

# Accessibility & Accommodations in *i-Ready Assessments*

Curriculum Associates fundamentally believes that all students deserve access to high-quality, equitable educational materials, regardless of disability or special needs. As such, we are dedicated to creating assessments that are fair and accessible to the widest population of students.

## Design Principles to Ensure Accessibility

We recognize that ensuring fairness and broad accessibility through the design and development of our assessments is not only our ethical responsibility, but also helps ensure that the inferences made about student performance are valid. To ensure assessments are free of characteristics that could interfere with students' test-taking experience, a set of seven elements were created for our assessment design based on the Universal Principles of Design:

1. Inclusive assessment population
2. Precisely defined constructs
3. Accessible, non-biased items
4. Amenable to accommodations
5. Simple, clear, and intuitive instructions and procedures
6. Maximum readability and comprehensibility
7. Maximum legibility

## Item Development Process

Our team incorporates these design principles throughout every step of the assessment development and testing process. The item development process for *i-Ready Assessments*, detailed below, serves as an example of Curriculum Associates' commitment to these principles.

In this process, content editors follow meticulous steps to create accessible, non-biased items. All content editors are trained not only on bias and sensitivity guidelines, but also on how bias may be revealed in data resulting from Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analyses. This cycle of review is critical, as it ensures content editors assess items for bias at multiple points in the process. It also serves as ongoing professional development so that bias and sensitivity issues are removed from ongoing development. Curriculum Associates also enlists the help of experienced teachers to review assessment items. Teachers who support this process have firsthand experience working with diverse student populations and receive training on bias and sensitivity guidelines. Finally, we employ a series of cognitive labs to gain a deeper understanding of the cognitive processes students use when responding to items.

<sup>1</sup>AERA, APA, NCME (2014). Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

<sup>2</sup>Thompson, S. J., Johnstone, C. J., & Thurlow, M. L. (2002). Universal design applied to large scale assessments (Synthesis Report 44). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes. Retrieved October 2002: <http://education.umn.edu/NCEO/OnlinePubs/Synthesis44.html>

## i-Ready Updates

As we continue to develop features that expand access to our assessments, all updates will be provided to educators at no cost as part of our Software as a Service model. A few exciting updates planned for *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* in August 2019 include:

- **Screen Readers** Students will be able to use screen readers to take *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* assessments. Screen reader capability will be supported by the addition of alt text for assessment content and HTML markup for tables.
- **Closed Captioning** Students will be able to view closed captioning for key prerecorded media in *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring*.\*
- **Keyboard Accessibility** Students will be able to navigate through *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* assessments using a keyboard. Assessment content will also support keyboard navigation for the majority of virtual tools embedded within the assessments.
- **Spanish Math Assessments** Spanish-speaking English Learners will be able to take *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* for Mathematics in Spanish. These assessments match the content and rigor of the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Mathematics and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* for Mathematics assessments based on a careful transadaptation of each item using a rigorous process recommended by the International Test Commission. They provide students with the same testing experience as students being assessed in English, and provide teachers with the same powerful reports they currently receive from the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Mathematics and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* for Mathematics assessments in English.

The goal of our planned enhancements is to meet the Level AA standard under the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) for *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* by fall 2019. In the future, we also plan to reach the same standard for *i-Ready Standards Mastery* and will provide periodic updates on our progress.

For a comprehensive description of how *i-Ready Assessments* conforms to the seven design principles above and how our roadmap aims to ensure continued improvements in accessibility, please see the document *Accessibility & Accommodations in i-Ready Assessments: Expanding Access for Diverse Student Populations*, which is available upon request from your local Curriculum Associates representative or Account Manager.

\*In fall 2019 closed captioning will be available for video tutorials in *i-Ready Diagnostic* as well as all items in *i-Ready Diagnostic* and *i-Ready Growth Monitoring* that contain video components.

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<sup>3</sup>International Test Commission. (2010). International Test Commission guidelines for translating and adapting tests. Retrieved from <http://www.intestcom.org>.