√
Small Group	√	√
Translating Test Directions	√	√
Typing Assistance for Grade 4 Writing		√
Designated Supports		
Basic Transcribing	√	√*
Braille/Refreshable Braille [†]	√	√*
Calculation Aids	√	√*
Content and Language Supports	√ [§]	√*
Extra Time	√	√
Individualized Structured Reminders	√	√
Large Print	√	
Manipulating Test Materials	√	√
Mathematics Manipulatives	√	√
Oral Administration/Text-to-Speech	√	√*
Signed Administration/Signed Videos	√	√*
Spelling Assistance	√	√*
Supplemental Aids	√	√
Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval		
Complex Transcribing	√	√
Extra Day	√	√
Mathematics Scribe	√	√
Other	√	√

*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)

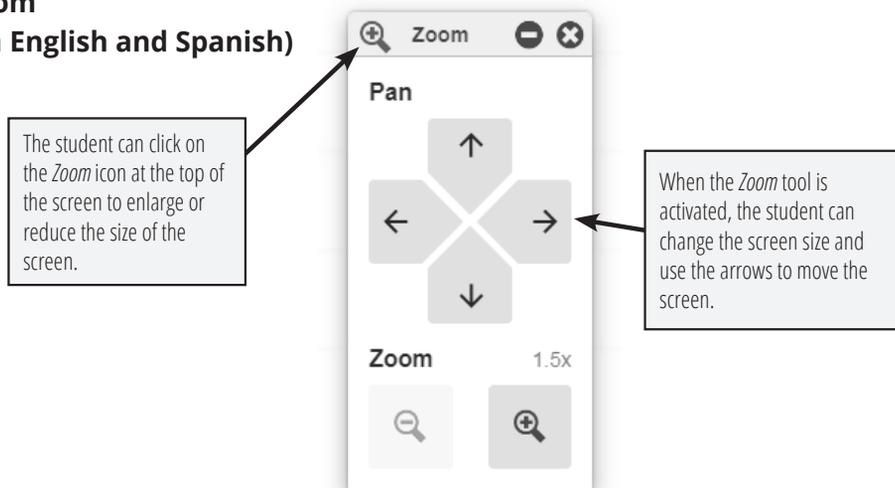
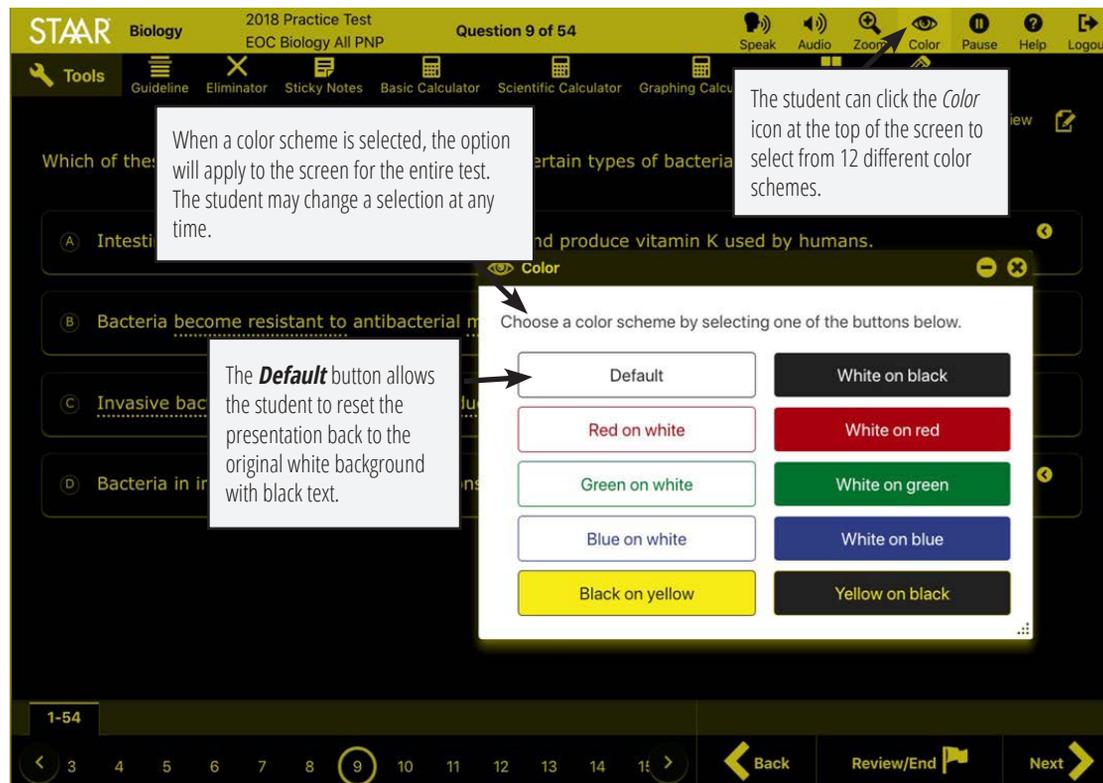


Figure 2. Color Setting (available in English and Spanish)



NOTES

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.

Passage-based tests have split screens and two guidelines.

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)

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.

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

Figure 5. Pencil (available in English and Spanish)

The screenshot shows the STAAR Biology interface for a 2018 Practice Test. The question is: "Which of these best demonstrates mutualism between certain types of bacteria and humans?" with four multiple-choice options (A, B, C, D). The Pencil tool is highlighted in the top toolbar, and a sub-menu is open showing options for Pencil, Points, and Lines. Callouts provide additional information: one explains that activating the Pencil tool shows a menu for marking options; another states that the Pencil tool allows for marks and annotations but has a limit on the number of marks per question and per test, and that marks are available for review on previous questions. A yellow box at the bottom contains a note: "NOTE: The Pencil tool functions differently on certain tablet devices. Students should practice using the Pencil tool prior to taking the test."

Figure 6. Sticky Notes (available in English and Spanish)

The screenshot shows the STAAR Grade 4 Writing interface for a 2018 Practice Test. The question asks to read a selection and choose the central idea of the paper. A yellow sticky note is placed over the text. Callouts explain: the Sticky Notes tool allows for notes with a 500-character limit and a maximum of 15 notes per panel; a student can minimize the tool to avoid blocking content; and clicking/dragging the lower right-hand corner of the sticky note can resize the window. A yellow box at the bottom contains a note: "Once activated, the Sticky Notes tool can be filled with notes and can be moved to different places within a screen." The interface includes a navigation bar at the bottom with question numbers 1 through 9 and buttons for Back, Review/End, and Next.

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.

Figure 7. Basic Calculator (available in English and Spanish)

The screenshot displays the STAAR Grade 5 Math interface for Question 22 of 36. The question asks for the numerical value of a temperature in degrees Fahrenheit given in expanded notation as (9×10) . Below the question are five input boxes for the answer. A 'Basic Calculator' tool is open, showing a standard four-function calculator interface with buttons for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, as well as memory and percentage functions. A navigation bar at the bottom shows question numbers 16 through 28, with 22 highlighted, and buttons for 'Back', 'Review/End', and 'Next'.

A temperature in degrees Fahrenheit is shown in expanded notation.
 (9×10)

How is this temperature in degrees Fahrenheit written as a numeral?

Record your answer in the boxes below. Be sure to use the correct place value.

□ □ □ . □ □

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)

The screenshot displays the STAAR Biology interface for a 2018 Practice Test, Question 9 of 54. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'Speak' and 'Audio' icons, and a toolbar with various tools like 'Highlight', 'Erase Highlights', and 'Speak'. A question is visible: 'Which of these best demonstrates mutualism between...'. Below the question, a 'Speak' button is highlighted. An 'Audio Settings' window is open, showing a 'Volume' slider and 'Text to Speech Settings' with a 'Speaking Rate' slider. A 'Click Word' button is also visible in a floating toolbar.

When the student selects a specific group of text, a menu appears. The selected text is read aloud when the student clicks *Speak* in this menu.

The student can click 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 *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 *Click Word* button allows the student to hear only one word at a time.

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

Figure 9. Speech-to-text (available in English and Spanish for written compositions only)

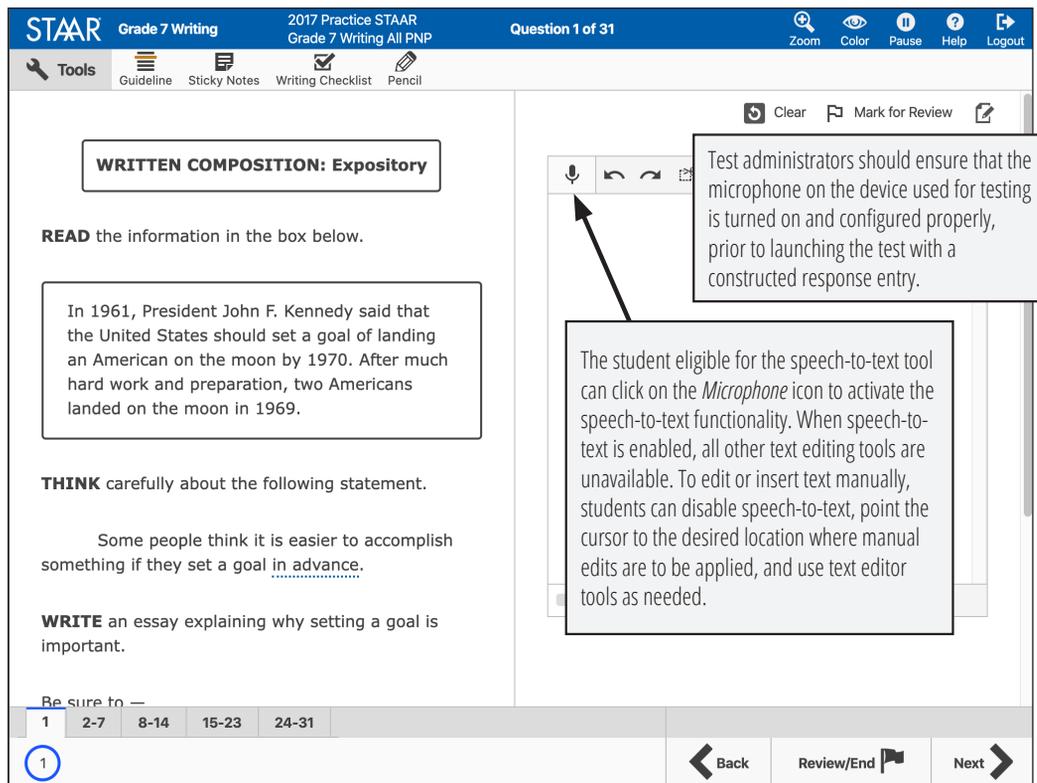
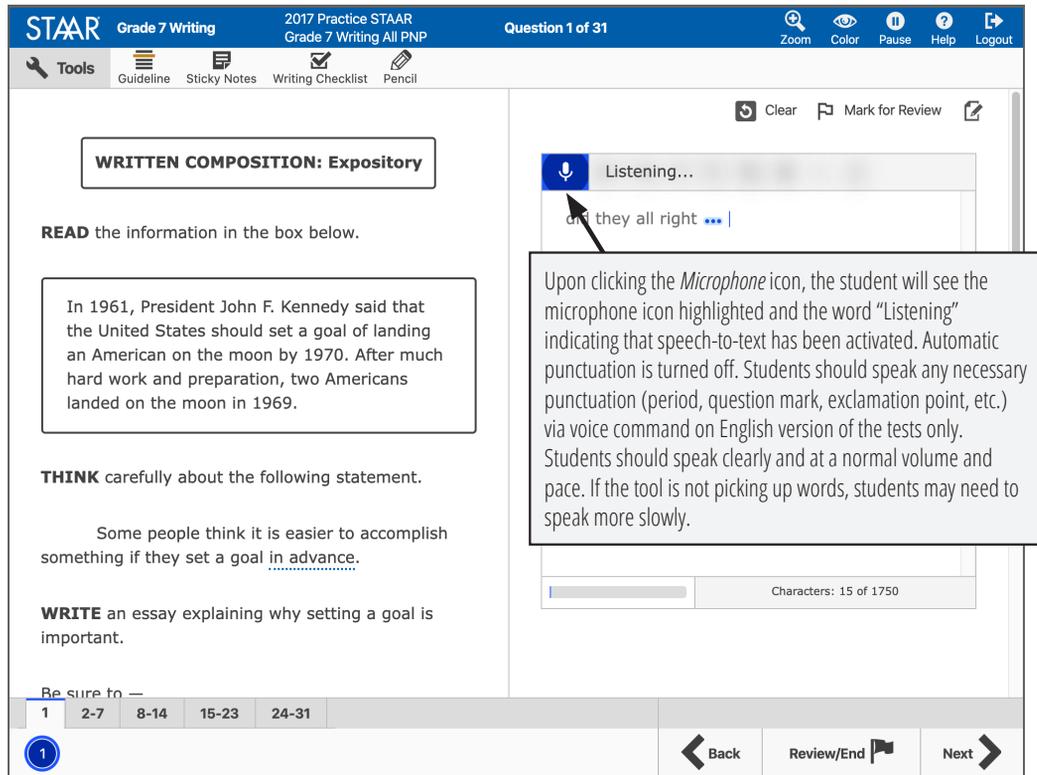


Figure 10: Speech-to-text (available in English and Spanish for written compositions only)



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Figure 11. Signed Videos (available in English)

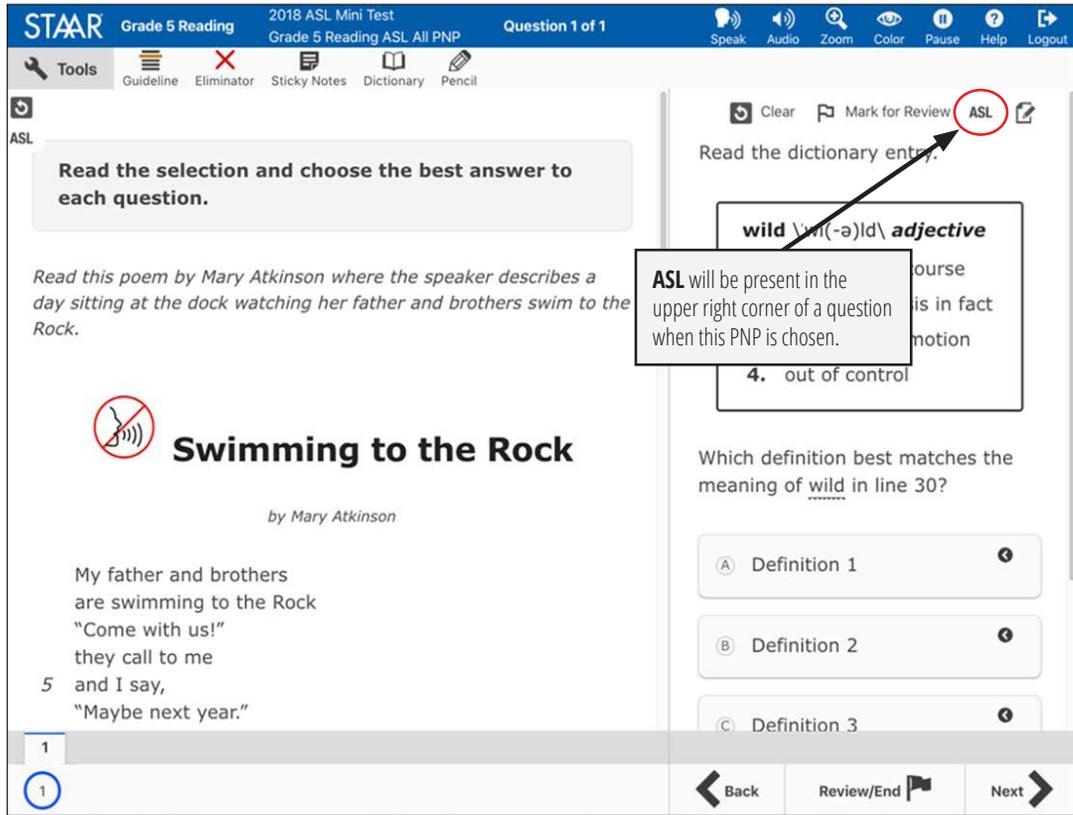


Figure 12. Signed Videos (available in English)

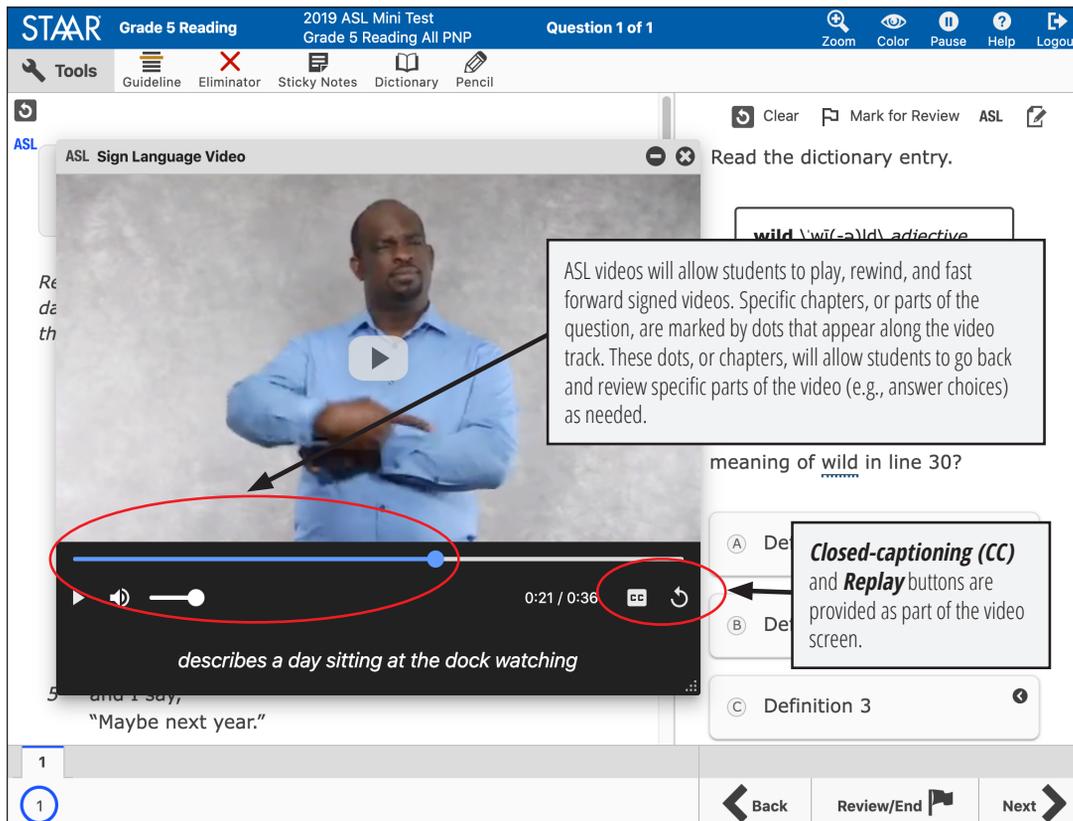


Figure 13. Rollovers (available in English and Spanish)

STAAR Grade 4 Math 2018 Practice Test Grade 4 Mathematics All PNP Question 11 of 34

Tools: Guideline, Eliminator, Sticky Notes, Formulas, Conversions, Customary Ruler, Metric Ruler, Graph Paper, Pencil

Clear, Mark for Review

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)

STAAR Grade 4 Math 2018 Practice Test Grade 4 Mathematics All PNP Question 11 of 34

Tools: Guideline, Eliminator, Sticky Notes, Formulas, Conversions, Customary Ruler, Metric Ruler, Graph Paper, Pencil

Clear, Mark for Review

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.

(B) $12 \times 6 = w$

(C) $3 \times 6 \times 12 = w$

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Figure 15. Pop-ups (available in English and Spanish)

The screenshot displays the STAAR 2018 Practice Test interface for the EOC U.S. History All PNP. The main content is a timeline titled "Selected Events in the History of the Gold Standard" with the following entries:

- March 1933: The Emergency Banking Act gives President Franklin Roosevelt the power to control domestic and foreign exchange gold movements.
- April 1933: The Reconstruction Finance Corporation is allowed to buy gold for more money, making the value of the dollar decrease and increasing the price of U.S. raw materials that can be bought and sold.
- May 1933: The Reconstruction Finance Corporation is authorized to buy gold at increasing prices, devaluing the dollar and raising prices of U.S. commodities.
- October 1933: Congress passes the Gold Reserve Act, permanently fixing the value of gold relative to dollars.
- January 1934: Congress passes the Gold Reserve Act, permanently fixing the value of gold relative to dollars.

Callout boxes provide the following information:

- Top Callout:** 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.
- Bottom-Left Callout:** 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.
- Right Callout:** 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.

The interface also shows a question: "What was the goal of the actions on this time line?" with multiple-choice options A, B, C, and D. The bottom navigation bar shows question numbers 11 through 22, with 17 selected, and buttons for Back, Review/End, and Next.

**Figure 16. Additional Content and Language Supports Features
(available in English and Spanish)**

The screenshot shows the STAAR Grade 4 Writing interface. At the top, it displays 'Grade 4 Writing', '2018 Practice Test', 'Grade 4 Writing All PNP', and 'Question 10 of 25'. Below this are navigation icons for Audio, Zoom, Color, Pause, Help, and Logout. A 'Tools' bar includes Guideline, Eliminator, Sticky Notes, and Pencil. The main content area contains a reading selection with an image of a monkey and a question: 'What change, if any, is needed in sentence 5?'. Answer choices A and B are visible. A 'Do Not Read' icon (a speaker with a slash) is positioned above the question. A callout box explains that this icon indicates that text-to-speech is not available for that portion of the assessment. Another callout box points to the 'Speak' icon (a speaker) at the top left, explaining that it allows for prereading text aloud.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Mario's teacher asked students to research and write about an interesting animal. Mario chose a unique type of monkey. Read Mario's rough draft and look for the corrections he needs to make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.

What change, if any, is needed in sentence 5?

A Change **serv**ed to **serv**e

B Change **called** to **they** **are called**

C

D

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.

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.

**Figure 17. Supplementary Materials and Spelling Assistance
(available in English and Spanish)**

The screenshot displays the STAAR Grade 4 Writing interface. At the top, the header includes 'STAAR Grade 4 Writing' and '2018 Practice Test Grade 4 Writing All PWP'. A 'Tools' menu is visible with options for 'Guideline', 'Sticky Notes', 'Writing Checklist', and 'Pencil'. The main content area is titled 'WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Expository' and contains instructions: 'READ the following quotation.', 'THINK about all the hard work you may be working on at school, at home, or outside.', and 'WRITE about one type of hard work you do. Tell about your work and explain why it is so hard to do.' A text entry field contains the sentence 'I do not know of anyone gotten to the top without hard work.' A red underline is under the word 'gotten'. A 'Suggestions' pop-up box shows the word 'accomplishment' as a replacement. A character count at the bottom right indicates 'Characters: 24 of 1750'. Navigation buttons for 'Back', 'Review/End', and 'Next' are at the bottom.

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.

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.

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 **ENTER** on a link to activate it. [Skip these links](#)

[About This Test](#) [Activating Form Fields and Controls](#)
[Braille Options for Spelling Questions](#) [Browse Mode and Forms Mode](#)
[Buttons with Collapsible Content](#) [Editing/Formatting Text](#)
[Extended Descriptions](#) [Guides](#)
[JAWS Key](#)
[Navigation Quick Keys](#)
[Radio Buttons](#)
[Reading Text](#)
[Special Announcement](#)

Callout 1: 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.

Callout 2: 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.

Read the selection. Then answer the questions that follow.

Gabrielle wrote this paper about a memorable experience she had on a trip with her family. Read Gabrielle's paper and think about the corrections she should make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.

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 Yucatán 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.

Callout 3: **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.

Question: What change should be made in sentence 5?

sentence 5

(A) Change *disintigration* to *disintegration*

(B) Change *exposed* to *expose*

(C) Insert a comma after *water*

(D) Change *filtered* to *filterred*

Clear Mark for Review

What change, if any, should be made in sentence 22?

1-2 3 4-5 6-7

1 2

Back Review/End Next

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.

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Classroom Accommodation Examples that Link to STAAR Content and Language Supports
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.
Using a dictionary or thesaurus, the teacher points out the meaning or synonym of a word.
The teacher isolates specific information to focus the student on the core concept being taught.
The teacher acts out or has the students role-play newly introduced vocabulary or difficult concepts.
The teacher simplifies difficult vocabulary and then reformats complex word problems by bulleting or spacing out each step required to solve the problem.
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.
The teacher provides the formula(s) needed to solve a problem.
The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to identify people and/or places.
The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to define or clarify vocabulary.
During classroom discussions, the teacher clarifies or rewords complex text or questions using simpler language.
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.
The teacher presents parts of a complex concept one at a time.

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., braille 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?

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- 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.

