# Forward Exam Guidelines for Read Aloud

When a student cannot access text-to-speech, an embedded resource available on the Forward Exam, the student may be eligible to work with a test reader. A test reader provides an oral presentation of the assessment text to an eligible student. The student depends on the test reader to read the test questions accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice throughout the test. The test reader must be trained and qualified and must follow the Guidelines for Read Aloud presented here. The guiding principle in reading aloud is to ensure that the student has access to test content.

On the Forward Exam, test readers are allowable across grades 3-8 as a **designated support** for mathematics, science, social studies (grade 10), and ELA items as appropriate (not ELA session 1 reading passages). Test readers are allowable for ELA reading passages as a **documented accommodation only for newly blind student who are not yet proficient in Braille**. For information on documentation requirements and decision-making criteria for use of test readers please see the *Accessibility Guidelines.*

## Qualifications for Test Readers

- The test reader should be an employed district staff member (including administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals) who is familiar with the student, and who is typically responsible for providing this support during educational instruction and assessments.

- Test readers must be trained on the administration of the assessment in accordance with DPI policy, and familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the test content and related conventions for standard oral communication.

- Test readers must be familiar with the allowable designated supports and accommodations for the Forward Exam available in the Accessibility Guide.

- Test readers must be trained in test security policies and procedures as articulated in test administration manuals, guidelines, and related documentation.

## Preparation

- Test readers should read and sign a Forward Exam Confidentiality Agreement prior to test administration in addition to the Forward Exam Read Aloud Security/Confidentiality Agreement.

- Test readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the online testing environment and format in advance of the testing session. Having a working familiarity with the test environment and format will help facilitate reading of the test.

- Test readers should have a strong working knowledge of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility features available on the Forward Exam.

- Test readers should be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan if the student for whom they are reading has access to additional designated supports and/or accommodations. This will ensure that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.

- In addition to a test reader, students may make use of any other approved specialized tools or equipment during the test as appropriate and in accordance with the *Accessibility Guidelines*. Test readers should be familiar with any assistive technology or approved supports the student requires.

- Test readers should have extensive practice in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before working directly with a student.

- The reader should be knowledgeable of procedures for reading aloud text by content area.

- The test reader should meet with the student in advance and inform the student of the parameters of the support. A suggested test reader script is included at the end of the Guidelines for Read Aloud.

- Unless otherwise specified by a student's IEP or 504 plan, the test reader does not have a role in manipulating the test or assisting with any other support tools. Test readers should be ready with appropriate script that reinforces the parameters during the test session.

## General Guidelines

- The test reader's support should 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, rough drafts, and login information immediately at the end of the testing session and deliver it to the test administrator in accordance with test security policies and procedures.

- 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.

### Images / Graphics

- For Students with visual impairments:

  - 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.

## Passages (for newly blind student who are not yet proficient in Braille only – requires prior approval from DPI)

- Read the passage in its entirety as punctuated (e.g., pauses at periods; raised intonation for questions). Do not verbalize punctuation marks other than ellipsis and quotation marks as noted above.

- If the student requires or asks for a specific section of the passage to be re-read with the punctuation indicated, the test reader should re-read those specific lines within the passage and indicate all punctuation found within those lines as many times as requested by the student.

- When test questions refer to particular lines of a passage, read the lines referenced as though they are part of the stem.

## Graphic Organizers

- Before reading a graphic organizer, the test reader should discern the most appropriate and logical manner in which to present the information. In general, information should be presented from broad to specific as indicated by the visual components of the document.

- The test reader should read the terms exactly as indicated in the graphic organizer. No other information about should be articulated. For example, the test reader should not create sentences if information is bulleted or appears in a title or label.

- Use common grade-appropriate language throughout the item and the test when referring to graphic organizers and their attributes (labels, blank cells, stems, etc.).

## Mathematical Expressions

- Mathematical expressions must be read precisely and with care to avoid misrepresentation by a student who has no visual reference. For mathematics items involving algebraic expressions or other mathematical notation, it may be preferable for the reader to silently read the mathematical notations or the entire question before reading it aloud to the student.

- Test readers read mathematical expressions with technical accuracy. Similar expressions should be treated consistently.

- In general, numbers and symbols can be read according to their common English usage for the student's grade level.

- Numbers greater than 99, however, should be read as individual numbers.

- Additional examples may be found in the attached appendix.

- Abbreviations and acronyms should be read as full words. For example, 10 cm needs to be read as "ten centimeters." Some abbreviations may be read differently by different readers. For example $cccc^3$ may be read as "cubic centimeters" or "centimeters cubed".

# Test Reader Guidance for Mathematics

## Table 1 – How to Read Numbers

| Description | Example | Read As |
|---|---|---|
| Large whole numbers | 632,407,981 | Six three two comma four zero seven comma nice eight one |
| | 45,000,689,112 | Four five comma zero zero zero comma six eight nine comma one one two |
| Decimal numbers | 0.056 | Zero point zero five six |
| | 4.37 | Four point three seven |
| Fractions – common | ½, ¼, 2/3, 4/5 | One half, one fourth, two thirds, four fifths Other common fractions include sixths, eighths, tenths |
| | 14/25 | Fourteen over twenty-five |
| Fractions – not common – read as numerator | 487/6972 | Four eight seven over six nine seven two |
| Mixed numbers – read with "and" between whole number and fraction | 3 ½ | Three and on-half |
| | 57 ¾ | Fifty-seven and three fourths |
| Percent | 62% | Sixty-two percent |
| | 7.5% | Seven point five percent |
| | 0.23 % | Zero point two three percent |
| Money – if contains a decimal point, read as "dollars and cents" | $4.98 | Four dollars and ninety-eight cents |
| | $0.33 | Thirty-three cents |
| | $5368.00 | Five three six eight dollars |
| Dates (years) | 1987 | Nineteen eighty-seven |
| | 2005 | Two thousand five |

| Description | Example | Read As |
|---|---|---|
| Roman Numerals | I | Roman numeral one |
| | IV | Roman numeral four |
| Ratios | x:y | X to Y |

## Table 2 – How to Read Operations

| Description | Example | Read As |
|---|---|---|
| Addition | 13   or  13 + 27 = <br> +27 | Thirteen plus twenty-seven equals |
| | 13 + 27 = | Thirteen plus twenty-seven equals question mark |
| Subtraction | 487  or  487 – 159 = <br> -159 | Four eight seven minus one five nine equals |
| | 487 – 159 = ? | Four eight seven minus one five nine equals question mark |
| Multiplication | 63    or   63 X 49 = <br> X49 | Sixty-three times forty-nine equals |
| | 63 X 49 = ? | Sixty-three times forty-nine equals question mark |
| Division | 120  = 8 <br>  15 | One two zero divided by fifteen equals eight |
| | 120 ÷ 15 = 8 | One two zero divided by fifteen equals eight |
| Operation with boxes | 3 + □ = 8 | Three plus box equals fifteen |

## Table 3 – How to Read Expressions

| Description | Example | Read As |
|---|---|---|
| Expressions containing variables (any letter may be used as a variable) | $N + 4$ | N plus four |
| | $8x – 3$ | Eight X minus three |
| | $4 ( y – 2 ) + 5 = 7$ | Four open parenthesis Y minus two close parenthesis plus five equals seven |
| | $V = \frac{4}{3} \pi r^3$ | V equals four-thirds pi r cubed |

| Description | Example | Read As |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | $x^2 y^3 = -36$ | X squared Y cubed equals negative thirty-six or<br>X to the second power times y to the third power equals negative thirty-six |
| | $156 x \geq 4$ | One hundred fifty six X is greater than or equal to four |
| Coordinate pairs | The point (-1, 2) | The point (pause) negative one comma two |
| | The point A is at (6, 3) | Th point A is at (pause) six comma three |
| Answer choices with no other text | A. (-3, -4 ) | A (pause) negative three comma negative four |
| Parallels | $\overline{AB} \parallel \overline{CD}$ | Line AB is parallel to line CD |
| Perpendiculars | $\overline{AB} \perp \overline{CD}$ | Line AB is perpendicular to line CD |

# Suggested Test Reader Script

*(to be used with student in advance of the day of testing)*

Hi:

I'm the person who will be reading your test to you when you take the Forward Exam next week in [math/ELA/science/social studies]. 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. (Unless this is an identified need in the student's IEP or504 plan and the reader has received appropriate training on when and how to do so)

- I will not be using different character voices or changes in my tone when I read. I will be using a very direct voice that does not change very much, no matter how exciting the story or test item gets.

- If there is a picture that has words in it, I will read those words. If you ask, I will re-read the words as well.

- Sometimes there may be something about a word or phrase that might give you a hint if I read it out loud. In those cases, I will skip the word, point to it on screen [or on your booklet if braille or print on demand], and continue to read.

- I can still help you with your [**list any assistive technology that the student may require that would need adult support -- if that support is provided by you].

- You can ask me to re-read parts of the test if you didn't hear me or need more time to think.

- 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 and tell you how it was punctuated, I can do that.

- If you ask me a question about the test all I will say is: "do you best work. I cannot help you with that."

Do you have any questions for me about how we'll work together during the test?