



California Alternate Assessments for English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, and Science: Guidance on Assessing Students Using Eye Gaze as a Response Method

The California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, and science allow students to use eye gaze as a primary response method. An individualized education program (IEP) team should determine if the use of eye gaze as a method of communication is appropriate. Prior to initiating the use of eye gaze as an accessibility resource for the CAAs, the IEP team should determine if this response method is accessible to the student and ensure that the student has successfully used this method in the classroom and in classroom assessments. In addition, alternate response options (e.g., adapted keyboard, large keyboard, Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches) are allowed as non-embedded accommodations.

When planning to administer a CAA using eye gaze, consider that

- each student has a unique eye gaze method and each teacher or CAA test examiner should have a method of noting and responding to it;
- students have modes of communication unique to them and unique to the activities they undertake in the classroom environment; and
- the teacher knows which methods best capture student responses during the administration of a CAA for ELA, mathematics, or science.

Some of the CAA item types have features that are better suited to administering the CAAs to students who predominantly use eye gaze. For example, a test examiner can print the test option images, enlarge as necessary, and then place the images as far apart as necessary to distinguish where a student is gazing.

Please consider that some items may not be easily adapted for use with eye gaze as a response method. In these cases, it is permissible to change how the item content is presented in order to make it possible for a student to respond with eye gaze. However, it is important to use caution to ensure the method used to present the item does not change the item content.

If the test examiner determines that it is in the best interest of the student to print out items, be sure to add the print-on-demand non-embedded accommodation to the student's test settings at least 48 hours prior to testing and allow time to print the items when administering the test.

Here are some strategies test examiners can use to assist students who respond with eye gaze:

Multiple-Choice items (ELA, mathematics, and science)—Print item, cut apart options, and place in order.

Match (Drag-and-Drop) items (ELA, mathematics, and science)—Print item, cut apart options and stem, and point at the options to be inserted into the stem.

Zone items (ELA, mathematics, and science)

- Print item, cut apart stem and options, and place in order as if for a multiple-choice item.
- Label zones with numeric or alphabetic values on the diagram and use cards with corresponding numeric or alphabetic values for distinguishing an eye gaze.

Inline Choice List items (ELA)—Print items, cut apart options, and place in order.

Numeric Entry items (mathematics)—Use or create an enlarged 10-key pad appropriately sized for distinguishing an eye gaze.

Grid items (mathematics and science)—Assign a numeric or alphabetic value to the grid and then label cards, which can be used to indicate positions in the grid.

Composite items (ELA, mathematics, and science)—Composite items are items that consist of a combination of any two of the item types listed previously. Combine the eye gaze methods previously discussed for this purpose.

Please note that methods for increasing accessibility to the CAAs for students using eye gaze as a response method are not limited to those mentioned in this list. Administer CAA items in the manner that is consistent with the IEP team recommendations and ensure that the student has successfully used this method in the classroom and in classroom assessments before using eye gaze as a response method in a CAA.