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KEY STAGE
2

YEARS
3-6

National curriculum assessments

Modified test administrators' guide

Braille tests for children with a
visual impairment

2014



Standards
& Testing
Agency

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2014 Modified test administrators' guide: braille tests for children with a visual impairment

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This publication is also available for download at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

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1. Introduction

This 'Modified test administrators' guide' (MTAG) provides guidance for anyone administering the braille versions of the key stage 2 national curriculum tests to children with a visual impairment.

This guide should be followed to ensure that children using the braille versions of the tests can access them properly and that they are not at a disadvantage.

In this guide, 'test administrator' refers to anyone responsible for, or involved with, test administration.

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring all test administrators administering the braille versions of the tests to children with a visual impairment are familiar with the content of this guide. Schools that do not comply with this guidance could be subject to investigation of maladministration.

Further information and advice

The information in this guide builds on section 4 of the 2014 key stage 2 'Assessment and reporting arrangements' (ARA). It should be used in conjunction with the

- 2014 key stage 2 'Test administrators' guide' (TAG); and
- test specific guidance provided with the modified test materials.

The ARA and TAG are both available on the 'Assessment at key stage 2' section of the Department for Education's (DfE's) website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

If you have any queries, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email assessments@education.gov.uk.

2. Planning for the tests

This section gives general guidance to help you prepare for administering the braille versions of the tests. Specific guidance for administering the English and mathematics tests is given in later sections. Test sensitive information will be provided with the test materials.

2.1 Access arrangements

Teachers should decide whether any access arrangements are appropriate, taking into account the assessment needs of each child and the support given as part of normal classroom practice. See section 4.4 of the 2014 key stage 2 ARA.

Detailed guidance on how to use each type of access arrangement is available on the 'Access arrangements' section of the DfE's website at www.education.gov.uk/accessarrangements.

2.1.1 Using technological and electronic aids and word processors

Children who normally use technological and electronic aids in the classroom, including low-vision aids such as closed-circuit television or JOCR scanners, may use these for the tests.

If a technological or electronic aid is used, a 'Use of a word processor or other technical or electrical aid form' must be completed and inserted inside the relevant child's test scripts, before they are sent for marking. The form can be downloaded from the 'Access arrangements' section of the DfE's website at www.education.gov.uk/accessarrangements.

2.1.2 Additional time

The timings shown on the braille test papers are the times for the standard tests.

Children using the braille tests are automatically entitled to up to 100 per cent additional time. The child should be informed of the time they are allowed, including any additional time, before each test starts.

2.1.3 Use of scribes and readers

The guidance given in the 'Access arrangements' section of the DfE's website at www.education.gov.uk/accessarrangements should be followed. In addition:

- If a scribe is used, the scribe must ensure that all the language, punctuation and phrasing are the child's own.
- Where a scribe supports a child with a visual impairment, it must be clear to the marker what work the scribe has done and what work is the child's own. On diagrams requiring completion, it must be clear where the child has indicated the answer.
- Any diagram which has been transcribed must show evidence of the child's work (for example pin marks). Diagrams transcribed without such indication will not be accepted.

- Where a scribe supports a brailist, the child's answers should be recorded on plain paper in a numbered list. Diagrams showing evidence of the child's work should be attached to the scribe's test script (answer booklets or test papers containing children's answers) and sent for marking.
- If a scribe is used, the 'Use of a scribe form' must be completed and inserted inside the relevant child's test scripts, before they are sent for marking. The form can be downloaded from the 'Access arrangements' section of the DfE's website.
- Readers can be used in the tests, but only with children who are not capable of accessing the materials independently and who are supported by a reader in normal classroom practice.
- In the English reading paper, readers can only read the general instructions, which include information on the front cover of the test paper and any directions that are not part of the actual questions. Readers must not read any other part of the reading test.
- In the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test, readers must read the prompts to the children in full. Readers may also read any part of the child's response back to them.
- In the mathematics test, readers must read the prompts to the children in full and refer to test sensitive guidance provided with the modified test materials.

2.2 Equipment for the tests

The tests are designed so that standard classroom equipment can be used.

The information provided with the test materials will list specific equipment needed for each test. You should make sure that the following equipment is available for children with a visual impairment.

2.2.1 All tests

- A suitable recording implement (such as a brailier, pen, pencil or word processor).

2.2.2 Mathematics tests

- A means of drawing. As drawing can be particularly difficult for children with a visual impairment, methods should be determined in advance. Appropriate diagrams on film, brailion or swell paper may be provided, but children may still require assistance in drawing and labelling.
- An adapted angle measurer or protractor, pins and a ruler, if appropriate for the child.
- A suitable calculator for the level 6 mathematics Paper 2. For some children with a visual impairment, this will need to be a calculator with speech output or enhanced display. If specialist calculators are not available, assistance may be given in reading the display, or in following a child's instructions. If a child uses a calculator with speech output you should consider administering the tests to them in a separate room so that other children are not disturbed or given an advantage.

It is not expected that children will have number apparatus in the tests. However for children who may need support, structured number apparatus such as Dienes blocks may be provided if this is normal classroom practice. Counters should not be used as they do not provide appropriate support.

2.3 Preparing rooms

Schools should consider administering the tests to children with a visual impairment in a separate room to other children sitting the tests, as they will need sufficient space to lay out their test papers. The instructions and content of the tests are also slightly different.

Headteachers should consider the number of test administrators that will be needed for each room where the tests are being administered. Arrangements should be in place should a child need to be removed, for example if they are disruptive or become ill.

Headteachers should also consider that test administrators who administer the tests on their own are more vulnerable to allegations of maladministration as they do not have another adult to verify the test administration procedures.

2.4 Early opening of modified test materials

Details of when the braille test materials can be opened to prepare for the administration of the tests are in the guidance provided with the modified test materials.

You may open the mathematics model pack(s) up to two school days before the relevant test, to check that you have sufficient quantities and to assemble the models.

You must not open the test packs early to familiarise yourself with the test content. This could lead to allegations of maladministration and the annulment of children's results.

2.5 Print transcriptions of the braille test papers

In addition to the braille test papers, print transcriptions of all braille papers are provided for reference during the administration of the tests. You should check the printed transcriptions carefully before starting the tests as amendments may be made to the wording of text and questions. A small amount of additional text may be added to explain information that appears as images in the standard version, to clarify visual references.

2.6 Making further adaptations to the tests

The braille versions of the tests are produced in contracted (grade 2) braille. The capital letter sign is used within the braille materials. These materials may be re-brailled in a mixture of uncontracted (grade 1) and contracted (grade 2) braille and without the capital letter sign if this is more suited to normal classroom practice.

If you make further adaptations to the braille version of the tests, care must be taken to ensure that the page layout and accuracy of the materials are not affected. If the corresponding text, questions or page references are adapted incorrectly, children may be disadvantaged.

Where appropriate, changes will have been made to the wording and layout of test questions in the braille versions of the tests.

2.7 Children's responses

Braillists will use separate sheets of braille paper and are not expected to record on the test papers. The braille versions of the mathematics tests may include separate inserts for particular questions. These are tagged at the back of test papers. Children will need to draw or braille on these inserts. In order to use double page spreads, braillists will need sufficient space to lay out their test papers.

As the tests will be marked externally, all completed test scripts must have the following information written on the front cover:

- the name of the child, (this must be the same as the name entered in the 'Pupil registration' section of the NCA tools website at www.education.gov.uk/ncatools);
- the name of the school;
- the Department for Education (DfE) number; and
- the name of the test paper (for example levels 3-5 mathematics Paper 1).

Any separate sheets should be labelled with the information listed above and inserted inside the relevant child's test scripts. If these details have not been provided by the child, you should add them at the end of the test session.

Braille question papers should not be sent to the marker.

If the child encounters unfamiliar braille contractions in any of the test papers you may tell the child what these contractions represent. The capital sign, italic sign, letter sign and bracket sign are all used in the tests.

2.7.1 Transcribing and making corrections on children's work

Children who wish to correct their work should do this as clearly as possible to assist external markers. For braillists, it is recommended that a series of 'for' signs (full six-dot cells) are used to obscure the incorrect work and record the revised answer under the first answer. If this is difficult, you should write on the test script, indicating the response which the child does not wish the marker to consider. This must be done accurately, according to the child's instructions and before the child leaves the test room.

You should not transcribe or overwrite any part of a child's test script unless it is a correction of braille requested by the child.

If a child produces unclear braille that needs to be clarified, this should be transcribed in print on the child's braille test script. You should clearly indicate which section of braille the annotation refers to.

It is important that evidence of the child's own response is submitted to the marker.

3. Administering the English tests

3.1 English reading test

In both the levels 3-5 and level 6 English reading tests, an example of the multiple choice question format will be provided in the braille question booklet. You should help children to identify the correct answer to this example so they are familiar with the method of answering this type of question.

Throughout the test, where question responses are labelled with letters, or letters and numbers, children may record the letter and / or number as their chosen answer rather than recording the answer in full, for example b, d, 1c and 2a.

Children using braille may need some additional assistance to understand the connection between the length of response required and the number of marks allocated for each answer. Guidance on the length of answers required has been provided in the 'Instructions' section of the braille question booklet. After each question, the type of answer required and the maximum number of marks will be shown.

Tactile diagrams are provided where appropriate and are included in the reading booklet. Due to the additional time required by braille users to interpret the diagrams, the clock may be stopped while the children examine them.

3.2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test

3.2.1 Short answer questions papers

For both the levels 3-5 and level 6 short answer question papers, children should work through the question booklet provided, recording their responses on separate sheets of braille paper.

For some questions children will be able to record just the letter of the correct answer; for others a word, sentence or phrase may be required.

3.2.2 Spelling tasks

A braille version of the levels 3-5 and level 6 spelling task booklet is not produced. You should read the passage as directed and the children should spell the target words in list form in braille. The children should use uncontracted braille for the spellings, but if contractions are used, the children should be asked to spell the word orally. You should also check orally if braille reversals occur. The children's work should be annotated accordingly. Braille markers will take account of the annotations when marking these test scripts.

The instructions for administering the braille version of the spelling task are the same as the standard instructions. A copy of the relevant spelling task administrator instructions will be provided with your test materials.

3.2.3 Level 6 Paper 1: extended task

The writing prompt for the extended task is produced in a separate instructions booklet for braillists.

For the extended task, a brailled answer sheet is provided.

This sheet (together with additional braille paper) will be located at the back of the extended task test booklet. You should remove these before the test commences and give them to the children during the introduction of the extended task. You may help children to align their responses with any headings on their braille answer sheet without invalidating the assessment.

The marker does not expect exact alignment of braille headings and responses. You can give additional braille paper during the task if the children require this.

Braillists should demonstrate the use of capital letters if they use them in their normal classroom work. You should indicate on the child's work whether or not the capital letter sign is used in normal classroom practice.

You should ensure that the name of the child (as recorded on the 'Pupil registration' section of NCA tools), the school name and the DfE number are recorded on each sheet of braille paper and inserted inside the relevant child's test scripts in the correct order.

4. Administering the mathematics tests

4.1 Levels 3-5 mental mathematics test

You should administer the braille version of the test on a one-to-one basis using the relevant section of the 'Mental mathematics scripts for children with a visual impairment'.

As instructions, question order and content may differ from the standard test you should not use the standard test CD or refer to the transcript of the standard version of the test when administering the braille version.

4.1.1 Timings

The timings of the braille test differ from the standard test to provide accessibility for children with a visual impairment. Children using the braille version of the mental mathematics test may be given as much additional time as they need to familiarise themselves with any stimulus material before a test question is read. Once a question has been asked, you may allow children up to 100 per cent additional time to process the language of the question and record their answer. The additional time is reflected in the modified script. Timings in the script must be strictly adhered to.

4.1.2 Test materials

The script for administering the braille version of the mental mathematics test may contain additional verbal prompts to help children to locate specific items in the braille child information booklet. This information is printed in italics in the modified script. It must be used on the first reading of the question but may be ignored on the second reading of the question.

4.2 The written mathematics tests

4.2.1 Braille test materials

The test materials provided consist of a braille test paper which contains a contracted braille version of the stimulus material from the standard child answer sheet, together with any additional stimulus material necessary for children to access the question. Some questions may be accompanied by stimulus material presented on separate braille sheets.

Some braille test papers may have loose sheets of plain paper inserted between facing page diagrams and the text to protect the braille dots. These should be removed before the test paper is given to the child.

You must provide each child with blank sheets of braille paper for their answers.

4.2.2 Models and objects

In some cases, models are provided with the braille test papers to support the child's ability to access the tests. You may wish to provide real objects which look like those illustrated in the tests. Care must be taken to use shapes identical to those drawn and to keep relative sizes the same. Children must not experiment with these objects. You are advised to indicate on the test paper where apparatus is available for children to handle or look at.

4.2.3 Children's responses to the braille test papers

No responses should be given on the braille test paper itself. Some braille questions require the use of additional answer sheets.

You must ensure that any inserts are attached to the child's brailled test scripts at the end of the test. No test papers should be sent for marking.

The following braille code is used to indicate missing numbers, words, letters or expressions.

- ⠠⠠⠠ Missing number with one or more digits.
- ⠠⠠ Missing number, one digit only.
- ⠠⠠ Missing word(s), letter(s), or expression(s) (which could include numbers).
- ⠠ or ⠠ Missing digit within a multi-digit number (use will be explained in the question).

4.2.4 Drawings, diagrams and tables

The mathematics tests contain a number of diagrams, graphs and pictures. Where necessary, these have been simplified or adapted for use by children with a visual impairment, but children might still need help in locating the correct diagrams or clarifying their layout. Compared with the standard versions of the tests, some non-essential diagrams and illustrations may have been omitted from the braille test papers.

Drawings

Some questions require children to draw. Where this is the case, children should use the method that they think is most appropriate. If a child is asked to draw a shape on a grid, the desired shape should be indicated by an outline. If appropriate, the area covered by the shape may be shaded, marked or indicated by pins (if used), so that it can be clearly read by the marker.

Where braillists are required to draw on plastic film, spare copies of the diagrams are provided so that they have the opportunity to make a second attempt if necessary. Where appropriate, children should be encouraged to use a ruler when drawing a straight line on film. Assistance may be needed to label these diagrams. You should ensure that these are attached to the child's test scripts at the end of the test.

Expected forms of response are:

- A drawing with a stylus on plastic film (a jelly-mat to place the plastic film on is essential). A drawing with pins and bands made by the child on either the thermoform or a plastic film sheet, or points shown with adhesive putty. You will remove the pins and bands, or adhesive putty, and indicate their positions by marking / drawing on the sheet (preferably with a permanent marker). Labels should be transcribed as positioned by the child.
- A drawing made by placing cardboard shapes in a particular position. When a diagram is created with several shapes, you should show the outline of the individual components as well as the outline of the whole shape created. For example, a shape made up of four triangles should show the four triangles and not just the outline of the completed shape.
- A combination of the above activities.

It is essential to mount the diagram on a cork board if pins are to be used.

Please note that where materials (pins, elastic bands, cardboard shapes and adhesive putty, for example) have been used to 'draw' a shape or diagram, these materials should not be sent to the marker.

Diagrams

Some of the diagrams may be tagged separately at the back of the test booklet. These diagrams are for use on a graph board or jelly mat, or are for children to braille on directly. You should detach these diagrams before administering the test so that the diagrams can be appropriately prepared. Spare copies of the diagrams should be kept separate in case they are needed during the test.

Tables

If a table has to be filled in, a separate copy of the table will be provided that children should put into their brailers, to fill in the answers.

5. After the tests

5.1 Packing and sending test scripts for marking

You will receive specific instructions for dispatching braille test scripts for marking. These will be included with your test materials.

5.2 Mark schemes amendments

In some cases, changes are made to the standard questions for the braille versions of the tests. This may result in a change to the standard mark scheme for these questions. Changes are recorded in the mark scheme amendments. You will be able to download these from the NCA tools website, www.education.gov.uk/necatools, from Tuesday 27 May after all test scripts have been collected for marking.



About this publication

Who is it for?

Anyone involved in administering the braille versions of the 2014 key stage 2 national curriculum tests to children with a visual impairment. Test administrators should familiarise themselves with its content before administering modified versions of the tests.

What does it cover?

Guidance on administering the braille versions of the tests.

Related materials

Visit the Department for Education's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2 for all related information.

For more copies

Printed copies of this document are not available. It can be downloaded from the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.