



Standards
& Testing
Agency

Key stage 2 modified test administration guidance

Administering braille versions

March 2020

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1 Introduction

This guidance will help you prepare to administer braille versions of the key stage 2 (KS2) tests. You should follow it to ensure that pupils can access the braille versions properly and are not at a disadvantage.

The information expands on section 7 of the [2020 KS2 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)¹ (ARA).

You should use this guidance together with the:

- 2020 KS2 [test administration guidance](#)²
- test administration instructions provided with the braille test materials

The test administration instructions include information about what you should do before, during and after each test. Schools may also want to use [practice materials](#)³ to help pupils prepare for the tests.

Headteachers are responsible for the test administration arrangements within their school. Failing to adhere to this guidance could lead to a [maladministration investigation](#)⁴, potentially resulting in the annulment of KS2 test results.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/2020-key-stage-2-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-test-administration-guidance-tag

³ www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-and-2-maladministration-investigation-procedures

2 Planning for the tests

2.1 Access arrangements

In addition to the [KS2 access arrangements guidance](#)⁵ you should follow the specific guidance below when administering braille versions of the tests.

Relatives of pupils who need access arrangements must not be involved in administering the tests to those pupils.

Additional time

Pupils using braille tests are automatically entitled to up to 100% additional time. You should use your discretion about whether to use the full amount of additional time and tell the pupils how much time they are allowed before each test starts. If pupils use additional time, they may also require rest breaks.

Rest breaks

Test administrators should consider using rest breaks for pupils who find it difficult to concentrate or who may experience fatigue. Schools do not need to notify or receive approval from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) if they are using rest breaks, but the arrangement must reflect normal classroom practice. Schools must supervise pupils and keep them under test conditions during the rest break.

Schools may want to split a test into sections for pupils with a visual impairment who are known to need a rest break. Rest breaks should be used by stopping and restarting the clock so that the pupil has the same overall test time. The content of the test must not be discussed during rest breaks. The test must be completed on the same day that it was started. Any partially completed test scripts must be sent for marking.

Scribes

Where a scribe supports a pupil with a visual impairment, it must be clear to the marker which responses the pupil has written and which have been written by the scribe.

All language, punctuation and phrasing must be the pupil's own. Particular care should be taken when transcribing the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test papers. The scribe must pause for relevant spellings to be dictated in Paper 1: questions and for

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-access-arrangements

all spellings to be dictated in Paper 2: spelling. Correct spelling is required for questions assessing contracted forms, verb forms, plurals, prefixes and suffixes.

In the mathematics test, any diagram that has been transcribed must show evidence of the pupil's work (for example, pin marks). Diagrams transcribed without such indication will not be accepted.

If a scribe supports a brailist, the pupil's answers should be recorded on plain paper in a numbered list. In questions using diagrams, evidence of the pupil's work should be attached to the scribe's answer booklet and sent for marking.

At the end of each test, test administrators should make a note of which pupils used a scribe and give this information to their headteacher. You do not need permission from STA, or your local authority, to use a scribe if it reflects normal classroom practice for the pupil. However, schools must notify STA of their use in the 'Available activity' section of the [Primary Assessment Gateway](#)⁶ by Friday 22 May.

Word processors or other technical or electronic aids

Pupils who normally use word processors or other technical or electronic aids in the classroom, including low-vision aids such as closed-circuit television or JOCR scanners, may use these for the tests, provided the functionality does not give the pupil an unfair advantage. You do not need permission from STA, or your local authority, but schools must notify STA of their use in the 'Available activity' section of the Primary Assessment Gateway by Friday 22 May.

2.2 Equipment for the tests

Braille versions of the tests are designed so that standard classroom equipment can be used. The test administration instructions provided with the braille test materials will list specific equipment needed for each test.

For all tests, pupils will need a suitable way of recording their answers, which reflects how they usually write in class. If the pupil is brailleing their responses, they will need braille paper to record their answers.

For the mathematics tests, pupils will also need the following:

- a means of drawing (methods should be determined in advance)
- an adapted angle measurer or protractor, pins and a ruler, if appropriate

⁶ www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk

The braille test materials may include diagrams on film, braille or swell paper, but pupils may still require assistance in drawing and labelling.

2.3 Use of rooms for modified tests

You should consider administering braille versions of the tests to pupils in a separate room from other pupils taking the tests. The instructions and content of braille tests are slightly different from standard versions and pupils using the braille versions are automatically entitled to up to 100% additional time. Using separate rooms will avoid distracting pupils using different versions of the tests. Pupils using braille versions of the tests may need more space to lay out their test papers and equipment.

3 Administering the tests

3.1 Test materials

The braille test pack will contain a copy of the test in Unified English Braille (UEB). You will also receive a printed transcript to help you administer the test. You should check the printed transcript carefully before starting the tests as amendments may have been made to the wording of text and questions compared to the standard versions.

A small amount of additional text may be added to clarify visual references and explain information that appears as images in the standard version. Some tables, diagrams or charts may also have been simplified. At a pupil's request, you may point to parts of the test paper such as charts, diagrams, statements and equations, but you must not explain the information or help the pupil by interpreting it.

The test materials may include braille contractions. You may tell the pupil what the letters or signs represent if these are unfamiliar to the pupil. The capital sign, italic sign, letter sign and bracket sign are used in all tests. Other punctuation signs will be used in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. You must not explain any punctuation marks in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

When to open test materials

Information about when test materials can be opened to prepare for their administration is provided on the front of each test pack.

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

3.2 Making further adaptations to the tests

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

Braille versions of the KS2 tests are produced in contracted braille and include the capital letter sign. The tests 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 the pupil's normal way of working.

If you make further adaptations to a 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, pupils may be disadvantaged. STA will not compensate, or give special consideration, where schools have incorrectly modified test papers.

3.3 Pupils' responses

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

Ensure the pupil's name and school DfE number are written on any additional paper used and the paper is attached to the pupil's test script.

3.4 Transcribing and making corrections on pupils' work

Pupils who wish to correct their work should do this as clearly as possible to assist external markers. For braille users, it is recommended that a series of 'for' signs (full 6 dot cells) are used to obscure the incorrect work. The revised answer should then be recorded under the first answer. If this is difficult, you should write on the pupil's braille answers, indicating which response the pupil does not wish to be marked. This must be done accurately, according to the pupil's instructions, and before the pupil leaves the test room.

You must not transcribe or overwrite any part of a pupil's test script unless it is a correction of braille requested by the pupil. If a pupil produces unclear braille that needs to be clarified, this should be transcribed in print on the pupil's braille answers. You should clearly indicate which section of braille the annotation refers to. It is important that evidence of the pupil's own response is submitted to the marker.

3.5 Instructions for mathematics

The test materials consist of:

- a braille test paper which contains a contracted braille version of the questions
- any additional stimulus material necessary for pupils to access the questions

Some questions may be accompanied by stimulus material presented on separate braille sheets or separate inserts for particular questions. These are tagged at the back of the test papers. Pupils may need to draw or braille on these inserts.

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 pupil.

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

STA uses established UEB code to indicate missing words, letters or expressions. The braille code for missing numbers is given in the instructions section of the mathematics papers.

Models

Models may be provided with the braille mathematics Papers 2 and 3: reasoning, for specific questions. You are advised to indicate on the test paper where models were available for pupils to handle or look at. If applicable, guidance will be provided in the braille test administration instructions.

Pupils' responses

Pupils should not respond on the braille question booklet itself. You must give each pupil blank sheets of braille paper for their answers.

For some questions, they may need to respond using the stimulus material or inserts tagged at the back of the test papers. You must ensure that any inserts are attached to the pupil's brailled test scripts at the end of the test so that they can be marked. Do not send the question booklets for marking.

Drawings, diagrams and tables

Mathematics Paper 2 and Paper 3: reasoning contain diagrams, graphs and pictures. Where necessary, STA has simplified or adapted these for pupils with a visual impairment, but they might still need help locating diagrams or clarifying their layout. Compared with standard versions of the tests, some non-essential diagrams and pictures may have been omitted from the braille test papers.

Make sure any separate sheets where a pupil has recorded their answers are:

- labelled with the pupil's details
- attached to the pupil's test script at the end of the test

Drawings

Pupils will need to draw in response to some questions. Where this is the case, pupils should use the method that they think is most suitable. If appropriate, the area covered by the shape may be shaded, marked or indicated by pins (if used), so that the marker can clearly read it.

Where braillists need to draw on plastic film, spare copies of the diagrams are provided so that they can make a second attempt if necessary. Where appropriate, you should encourage pupils to use a ruler when drawing a straight line on film. You may need to assist the pupil when labelling these diagrams. Make sure the diagrams are attached to the pupil's test script at the end of the test.

Pupils may draw using one, or a combination, of the following techniques:

- with a stylus on plastic film (a jelly mat to place the plastic film on is essential)
- with pins and bands made by the pupil on either the thermoform or a plastic film sheet, or points shown with adhesive putty—you should mount the diagram on a corkboard if pins will be used, and you will remove the pins and bands, or adhesive putty, then indicate their positions by marking or drawing on the sheet (preferably with a permanent marker)—labels should be transcribed as positioned by the pupil
- 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 4 triangles should show the 4 triangles and not just the outline of the completed shape)

Materials used to ‘draw’ a shape or diagram, such as pins, elastic bands, cardboard shapes and adhesive putty, should not be sent for marking.

Diagrams

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

You may stop the clock if pupils with severe visual impairment need time to interpret diagrams. You may also help the pupil to identify key features of the diagram, but you must not explain the information or help the pupil by interpreting it.

Tables

If a pupil has to fill out a table, STA will either provide:

- labels for pupils to put into the cells of the table
- a separate copy of the table, which pupils should use their brailers to complete

You may help the pupil to align their responses within the table.

3.6 Assistance

You must ensure that nothing you say or do during the test could be interpreted as giving pupils an unfair advantage, for example indicating that an answer is correct or incorrect, or suggesting the pupil looks at an answer again.

4 Test administration on Monday 11 May

4.1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 1: questions

Format

The KS2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test consists of 2 papers.

Paper 1: questions consists of a braille question booklet. There is a printed transcript to help test administrators. You must refer to the printed transcript rather than the standard test questions when administering the braille version of the test. Minor changes have been made to the text and layout of the braille booklet, compared with the standard version.

Pupils should work through the question booklet provided, recording their responses on separate sheets of braille paper. For some questions, pupils will be able to record just the letter of the correct answer. For other questions a word, sentence or phrase may be required.

Pupils will have 45 minutes plus up to 100% additional time to answer the questions in the booklet.

Equipment

Each pupil will need the equipment specified below:

- a suitable way of recording their answers (such as a braille, electronic braille display or word processor)
- braille paper (if the pupil is brailleing their responses)

Pupils may use the following, if this is normal classroom practice:

- technical or electronic vision aids, including low-vision aids such as closed-circuit television or JOCR scanners

No additional equipment is allowed.

Assistance

You may explain or rephrase a question, provided you do not give away subject-specific information. For example, if a question asks: "Rewrite the underlined verbs in the present progressive", 'rewrite' may be explained but not 'present progressive'.

[Notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests](#)⁷ gives examples of how to read particular types of question in Paper 1.

The following examples illustrate how to deal with some common situations.

Question: “I do not understand the question.”

Answer: “Read the question again and underline key words that tell you what to do.”

Question: “What does ‘adverb’ mean?”

Answer: “I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.”

You must not explain any subject-specific terminology. If any other word in a question is unfamiliar to pupils, you may explain it or show them objects or pictures to help them understand.

4.2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 2: spelling

There is no braille version of Paper 2: spelling. Instructions for administering this paper to pupils with a visual impairment are the same as the standard instructions. You should use the test transcript from the standard version and pupils should spell the target words in list form in braille.

Pupils should use uncontracted braille to spell the target words. If any pupil is unable to record their answers using uncontracted braille, they should be asked to spell the word orally and their answers should be recorded by a scribe. If any pupil inadvertently uses a braille contraction in their spellings, test administrators may check the pupil’s spelling of the word orally and annotate the paper accordingly. If the test administrator suspects that a brailist has used a braille reversal in their answer, they may ask the pupil to spell the word orally and annotate the paper accordingly.

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-for-readers-in-the-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-short-answer-questions

5 Test administration on Tuesday 12 May

5.1 English reading

Format

This test consists of a reading answer booklet and a separate reading booklet. There are printed transcripts of both booklets to help administrators. You must refer to the printed transcript rather than the standard test questions when administering the braille version of this test.

Changes have been made to the text and layout of the braille reading booklet, compared with the standard version. Changes have also been made to the text and layout of the questions in the braille version of the reading answer booklet.

Pupils will have 1 hour plus up to 100% additional time to read the 3 texts in the reading booklet and complete the questions at their own pace. They can approach the test as they choose, for example working through one text and answering the questions before moving onto the next.

Throughout the test, where question responses are labelled with letters, or letters and numbers, pupils may either:

- record the letter or number as their chosen answer, for example b, d, 1c, 2a
- record the answer in full

Equipment

Each pupil will need the equipment specified below:

- a suitable way of recording their answers (such as a braille, electronic braille display or word processor)
- braille paper (if the pupil is brailleing their responses)

If it is normal classroom practice, pupils may use:

- technical or electronic vision aids, including low-vision aids such as closed-circuit television or JOCR scanners
- monolingual English electronic spell checkers, provided they do not give definitions of words

Pupils must not use a dictionary.

Tactile diagrams may be provided where appropriate and may be included in the reading booklet. You may stop the clock while brailleists examine the diagrams, as they will need additional time to interpret them.

Assistance

The English reading test must not be read to individuals or to a group, except for the general instructions. However, you may read, and rephrase if necessary, the information in the test instructions on pages 1 to 2 of the reading question booklet to ensure all pupils understand them.

You may help pupils to locate pages or paragraphs in the text, as well as the questions in the reading question booklet. You may help to identify and interpret any pictorial details within the test but must not help with the reading of any text. Pupils with severe visual impairment will need extra time to interpret pictures and diagrams. You may stop the clock while pupils examine them.

Pupils 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. The instructions section of the braille question booklet gives guidance on the length of answers needed. The type of answer required, and the maximum number of marks will be shown after each question.

If a pupil asks a question about test content, you must not explain the meaning of any word or expression. The example below illustrates how to deal with a common situation:

Question: "I do not understand the question."

Answer: "Read the question again and pay attention to the key words that tell you what to do."

6 Test administration on Wednesday 13 May

6.1 Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic

Format

Paper 1: arithmetic consists of a single test booklet in braille.

There is a printed transcript of the braille booklet to help test administrators. You must refer to the printed transcript rather than the standard test questions when administering this test.

Pupils will have 30 minutes to complete the test, plus up to 100% additional time.

Equipment

Each pupil will need the equipment specified below:

- a suitable way of recording their answers (such as a braille, electronic braille display or word processor)
- braille paper (if the pupil is brailleing their responses)

Pupils are not allowed:

- calculators
- other mathematical equipment, such as angle measurers or mirrors

Assistance

If a pupil requests it, you may read a question to the pupil on a one-to-one basis. If reading to a pupil, you may only read words and numbers, but not mathematical symbols. This is to ensure pupils are not given an unfair advantage by having the function inadvertently explained by reading its name.

The example below illustrates how to deal with a common situation:

Question: "Do I need to multiply when I calculate 95% of 240?"

Answer: "I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test."

6.2 Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning

Format

Paper 2: reasoning consists of a single test booklet in braille.

Any additional diagrams needed for the braille version of the test will be included in the back of the braille test booklet.

Pupils will have 40 minutes to complete the test, plus up to 100% additional time.

There is a printed transcript of the braille booklet to help test administrators. You must refer to the printed transcript rather than the standard test questions when administering this test.

Equipment

Each pupil will need the equipment specified below:

- a suitable way of recording their answers (such as a braille, electronic braille display or word processor)
- braille paper (if the pupil is brailleing their responses)
- a suitable tactile ruler to measure centimetres
- a suitable tactile protractor or angle measurer

Pupils may use the following, if this is normal classroom practice:

- pins and bands to help record responses on diagrams
- stylus and floppy mat to help with drawing on plastic film
- monolingual English electronic spell checkers
- bilingual word lists
- bilingual dictionaries or electronic translators, provided they only give word-for-word translations

Pupils are not allowed calculators.

Assistance

If the pupil requests it, you may read a question to them on a one-to-one basis. If reading to a pupil, you may read words and numbers, but not mathematical symbols. This is to ensure pupils are not given an unfair advantage by having the function inadvertently explained by reading its name.

At a pupil's request, you may point to parts of the test paper such as charts, diagrams, statements and equations, but you must not explain the information or help the pupil by interpreting it.

The examples below illustrate how to deal with some common situations.

Question: "What does 'quadrilateral' or '>' or '<' mean?"

Answer: "I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test."

Question: "What is '0.6'?"

Answer: "That is nought point six."

You must not explain any subject-specific terminology. If any other word in a question is unfamiliar, you may explain it or show them objects to help them understand.

Further guidance for any specific questions is included in the braille test packs.

7 Test administration on Thursday 14 May

7.1 Mathematics Paper 3: reasoning

Format

Paper 3: reasoning consists of a single test paper.

Any additional diagrams needed for the braille version of the test will be included in the back of the braille test booklet.

Pupils will have 40 minutes to complete the test, plus up to 100% additional time.

There is a printed transcript of the braille booklet to help test administrators. You must refer to the printed transcript, rather than the standard test questions, when administering this test.

Equipment

Each pupil will need the equipment specified below:

- a suitable way of recording their answers (such as a braille, electronic braille display or word processor)
- braille paper (if the pupil is brailleing their responses)
- a suitable tactile ruler to measure centimetres
- a suitable tactile protractor or angle measurer

Pupils may use the following, if this is normal classroom practice:

- pins and bands to help record responses on diagrams
- stylus and floppy mat to help with drawing on plastic film
- monolingual English electronic spell checkers
- bilingual word lists
- bilingual dictionaries or electronic translators, provided they only give word-for-word translations

Pupils are not allowed calculators.

Assistance

If a pupil requests it, a question may be read to them on a one-to-one basis. If reading to a pupil, you can read words and numbers but not mathematical symbols. This is to ensure pupils are not given an unfair advantage by having the function inadvertently explained by reading its name.

At a pupil's request, you may point to parts of the test paper such as charts, diagrams, statements and equations, but you must not explain the information or help the pupil by interpreting it.

The examples below illustrate how to deal with some common situations.

Question: "What does 'quadrilateral' or '>' or '<' mean?"

Answer: "I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test."

Question: "What is '0.6'?"

Answer: "That is nought point six."

You must not explain any subject-specific terminology. If any other word in a question is unfamiliar to pupils, you may explain it or show them objects or pictures to help them understand.

Further guidance for any specific questions is included in the braille test packs.

8 After the tests

8.1 Packing and sending scripts for marking

Pupils taking braille versions of the tests should be marked as 'attended' on the attendance register. You will receive the braille materials in a padded envelope, which you should retain and use to return the completed braille scripts for marking.

Instructions for completing attendance registers and packing scripts for marking are provided in the [guidance on returning test scripts](#)⁸.

8.2 Amendments to mark schemes

In some cases, changes are made to the standard questions for the braille version of the tests. This may result in a change to the standard mark scheme for these questions.

These changes are recorded in the amendments to mark schemes for braille tests, which will be available to download from [GOV.UK](#)⁹ after the test period.

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-attendance-register-and-test-script-dispatch

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials

9 Further information

9.1 General enquiries

For general enquiries about test administration and access arrangements, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email assessments@education.gov.uk.

9.2 Modified tests

Schools can discuss the suitability of, and order, braille, enlarged print and modified large print versions of KS2 tests by contacting the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 (select option 3) or email modifiedtesthelpline@iwanttoconnect.co.uk.

9.3 Message us

For queries relating to access arrangements to meet a pupil's specific needs, schools can 'Message us' in the 'Available activity' section of the Primary Assessment Gateway.



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