



Read-Aloud Protocol for Maine Educational Assessments

Read-Aloud Protocol for MEA Science Grades 5, 8 and 3rd Year High School Spring 2020

As per school-based decisions regarding assessment accommodations, the student may be eligible to work with a test reader. A test reader is an adult who provides an oral presentation of the assessment text to an eligible student. Read-Aloud should be consistent with the student's normal routine during instruction and assessments. The guiding principle in reading aloud is to ensure that the student has access to test content. The student depends on the test reader to read the test questions accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice throughout the test. The test reader must be familiar with the Test Administration Manual (TAM). Principals must complete the *Principal Certification of Proper Test Administration (PCPA)* upon completion of testing.

The following Read Aloud accommodations are available as per MEA Science Accommodations Table revised November 2019:

- A1 (new code) Read Aloud/Human Reader American Sign Language – Directions AND Test = A reader may be used for a student whose inability to read would hinder performance on the Science test. Words must be read as written. No translations (with the exception of signed language) or explanations are allowed. Trained personnel may use sign language to administer the test.
- A2 (new code) Read Aloud/Human Reader/American Sign Language – Directions ONLY = A reader may be used for a student whose inability to read or locate directions would hinder performance on the test. Note that most directions on the MEA test occur at the beginning of the test session and are already read aloud by the test administrator. Guidelines for what are and are not “test directions” must be followed. With the exception of sign language and the case of students enrolled in a program where the test administrator routinely presents information in a foreign language, directions may not be translated.

Qualifications for Test Readers

- The test reader must be an adult who is familiar with the student, and is typically responsible for providing this support during educational instruction and assessments.
- Test readers must be familiar with the administration of the assessment in accordance with the TAM, familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the test content, and related conventions for standard oral communication.

Preparation

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- Test readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test environment and format in advance of the testing sessions.
- Test readers should have a working knowledge of the MEA Science accommodations table. Test readers should be familiar with the all supports and/or accommodations assigned to the



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student for whom they are reading.

- Test readers should have practice in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before working directly with a student.
- The test reader should meet with the student in advance and inform the student of the parameters of the support. A test reader script is included at the end of the Protocol for Read Aloud, Test Reader.

General Guidelines

- The test reader's support should ideally be provided in a separate setting so as not to interfere with the instruction or assessment of other students.
- Read each question exactly as written as clearly as possible.
- Throughout the exam, strive to communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Avoid gesturing, head movements, or any verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words not otherwise emphasized in text.
- Avoid conversing with the student about test questions as this would be a violation of test security; respond to the student's questions by repeating the item, words or instructions verbatim as needed.
- Do not paraphrase, interpret, define, or translate any items, words, or instructions as this would be a violation of test security.
- Spell any words requested by the student.
- Adjust your reading speed and volume if requested by the student.

Post-Administration

- The test reader must collect scratch paper, and rough drafts immediately at the end of each testing session and deliver it to the Principal or Test Coordinator.
- The test reader must not discuss any portion of the test with others.

English Usage/Conventions

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



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Images / Graphics

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

Graphic Organizers

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



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Suggested Test Reader Script (To be used with student in advance of the testing day)

Hi _____,

I'm the person who will be reading your test to you when you take your MEA Science. I wanted to let you know how we'll work together. When I'm reading a test to you, it's very different from when I'm reading to you during class time. I have to follow certain rules.

- I cannot help you with any answers.
- I cannot click on anything in the screen.
- I will not be using different character voices or changes in my tone when I read. It will be very direct voice that does not change very much, no matter how exciting the story or test gets.
- If there is a picture that has words in it, I will read those words. If you ask, I will re-read as well.
- Sometimes there may be something about a word or phrase that might give you a hint if I say aloud. In those cases, I will skip the word, point to it on the screen [or your booklet if paper-version], and continue to read.
- I can still help you with your [*any assistive technology that the student may require]
- You can ask me to re-read parts of the test you didn't hear or need more time/repetition
- You can ask me to pause my reading if you need to take a break.
- You can ask me to slow down or speed up my reading, or read louder or softer if you are having trouble understanding what I read.
- I will only read certain types of punctuation, but if you need me to re-read a sentence how it was punctuated, I can do that.
- If you ask me a question about the test, all I will say is, "Do your best work. I cannot help you with that".
- Do you have any questions for me about how we will work together during the test?