

General Instructions for Administering Braille and Large-Print Statewide Assessments

Introduction

This set of instructions provides general information about how to administer the braille and large-print versions of the statewide assessments and will be included in the braille and large-print kits that the district testing coordinator receives.

Braille and large-print versions of the assessments are available to students with visual impairments. STAAR, STAAR Modified, TAKS, TAKS (Accommodated), and TAKS–M tests are available in both braille and large print. The same braille form is used for TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated). TELPAS reading tests and STAAR L are available in large print. TELPAS reading tests cannot be offered in braille because of the way visual cues are used on the test. For information regarding braille versions of STAAR L and STAAR Spanish, call TEA’s Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536.

Test Materials in Large Print and Braille

Large-print materials are shipped with the initial secure shipment for each administration.* Only districts that have identified eligible students during the enrollment process will receive large-print materials. The large-print test booklets are spiral bound, and the dimensions of the booklets are 11 inches by 14 inches. As with a regular-print test booklet, each subject-area test of a large-print booklet is sealed.

Braille materials must be ordered online and will arrive in a separate shipment one week prior to testing. The braille test booklets have single-sided pages and single spacing of braille lines. The booklets are not sealed; instead each subject-area test is presented in a separate booklet.



The decision to provide a student with a braille or a large-print test booklet should be made in accordance with specific accommodation policies located on the Accommodation Resources webpage at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/accommodations>. Be sure to reference the appropriate set of accommodation policies based on the assessment the student is taking.

For a student who has an impairment in vision and requires printed materials in a size larger than the state-supplied, large-print materials, refer to the Photocopying Test Materials accommodation policy.

* **NOTE:** Large-print TELPAS reading test booklets are not included in the initial shipment. TELPAS grades 2–12 reading tests are administered online. Refer to the *2013 District and Campus Coordinator Manual* for information about the process for requesting a large-print TELPAS reading test booklet for a student for whom technology-based accommodations are not appropriate.



Font and point sizes matrices for the regular- and large-print tests are provided on the Accommodation Resources webpage at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/accommodations>.

Braille tests are available in both contracted and uncontracted braille. Uncontracted braille tests may be ordered only for students who use uncontracted braille materials routinely during classroom instruction. Orders for braille tests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to testing. A corresponding print test booklet will be included in all braille kits. If a student taking a braille test needs an oral administration, the test administrator should use the print test booklet that is included in the braille kit.

A student may have an impairment in vision that requires the use of two types of test materials. For example, a student may need to use a braille test booklet in conjunction with a large-print test booklet, or a regular-print test booklet in conjunction with a large-print test booklet. These situations fall under the Type 3 “Other” accommodation, and an Accommodation Request Form must be submitted so that specific instructions regarding the use of both forms can be provided to the district.

Specific Braille Instructions

Specific braille instructions supplement the test administrator manual and are designed to help a test administrator understand and meet the needs of a student taking a braille test. Secure specific braille instructions are included in the shipment of braille materials. Unless otherwise stated in these instructions, the directions contained in the test administrator manual should be followed.

After the braille shipment arrives, but prior to the day of testing, the test administrator should read the specific braille instructions to determine which materials or procedures a student may need for testing.

Specific braille instructions are divided into three sections:

- **General Information:** This section gives the test administrator information about the braille test booklet and how it compares to the print test booklet. Instructions on how to transcribe the student’s responses onto the answer document are also included in this section.
- **Specific Instructions:** This section provides information for the test administrator about how a particular braille test differs from the print version, including information about test questions that have been altered, replaced, or omitted to ensure that the test is accessible to a student who reads braille. If a test question has been replaced on the braille version, a copy of the replacement question will be included at the back of the specific braille instructions for the test administrator to read aloud during an oral administration. This section also provides related administration instructions. For example, test questions with a visual element that cannot be rendered in braille will include a description of what is depicted in the print version of the test. Although such descriptions are provided in the braille test

booklet, the test administrator may read them aloud from the specific braille instructions at a student's request. This section also informs test administrators of any manipulatives (e.g., a braille ruler or three-dimensional geometric figure) that a student will need in order to complete the test.

- **Test Administration Directions:** This section includes general and specific information about the braille test that should be read to the students (e.g., whether special symbols or standard braille codes are used on the test). Any information that is on the Transcriber's Notes page in the braille test booklet is also provided in this section.

The specific braille instructions are secure. When administering the braille version of a test, keep in mind that you must follow the same security measures as for the administration of a regular-print test.

Training

Districts should plan appropriately to ensure that individuals who are administering the large-print or braille versions of the assessments have received training prior to testing. Only test administrators who have been trained in the procedures and special instructions for testing students with visual impairments should administer the tests.

Campus testing coordinators are responsible for issuing the test materials to the appropriate test administrators. It is important that test administrators be given their test administration materials, including the specific braille instructions, in time to prepare for testing. Campus testing coordinators are also responsible for monitoring braille and large-print test administrations to ensure that they are conducted, to the greatest extent possible, in the same manner as the administration of regular-print tests.

Student Materials and Accommodations

All materials and equipment needed by the student, including allowable testing accommodations, should be furnished before testing begins. Refer to each specific accommodation policy for student eligibility criteria and special instructions.

- The test administrator should have available braille paper, typing paper, bold-lined paper, pens, crayons, pencils, 20/20 pens, markers, placeholders, and any manipulatives or reference materials required by the specific braille instructions. Special consideration should also be given to lighting conditions for students with low vision.
- Students who take the braille version of the tests at any grade level may use slate and stylus, electronic note-takers, word processors, projection or low-vision devices such as a closed-circuit television (CCTV), braille rulers, a Cranmer modified abacus, or speech-output calculators.

- If a student uses an electronic note-taker or a word processor to generate a written response (e.g., written composition), the document may be saved periodically while the student is completing the response. However, the response must be deleted when the student finishes testing. All special features (e.g., spell check, word predictor) must be disabled unless the student meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Spelling Assistance accommodation policy.
- Students taking the braille version of the grade 8 science, chemistry, or physics tests may use a periodic table that is routinely used in the classroom in addition to the Periodic Table of the Elements included as a reference material in the test booklet.
- Students taking the braille version of the Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II, chemistry, or physics tests may use the audio-graphing calculator (AGC). Other programs that perform graphing functions may be used EXCEPT for those that include a computer algebra system (CAS).

If a student needs an accommodation not described on the Accommodations for Students with Disabilities webpage, contact TEA's Accommodations Task Force at 512-463-9536.

Students Requiring More Time to Complete Testing

Students with an impairment in vision who take a braille or large-print test may require considerably more time to complete the test than a student without an impairment in vision. If the student typically requires more time than is allotted for testing, refer to the accommodation policies that address Extra Time or Extra Day (for STAAR and TELPAS) or Extended Time (for TAKS).

Student Response Procedures

The test administrator and the student should determine the best method for the student to respond to the test questions. The student may respond by writing in the test booklet, typing, using braille, or indicating the answer to the test administrator. Special consideration should be given to the type of paper that a student will need to generate a response for the written composition and open-ended items. The student's response in its entirety must fit onto the lined pages and/or spaces for each written composition and/or short answer reading question on the answer document. Students with impairments in vision may need an individual or small-group administration in cases where their methods of response might distract other students. Any student responding verbally must receive an individual administration.

In the large-print test booklets, the printing on a page is faintly visible through the page that precedes it. To reduce this show-through effect, a large colored sheet is provided with each large-print test. The test administrator should instruct the students to insert this sheet behind the page on which they are working. If a student chooses to mark answers on the large-print test, it is essential that the marks do not bleed through to such a degree that the student is unable to respond to subsequent test items.

For students taking a large-print test, a separate sheet for students to record their answers to griddable questions will be included with large-print materials. The “Transcribing Griddable Questions” student document applies to:

- STAAR and STAAR L grades 3–8 mathematics, Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II tests;
- STAAR and STAAR L grades 5 and 8 science, chemistry, and physics tests;
- STAAR Spanish grades 3–5 mathematics and grade 5 science tests;
- STAAR Modified grades 3–8 mathematics, Algebra I, and geometry tests; and
- TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) exit level mathematics and science tests.

The “Transcribing Griddable Questions” student document must be provided to each student who does not utilize his or her answer document so that the student is aware of the maximum number of boxes available for an answer to a griddable question. This separate sheet must be used when the test administrator transcribes the student’s responses onto the answer document. The sheet must be destroyed after testing.

Braille test booklets have braille cells that correspond to the number of boxes on the answer document for griddable questions. The braille and large-print kits include mathematics and science reference materials that match the format provided in the print test booklets. If a student has written on the reference materials, the materials must be destroyed after testing.

Transcribing

Student responses for all braille and large-print tests must be transferred to the student’s answer document. If this is not done, the student’s test cannot be scored. Refer to the accommodation policies that address Basic Transcribing and/or Complex Transcribing (for STAAR and TELPAS) or Other Methods of Response/Transcribing (for TAKS).

An answer document is provided with each braille or large-print test. The instructions for completing the student identification information and the FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY section of the answer document can be found in the test administrator manuals.

Transcribing may be done by the test administrator during or after testing. The student’s responses should be transcribed as follows:

- Transcribe the student’s responses onto the regular-print answer document exactly as indicated by the student.
- Write “Transcribed by (NAME) because student used the large-print/braille version” at the top of the answer document on the page where the student identification information is located.
- All transcriptions must be done in No. 2 pencil.

For STAAR and TELPAS, the braille (BR) or the large-print (LP) bubble under Type 2 in the ACCOMMODATIONS field must be marked on the student's answer document. If a student used other accommodations in addition to taking the braille or large-print test, the corresponding bubble(s) should also be marked in this field. Refer to the "Guidelines for Recording Accommodation Use on the Student's Answer Document," located at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/accommodations/staar-telpas>.

For TAKS, mark the braille (BR) or the large-print (LP) bubble in the ACCOMMODATIONS (FOR ALL PROGRAMS) field on the student's answer document. Other accommodations should be marked as "P" (Presentation), "R" (Response), "S" (Setting), or "T" (Timing and Scheduling). Refer to the *2010–2011 Accommodations Manual*, located at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/accommodations>, for more information about recording accommodation use on TAKS answer documents.

Returning Materials

All braille and large-print materials, including handwritten, typewritten, or brailled responses, must be returned to the district testing coordinator. All answer documents onto which students' responses have been transcribed should be returned in the shipment of scorable materials. The answer documents for students taking braille and large-print versions of the tests will be processed in the same manner as all other answer documents.

The braille and large-print test booklets, extra regular-print test booklets, and specific braille instructions should be returned in the nonscorable shipment. Any brailled or typewritten responses or handwritten responses on scratch paper that include student notes, answers to multiple-choice questions, written compositions, or responses to short-answer reading questions must be destroyed after testing. For additional information about what to return in the nonscorable shipment, refer to the *2013 District and Campus Coordinator Manual*.

Contact TEA's Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536 if you have any questions regarding the administration of braille or large-print tests.