

Testing Directions: Paper

Spring 2026

These directions provide the information you need while administering the Reading, Mathematics, and Science Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) with paper test materials; the following sections are included:

- A script you will read aloud to students throughout testing.
- Information about what assistance you may provide and how to address student questions during testing.
- A checklist to verify and confirm important tasks during testing.
- Detailed information about testing policies and procedures.
- Information about entering student responses online after testing.

Using these directions ensures that tests are administered the same way for all students across the state, and that all students receive a score that accurately reflects what they know without any support, guidance, or unauthorized interference.

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Script to Read to Students

Review this script before testing so you are comfortable with the instructions you must read aloud. There are separate instructions for the first day of testing and any following days.

- All instructions that must be read to students are in shaded boxes and start with the word **Say**.
- The text in brackets [] should be read only if applicable.
- If you see a blank line, fill in the appropriate information. Your District or School Assessment Coordinator may also provide this information to you.

First Day of Testing for a Subject

Starting Testing

Provide information to students based on how testing is scheduled (for example, students will stop after completing a certain number of segments/sections or after a certain period of time).

Say: Tenemos programados aproximadamente _____ minutos para la prueba.

Se van a detener _____. Es importante que hagan su mejor esfuerzo. La prueba no tiene límite de tiempo así que pueden tener más tiempo después, si lo necesitan. Cuando hayan terminado, levanten la mano y luego _____ [por ejemplo, leerán un libro.]

Follow your school policy for collecting cell phones/wearable technology/devices, or ensure students have put them away. Depending on your school policies, students may have water/gum/snacks out during testing.

Say: Durante la prueba, los únicos artículos que pueden tener afuera son su cuaderno de prueba, algo con qué escribir y cualquier material que yo les dé.

[For mathematics and science: También pueden tener una calculadora.]

Si tienen alguna otra cosa, guárdenla ahora.

No pueden usar su teléfono celular o ningún otro aparato durante la prueba. Quítense sus relojes inteligentes u otro aparato de tecnología que tengan. Si usan su teléfono celular, su reloj inteligente, o cualquier otro aparato, su prueba no será calificada.

Distribute regular print, large print, or braille test books.

- For reading, distribute the passages book with the test book.
- For science, distribute the phenomena book with the test book.
- If providing any other materials (for example, scratch paper or translated word lists), distribute them as well.

Say: Escriban su nombre en la portada del cuaderno de prueba.

[If providing other materials: Escriban su nombre arriba de los otros materiales que les di. Cuando terminen la prueba, yo recogeré esos materiales.]

Provide the following instructions for the applicable subject. Assist students as needed.

Subject	Scripted Instructions
Reading	Say: Ahora vamos a romper el sello del cuaderno de prueba y del cuaderno de pasajes. Rompan el sello jalando la pestaña. Luego, abran cada cuaderno.
Mathematics	Say: Ahora vamos a romper el sello del cuaderno de prueba. Rompan el sello jalando la pestaña. <i>[Grades 3-4: Luego, abran su cuaderno de prueba. Al final del cuaderno de prueba van a encontrar una hoja cuadriculada. Pueden arrancarla de su cuaderno de prueba para usarla mientras toman la prueba. Escriban su nombre en la hoja cuadriculada.]</i> <i>[Grades 5-8 and 11: Luego, abran su cuaderno de prueba. En la parte de adelante de su cuaderno de prueba encontrarán una hoja con fórmulas y en la parte de atrás encontrarán una hoja cuadriculada. Pueden arrancarla de su cuaderno de prueba para usarlas mientras toman la prueba. Escriban su nombre en la hoja de fórmulas y/o en la hoja cuadriculada.]</i>
Science	Say: Ahora vamos a romper el sello del cuaderno de prueba y del cuaderno de fenómenos. Rompan el sello jalando la pestaña. Luego, abran cada cuaderno.

Read the directions from the student test books.

Say: Vayan a la página con las instrucciones.

- *[Reading and Mathematics: Para cada pregunta, escojan la respuesta que crean que es mejor.]*
- *[Science: Para cada pregunta, escojan la respuesta o las respuestas que piensan que son mejores.]*
- Deben contestar cada pregunta en su cuaderno de prueba.
- Pueden usar las hojas en blanco o escribir en su cuaderno de prueba para ayudarse a contestar las preguntas.
- Cuando terminen un segmento o sección, revisen sus respuestas. Luego, levanten la mano para que les dé una calcomanía para que sellen el segmento o sección. Una vez que lo sellen, ya no pueden regresar a él.
- En esta prueba, trabajen lo mejor que puedan para mostrar lo que saben y lo que pueden hacer.
 - No acepten ayuda para encontrar las respuestas a las preguntas de la prueba.
 - No les digan las respuestas a otros estudiantes.
 - No les digan a otros lo que viene en la prueba.
 - Puede haber consecuencias si no siguen las instrucciones o si actúan de manera deshonestas.

For reading only, read the directions from the student passages book.

Say: Vayan a la página con las instrucciones del cuaderno de pasajes.

- Usarán este cuaderno de pasajes para leer información que les ayudará a contestar sus preguntas.
- Todas las preguntas están en su cuaderno de prueba. Deben contestar cada pregunta en su cuaderno de prueba.

For science only, read the directions from the student phenomena book.

Say: Vayan a la página con las instrucciones del cuaderno de fenómenos.

- Usarán este cuaderno de fenómenos para leer información que les ayudará a contestar sus preguntas.
- Todas las preguntas están en su cuaderno de prueba. Deben contestar cada pregunta en su cuaderno de prueba.

For mathematics and science only, provide information about calculators. For reading, go to the next **Say** box. Ensure students are using the correct handheld calculator; refer to the *Detailed Information* section for requirements. For graphing calculators, ensure students have cleared the memory or disabled applications for testing. You will verify whether calculators may be used as students move between segments for mathematics.

Say: [*Mathematics grades 3-8:* No pueden usar calculadora en el segmento 1. Pueden usar calculadora en todos los demás segmentos.]

[*Mathematics grade 11:* Pueden usar calculadora en todos los segmentos.]

[*Science:* Pueden utilizar una calculadora, según sea necesario]

Instruct students to begin testing.

Say: Ahora den vuelta a la página (las páginas) y comiencen con el segmento 1 o sección 1.

Actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration. If students have questions during testing, refer to the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section for instructions you may provide.

Breaks

If students will take a break during testing, instruct them to close their test books. Make sure students do not talk about the test during the break.

End of Segments/Sections

As students finish a segment/section, read these instructions and provide them a sticker to seal it. If you run out of stickers, tape can be used instead.

Say: Cuando terminen un segmento o sección, revisen sus respuestas y asegúrense de haber contestado todas las preguntas. Una vez que sellen el segmento o sección, no podrán regresar a ninguna de esas preguntas.

Ending Testing

When getting to the end of the day's scheduled testing time, read these instructions to students. Students must seal the pages that were completed in the test book at the end of the test session.

Say: Vamos a detener la prueba en _____ minutos.

Revisen el segmento o sección en que están trabajando, según lo necesiten, y asegúrense de haber contestado todas las preguntas.

No podrán regresar a ninguna de esas preguntas.

If students will not finish a segment/section during the time scheduled for testing, use the following guidelines and script below. Otherwise, go to the next **Say** box following the table.

Say: Si no terminan el segmento en que están trabajando, yo les ayudaré a sellar las páginas que ya tienen contestadas hasta el momento.

Subject	Guidelines	Scripted Instructions
Reading	Students must complete all items associated with a passage. In the passages book a title page will indicate the beginning of the next passage. Seal the pages so that the title page for the next passage is visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas del pasaje de lectura en que están trabajando.
Mathematics	The last item completed must be the last item on the right-hand page so that the next item is not visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas de las páginas en que están trabajando.
Science	Students must complete all items associated with a phenomenon. In the phenomena book, a title page will indicate the beginning of the next phenomenon. Seal the pages so that the title page for the next phenomenon is visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas para el fenómeno en que están trabajando.

To end testing, read the following script to students.

Say: Hemos terminado la prueba. Ahora recogeré su cuaderno de prueba y cualquier otro material.

Collect test materials from students. For graphing calculators, ensure students have cleared the memory.

Following Days of Testing for a Subject

Resuming Testing

Provide information to students based on how testing is scheduled (for example, students will stop after completing a certain number of segments/sections; after completing the test, or after a certain period of time).

Say: Tenemos programados aproximadamente _____ minutos para la prueba.

Se van a detener _____. Es importante que hagan su mejor esfuerzo. La prueba no tiene límite de tiempo así que pueden tener más tiempo después, si lo necesitan. Cuando hayan terminado, levanten la mano y luego _____
[por ejemplo, leerán un libro.]

Follow your school policy for collecting cell phones/wearable technology/devices, or ensure students have put them away. Depending on your school policies, students may have water/gum/snacks out during testing.

Say: Durante la prueba, los únicos artículos que pueden tener afuera son su cuaderno de prueba, algo con qué escribir y cualquier material que yo les dé.

[For math and science: También pueden tener una calculadora.]

Si tienen alguna otra cosa, guárdenla ahora.

No pueden usar su teléfono celular o ningún otro aparato durante la prueba. Quítense sus relojes inteligentes u otro aparato de tecnología que tengan. Si usan su teléfono celular, su reloj inteligente, o cualquier otro aparato, su prueba no será calificada.

For mathematics and science only, provide information about calculators. Ensure students are using the correct handheld calculator; refer to the *Detailed Information* section for requirements. For reading, go to the next **Say** box. For graphing calculators, ensure students have cleared the memory or disabled applications for testing. You will verify whether calculators may be used as students move between segments for mathematics.

Say: [*Mathematics grades 3-8:* No pueden usar calculadora en el segmento 1. Pueden usar calculadora en todos los demás segmentos.]

[*Mathematics grade 11:* Pueden usar calculadora en todos los segmentos.]

[*Science:* Pueden utilizar una calculadora, según sea necesario.]

Distribute test books and any other test materials (for example, phenomena book for science, passages book for reading, grid paper or formula sheets removed from the test book, scratch paper, translated word lists, etc.).

Say: Revisen que su nombre esté escrito en los materiales que les di.

Recuerden revisar sus respuestas cuando terminen un segmento o sección de la prueba. Luego, levanten la mano para que les dé una calcomanía para que sellen ese segmento o sección.

Students will begin with the next unsealed part of test.

Say: Abran su cuaderno de prueba. Ahora pueden continuar con su prueba.

Actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration. If students have questions during testing, refer to the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section for instructions you may provide.

Breaks

If students will take a break during testing, instruct them to close their test books. Make sure students do not talk about the test during the break.

End of Segments/Sections

As students finish a segment/section, read these instructions and provide them a sticker to seal it. If you run out of stickers, tape can be used instead.

Say: Cuando terminen un segmento o sección, revisen sus respuestas y asegúrense de haber contestado todas las preguntas. Una vez que sellen el segmento o sección, no podrán regresar a ninguna de esas preguntas.

Ending Testing

When getting to the end of the time scheduled for that day's testing, read these instructions to students. Students must seal the pages that were completed in the test book at the end of the test session.

Say: Vamos a detener la prueba en _____ minutos.

Revisen el segmento o sección en que están trabajando, según lo necesiten, y asegúrense de haber contestado todas las preguntas.

No podrán regresar a ninguna de esas preguntas.

If students will not finish a segment/section during the time scheduled for testing, use the following guidelines and script below. Otherwise, go to the next **Say** box following the table.

Say: Si no terminan el segmento en que están trabajando, yo les ayudaré a sellar las páginas que ya tienen contestadas hasta el momento.

Subject	Guidelines	Scripted Instructions
Reading	Students must complete all items associated with a passage. In the passages book, a title page will indicate the beginning of the next passage. Seal the pages so that the title page for the next passage is visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas del pasaje de lectura en que están trabajando.
Mathematics	The last item completed must be the last item on the right-hand page so that the next item is not visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas de las páginas en que están trabajando.
Science	Students must complete all items associated with a phenomenon. In the phenomena book, a title page will indicate the beginning of the next phenomenon. Seal the pages so that the title page for the next phenomenon is visible.	Say: Ustedes deben completar todas las preguntas para el fenómeno en que están trabajando.

To end testing, read the following script to students.

Say: Hemos terminado la prueba. Ahora recogeré su cuaderno de prueba y cualquier otro material.

Collect test materials from students. For graphing calculators, ensure students have cleared the memory.

Script to Read to Students

Answering Questions and Providing Assistance

To ensure that all students receive a score that accurately reflects what they know, you cannot provide guidance on test content or test-taking strategies when answering questions or providing assistance during testing. This section includes information and guidance on what assistance may be provided and how to address student questions during testing.

Test-Related Scenarios

Students must be familiar with how to answer different types of items. The only exceptions where additional guidance may be provided are scripted below.

Scenario	Scripted Instructions and/or Guidance
A student has a question on test content (for example, “how do I add fractions?”) or how to answer an item.	Say: No puedo ayudarte con las preguntas de la prueba. Haz tu mejor esfuerzo.
A student does not think there is a correct answer or reports an issue with the test content.	Say: Dime en qué pregunta estás y tomaré nota. [<i>Reading and Mathematics:</i> Say: Para cada pregunta, escoge la respuesta que creas que es mejor.] [<i>Science:</i> Say: Para cada pregunta, escoge la respuesta o las respuestas que piensas que son mejores.] Refer to Documenting Suspected Issues on pages 19-20 for the information you need to take note of if this occurs.]
A student does not know how to answer an item type that is not multiple-choice (for mathematics or science).	Say: Observa las instrucciones arriba de la pregunta para ayudarte a contestar la pregunta. [You may verbally describe how to answer the type of item in general but cannot show the student how to answer the item in the test or provide assistance on the test content.]

Student or Classroom Management Scenarios

While not an exhaustive list, these scenarios may help you evaluate what is appropriate to say and do for similar situations while ensuring that students are able to demonstrate what they know independently.

If you are unsure how to assist in a situation that arises, follow your school procedures for asking for assistance from others (like your School Assessment Coordinator) before proceeding if possible.

Scenario	Scripted Instructions and/or Guidance
A student is off task or being disruptive.	Redirect the student's attention to the test without assisting the student on the test in any way. Examples may include verbal reminders or visual cues to stay on task (for example, Say: Es importante que hagas tu mejor esfuerzo, or Say: Concéntrate en realizar tu prueba).
A student needs to leave and will not return (for example, illness or emergency).	Instruct the student to close the test books and turn in test materials. The segment/section the student was working on should not be sealed. Note: For reading and science, when the student resumes testing, they may need to go back to access the passage or phenomenon; however, the student cannot change answers to previously completed items.
A student needs to use the restroom.	Follow school procedures regarding restroom breaks during testing (for example, only one student can leave at a time or hallway monitors ensure students are not talking during breaks). Ensure the test books are closed.
A student is discouraged and not making progress.	Encourage the student without assisting the student on the test in any way. Examples may include verbal reminders or visual cues (for example, Say: Haz tu mejor esfuerzo, or Say: Puedes hacerlo). If the student is not making progress after encouragement, instruct the student to stop testing using scripted instructions and contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator for appropriate next steps.
A student is not using a strategy or material that is used during instruction.	You cannot remind students of test-taking or academic strategies (for example, using their scratch paper or re-reading the passage).
A student is rushing through the test.	You cannot control the pace a student is testing or instruct a student to slow down. Follow your school procedures for what to do when students finish early.

Test Monitor Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure you have verified or completed the following tasks for testing. The “Section to Reference” column indicates where more information can be found in the *Detailed Information* section that follows.

Overview	Section to Reference
☐ Confirm the days and times scheduled for test administration.	Testing Schedules (pages 13-14)
☐ Confirm what plans have been made for students who finish early or need extra time during the testing session.	Testing Schedules (pages 13-14)
☐ Confirm what plans have been made for students who finished testing in an earlier testing session, as they are not allowed to be in the testing room on subsequent days of testing.	What Students May Do (page 20)
☐ Confirm if additional resources are needed to administer any accommodations and/or universal supports.	Materials Allowed and Not Allowed During Testing (page 15)
Prepare for Testing	Section to Reference
☐ Remove or cover academic or instructional posters and graphics on testing room walls and desks.	Prepare the Testing Room (pages 14-15)
☐ Confirm which allowable materials will be provided to students (for example, scratch paper) during testing.	Materials Allowed and Not Allowed During Testing (page 15)
☐ Review materials not allowed during testing and verify school procedures for ensuring students do not access them.	Materials Allowed and Not Allowed During Testing (page 15)
Start/Resume and Monitor Testing	Section to Reference
☐ Provide materials to students and have students start testing using scripted instructions.	Provide Test Materials to Students (pages 18)
☐ If applicable, review how to access and navigate the recorded translated <i>Testing Directions</i> and associated Test Monitor instructions.	Recorded Translated Testing Directions (page 13)
☐ Actively monitor student testing.	Active Monitoring (page 18)
☐ Answer student questions, following the guidance in these directions.	Policies on Providing Assistance (pages 18-19)
☐ As needed, follow school procedures to request assistance from other staff.	Requesting Assistance from Others (page 19)
☐ Document any suspected item or translation errors.	Documenting Suspected Issues (pages 19-20)
☐ If applicable, provide breaks to students.	Breaks and Leaving During Testing (page 20)

Ending Testing	Section to Reference
☐ Remind students that testing is almost over by reading verbal instructions and help students seal completed pages, as needed.	End Testing (page 20)
☐ If students finish testing at different times during the testing session, direct students on what to do (for example, read a book).	What Students May Do (page 20)
☐ Collect test books and any other materials provided.	Collecting Secure Test Materials (page 21)
☐ Return test materials, or keep them secure, as instructed.	Collecting Secure Test Materials (page 21)
☐ Know how to answer student questions about the testing experience.	Discussing the Testing Experience (page 21)
☐ Report any suspected item or translation errors.	Reporting Suspected Issues (page 21)
☐ Report any misadministrations or test security issues.	Reporting Misadministrations and Test Security Violations (page 21)
Ending Testing	Section to Reference
☐ Enter student responses online for scoring, if applicable.	Enter Student Responses Online (page 22)

Detailed Information

This section provides additional details about testing. Review this information before testing and refer to it as needed during and after testing.

Overview

This section contains information about the administration of the MCA with paper test materials.

Changes to Statewide Assessments

As the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) to which the assessments are aligned change, the assessments themselves must also change.

- 2024-25 was the first year of a new Science MCA aligned to revised academic standards. The new science assessments are aligned to the [2019 Minnesota Academic Standards in Science](#).
- 2025-26 is the first year of a new Reading MCA aligned to revised academic standards. The new reading assessments will be aligned to the [2020 Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts](#).
- With new assessments, MDE seeks to continuously improve the supports, tools, and accommodations available.

Science Phenomena Book

A separate phenomena book is provided automatically with the Science MCA paper test book to make it easier for students to access phenomena information alongside the items included in the test book. Students must answer all items in the test book.

Reading Passages Book

New for 2025-26: A separate passages book will be provided automatically with the Reading MCA paper test book to make it easier for students to access reading passages alongside the items included in the test book. Students must answer all items in the test book.

Reading and Science Large Print Accommodation Change

For the Reading and Science MCA, the 24-point large print test book is not available for the MCA-IV series. Instead, the 18-point large print test book format has been improved to maximize the layout of the content on an 8.5" x 11" page size, making the materials more manageable for students.

Resource for Script, Signed Interpretation, and Scribe

If you are administering the test with a script, signed interpretation, or a scribe, refer to the [Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments](#) before testing. This resource is available on the MDE website (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources > under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading).

Administration of the Script

Administering the Mathematics or Science MCA with a script requires an individual setting or a small group setting with other students who require the script accommodation. The Test Monitor reads each question from the script while the student answers in the test book. Additional guidelines for the administration of a script are provided in the script.

New for 2025-26: A reading script is now available. This accommodation will require MDE approval.

Braille Administrations and Braille Test Administration Notes

The method the student will use to record answers to the questions (for example, dictated to a scribe or with a braille writer) should be discussed with the student prior to testing.

Braille Test Administration Notes are included with each braille test and must be used in addition to these directions to administer the braille test. If you are administering a braille test, use the *Script to Read to Students* section that is included in the *Braille Test Administration Notes*; that version of the script is tailored to the braille administration.

A student may use the braille test materials with the Reading and Science MCA assistive technology online forms. Many students need the extra support of braille materials or tactile graphics for more complicated test content like graphs, images, and charts. The braille paper test book and assistive technology online forms can be paired together as they contain the same content. Refer to the *Braille Test Administration Notes* for additional details.

Recorded Translated Testing Directions

Recorded translated *Testing Directions* to play for students are available in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish on the [Minnesota Assessment Hub](#) (Minnesota Assessment Hub > Resources & Training > Test Administration Resources). These recorded directions are intended to be used by multilingual learners, including English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. If you are administering a test using the recorded translated *Testing Directions* provided by MDE, refer to the specific guidance for the use of these directions available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Note: Districts may translate the scripted directions into additional languages as needed. For detailed guidance, refer to Translated Directions (MCA) (Written, Oral, Recorded, Signed) in the *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations* on the MDE website (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources > under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading).

Testing Schedules

Verify how testing is scheduled and what the daily testing times will be with your District and School Assessment Coordinator.

Each table includes different information to help Test Monitors if testing is scheduled over multiple days. If a student will not complete a section during the testing session, use the applicable scripted instructions to end testing. Know what plans have been made for students who finish early or need extra time during the testing session, based on how testing is scheduled.

Number of Items for Paper Reading MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Section 1	Number of Items in Section 2	Total Number of Items
Grade 3 Reading MCA	21	21	42
Grade 4 Reading MCA	23	19	42
Grade 5 Reading MCA	20	22	42
Grade 6 Reading MCA	19	23	42
Grade 7 Reading MCA	21	21	42
Grade 8 Reading MCA	23	19	42
Grade 10 Reading MCA	22	20	42

Number of Items for Paper Mathematics MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Segment 1	Number of Items in Segment 2	Number of Items in Segment 3	Number of Items in Segment 4	Total Number of Items
Grade 3 Mathematics MCA	10	16	12	12	50
Grade 4 Mathematics MCA	12	11	14	13	50
Grade 5 Mathematics MCA	12	12	14	12	50
Grade 6 Mathematics MCA	11	14	13	12	50
Grade 7 Mathematics MCA	9	15	14	12	50
Grade 8 Mathematics MCA	12	15	15	8	50
Grade 11 Mathematics MCA	14	14	14	14	56

Number of Items for Paper Science MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Section 1	Number of Items in Section 2	Total Number of Items
Grade 5 Science MCA	20	23	43
Grade 8 Science MCA	21	22	43
High School Science MCA	27	27	54

Prepare for Testing

Prepare the Testing Room

Ensure all academic or instructional posters and graphics, including strategy techniques or methods, in the testing room or on desks are covered or removed during test administration. This also includes academic or instructional information not related to the subject being tested (for example, mathematics information must be covered during a reading test). This policy is required to ensure that students are answering items independently, without extra support or guidance that could be present in academic or instructional materials. For example, information in a historical poster about a scientist may provide an advantage for a reading passage or science phenomenon; likewise, information on a mathematics concept may provide information that could be used to answer a science item.

If you choose, you may write information specific to test administration on the board or in the room. Examples of allowable information include information about scheduling (for example, “We will stop after completing two segments or sections,” or “We will stop testing at the end of the class period”) and what students may do when they are done with testing (for example, “Read a book when you are done testing”).

Materials Allowed and Not Allowed During Testing

Materials Allowed

- A pencil or pen
- Stickers
- Handheld calculators (only in specified tests and segments/sections; see below)
- Paper copy of translated word lists or translated and glossed word lists (see below)
- Paper copy of mathematics multiplication or hundreds tables (mathematics only; see below)
- Scratch paper (if providing; see below)

Materials Not Allowed

- Dictionaries, thesauruses, and other reference materials
- Calculator manuals
- Cell phones (see below)
- Wearable technology or other devices (see below)

Cell Phones, Wearable Technology, and Other Devices

Students may not use or access cell phones or any other devices, including wearable technology (for example, smartwatch, smart glasses, fitness tracker, Bluetooth headphones), at any time during testing, including during breaks or when testing is completed (if students remain in the testing room). If applicable, follow your school procedure for collecting all devices or ensuring that students leave devices outside the testing room. If students are allowed to bring devices inside the testing room, they must remove them (for wearable technology), turn them off, and/or put them away before testing begins. Note: For the rare situation where a student may need to use a cell phone or device as a support or accommodation (for example, as a medical monitor, personal hearing aid, amplification system, or assistive technology), contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator to confirm if the use is an allowable exception to the policy.

Calculators

Students must be familiar with the functionality of the handheld calculator prior to test administration. The following table specifies which type of handheld calculator may be used by grade for Mathematics MCA. Using a more technologically-advanced calculator than the one specified provides assistance that invalidates what is being assessed (for example, using a scientific calculator instead of a four-function calculator for grade 5). Using a less technologically-advanced calculator than the type specified (for example, using a four-function calculator instead of a graphing calculator for grade 8) is allowed but not recommended as students do not have the same access to additional functions the more advanced calculator provides.

For the Science MCA, any type of handheld calculator that meets the allowable requirements may be used. Because these items require only simple mathematical computations, using a more or less technologically-advanced calculator does not invalidate what is being assessed.

Calculator Type Allowed for Paper MCAs

Test	Type of Calculator Allowed
Grade 3-5 Mathematics MCA	Basic or four-function
Grades 6-7 Mathematics MCA	Scientific
Grades 8 and 11 Mathematics MCA	Graphing
Science MCA	Any (a basic or four-function calculator is all that is necessary; however, scientific or graphing calculators are also allowed)

Contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator with questions on the types of handheld calculators that may be used. Note: Web-based calculators or calculator apps accessed from another device (for example, Chromebook) are not allowed.

- For grades 3-8 Mathematics MCA, a calculator is not allowed during Segment 1 of the test.
- For grade 11 Mathematics MCA, a calculator is allowed on all segments of the test.
- For Science MCA, a calculator may be used on any items as needed.

Graphing calculators must either have the memory cleared before and after each testing session, or have a feature that temporarily disables all flash applications and calculator files (for example, TI-NSpire has “Press to Test” mode).

Translated/Glossed Word Lists

Translated word lists provide direct one-to-one translations of terms in a student's target language. They are most helpful for multilingual learners who are literate in the target language and have encountered the translated terms during instruction. This may include English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. Translated word lists are available for the Mathematics MCA as a universal support.

Glossed word lists provide concise, English-language definitions of academic terms and may be helpful for any student who typically receives classroom support with vocabulary development. Translated and glossed word lists are a universal support available on the Reading and Science MCAs that may allow students to access the meaning of unfamiliar words in test items. **New for 2025-26:** Translated and glossed word lists are now available for the new Reading MCA.

- [Translated word lists](#) are available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub (Minnesota Assessment Hub > Resources & Training > Student Tools and Supports). Additional guidance for providing and using the lists during test administration are available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub.
- [Translated and glossed word lists](#) are available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub (Minnesota Assessment Hub > Resources & Training > Student Tools and Supports). The translated word lists have been updated to include glossed definitions, which are concise definitions of terms in English. Additional guidance for providing and using the lists during test administration are available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Verify with your District or School Assessment Coordinator which students may be provided translated or glossed word lists as a universal support.

Mathematics Tables

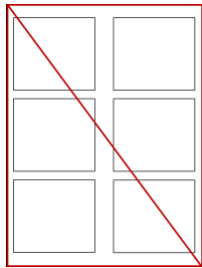
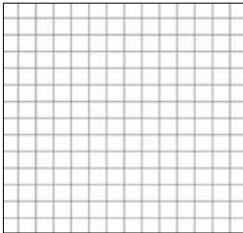
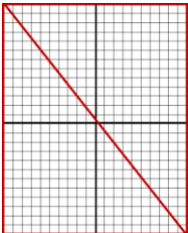
For Mathematics MCA, paper versions of mathematics multiplication and hundreds tables are available. If providing a mathematics multiplication or hundreds table, it must be a printed version of the document posted to the Minnesota Assessment Hub on the [Student Tools and Supports](#) page (Minnesota Assessment Hub > Resources & Training > Student Tools and Supports). Verify with your District or School Assessment Coordinator which students may be provided a mathematics tables as a universal support.

Note: Mathematics multiplication and hundreds tables must only be used on the segments where calculators are allowed (Segments 2, 3, and 4 for grades 3-8; calculators are allowed on all segments for grade 11). Contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator for more information.

Scratch Paper

Students can use blank spaces in the test book to work on items and make notes; for mathematics, students may also use the grid paper and formula sheets provided inside the test books. If students remove the grid paper or formula sheets from inside the test book, they must write their names on the sheets. Note: Ensure students do not tear off the back page of the test book for scratch paper; the back page contains the secure barcode number for the test book, which is needed to confirm secure materials are returned.

If other scratch paper will be provided, the following materials outlined below may be used. Students may draw lattices, diagrams (for example, number lines), or charts (for example, multiplication table or hundreds chart) on scratch paper if they choose, but examples cannot be displayed in the classroom or handed out during testing.

Allowable Scratch Paper	Guidelines	Examples
Blank paper	Lined notebook paper is acceptable, but the paper must be blank. No boxes or numbers may be added to guide students to show their work, and paper may not be pre-folded into sections. Sticky notes are also allowed, but they must be provided as a pad and not strategically pre-arranged by the Test Monitor.	Not Allowed: 
Individual white- or blackboards	Must be blank before and after administration. Must not contain pre-printed numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes.	N/A
Commercially produced graph paper	Must not contain numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes.	Allowed:  Not Allowed: 

Start/Resume and Monitor Testing

Provide Test Materials to Students

- Provide students with the correct test book according to the security number assigned to them on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or other checklist provided in the school. The security number is located on the back cover.
- On the first day of testing, the student should write their name on all materials provided: test book, reading passages book or science phenomena book, scratch paper, grid paper (if removed from inside the test book), mathematics formula sheets (if removed from inside the test book), translated or glossed word lists (if provided), and mathematics tables (if provided). All materials must be turned in at the end of the test session.
- Scripts are not provided to students; they are used by the Test Monitor to administer the test to students who require a script/human reader accommodation.

Active Monitoring

Actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration to carefully observe student behavior and ensure that all students are working independently and making progress on their tests. You cannot complete other tasks, including planning lessons, grading papers, working online, reading a book or newspaper, or talking casually with other staff. Note: If your school procedures allow you to access these directions electronically, ensure your primary focus is still on active monitoring.

If space is limited and students can potentially see other test materials, ensure through your active monitoring that students are working independently.

Student Responses and Sealing Segments/Sections

Students respond directly in the regular or large print test book, unless they require the scribe accommodation. As students finish each segment/section, you will provide a sticker and may assist them in applying the sticker to seal the appropriate pages, if needed. If you run out of stickers, tape may be used instead.

Policies on Providing Assistance

The *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of this document gives specific guidance regarding the type of help that may be provided during testing. Keep the following requirements in mind:

Type of Assistance	Requirements
Repeating or clarifying directions	• You may repeat the scripted instructions in this document. As needed, scripted directions can be explained or clarified only after the scripted directions are provided as written. The explanation can only clarify the directions to ensure that the meaning of specific words or sentences are accurately understood. The Test Monitor cannot change the meaning of the directions or provide information that would lead or cue the student. You may not read directions from the student's test book. • If you believe a student missed any item(s), you may remind them to make sure they have answered all items using only scripted instructions from this document. You may not point out specific items or provide any other instructions that may lead the student to change or reconsider their answers.

Type of Assistance	Requirements
Assistance with the test	- You may not define or pronounce a word on a test item, discuss a test item, or give an opinion on a test item. - You may not give any indication that there may be a different approach or answer; do not help students with answers to items in any way. - You may not remind students of any test-taking strategies or academic strategies (such as using scratch paper). Help of this sort should be provided prior to testing, such as when the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) are used. - For mathematics and science, students must be familiar with the functionality of the calculator prior to the start of testing, and you cannot provide assistance. The only exception is if a calculator is not functioning (for example, dead batteries).
Pacing and monitoring student progress	- You may not control the pace at which a student tests, as the tests are not timed and students should be allowed to continue as long as they are making progress. For example, if you notice a student is moving quickly through the test, you can re-read any scripted instructions from this document, but it is not permissible to say, “Slow down” or “Take your time.” - You may monitor student tests to verify where students are in terms of how testing is scheduled (such as verifying how many items students have completed or verifying which segment/section they are in). However, you need to make sure that you are not viewing secure test content. Unauthorized viewing of secure test content is when you view the content long enough to determine the essence of it.

Requesting Assistance from Others

During testing, you will follow your school procedures for alerting others if assistance is needed (for example, sick student in the room) so that you can continue actively monitoring. Your primary focus must remain on the students who are testing, even when an unexpected issue arises.

Your school procedure may require you to use a cell phone, computer, or other device to alert others if assistance is needed; however, these devices may be used for that purpose only. You cannot check email or work on your computer/device, and cell phones and wearable technology should be silenced to reduce disruptions.

Documenting Suspected Issues

All items on statewide assessments go through numerous educator reviews, as well as reviews at MDE and at the service providers, before being placed on a test. However, there may be times when a student feels that there is no correct answer. In order to maintain test security, MDE requires that a specific process be followed to report this to MDE.

If a student does not think there is a correct answer or points out a test item that appears to have an error, note the following information to report to your District or School Assessment Coordinator within two business days:

- Grade
- Subject
- Student's MARSS/SSID number
- Item number

The student should select the answer they think is best and continue testing. This same process is used if a student points out a translation that appears to be incorrect in a translated or glossed word list. You will report these issues when the testing session is over.

Breaks and Leaving During Testing

Depending on your school's testing schedule and procedures for testing, students may be allowed a short break. Whenever leaving the testing room (such as a restroom break) or when there is a break in testing, students should close their test books unless an emergency prevents them from doing so. Ensure that students do not discuss test items and answers.

In the case of an emergency (such as a fire alarm or a severe weather warning), it is important to follow all safety procedures and exit as quickly as possible. To maintain test security when all students must leave the room, you should close the door and lock the door when leaving, if possible.

End Testing

You must read the verbal instructions to alert students prior to the end of the day's testing so that they have time to review their answers.

What Students May Do

If students finish testing early and stay in the testing room, students may read a paper book, complete activities on paper that are not related to the subject(s) being tested (such as word searches, drawings, or coloring sheets), or sit quietly. Disruptions for other students must be kept to a minimum.

- Student test materials (such as scratch paper and word lists) must be collected before students work on other activities. The district determines if other paper activities completed by students after they are done testing need to be collected as well.
- Students may read a paper book, even if reading is being tested, but textbooks for any subject(s) being tested in the room are not allowed.
- If multiple subjects are being tested (which may happen during a makeup session), the materials students can use must be taken into consideration.
- Cell phones or other devices (including wearable technology) cannot be used at any time, even if the student has completed testing or is working on something unrelated.

Note: Students who have finished testing in a previous test session are not allowed to be in the testing room on subsequent days of testing. Follow your school procedures to ensure students who have finished testing in a previous test session are not in the room during future testing sessions. This policy is required in order to reduce distractions for students who are still testing and to ensure test security is maintained.

Collecting Secure Test Materials

At the end of each testing session, **all materials must be collected** before students leave the testing room.

- Verify that all regular print, large print, and braille test books have been collected, using the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist*.
- Verify that additional materials provided (scratch paper, translated or glossed word lists, and/or mathematics tables) have been collected. For mathematics, any formula sheets or grid paper removed by students from inside the test book must also be collected.
- Verify you have all scripts, using the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist*.
- Immediately report any missing test materials to your District or School Assessment Coordinator.

These materials must be kept secure between testing sessions following your school procedures (for example, you will secure test materials in a locked drawer or cabinet, or return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator between testing sessions).

Once testing is completed, all secure materials must be securely disposed of or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school procedures). The secure disposal must be completed no more than two business days after the close of the testing window. This also applies to any formula sheets or grid paper, if removed from inside the test book, scratch paper, any translated or glossed word lists, or mathematics tables, if provided to students.

Discussing the Testing Experience

Remember that you cannot ask students about specific test items, even after testing is over. If students ask about a specific item following testing, remind them that items are secure and cannot be discussed. If all testing is completed for the grade and subject in the school, you may provide instruction on the general academic standards assessed. However, targeted instruction as a result of student questions is not allowed if any students still need to complete testing. In any case, you must not address or solve the specific test item.

Reporting Suspected Issues

If a student reported a suspected content issue during testing, provide the information you documented to the District or School Assessment Coordinator or other designated contact, following your school procedures.



The content of the item itself, reading passage, or science phenomenon, should never be referenced, captured as an image, or emailed within the school or district or in a communication with MDE or Pearson. Doing any of these actions is a security violation.

Reporting Misadministrations and Test Security Violations

If a misadministration (a non-standard situation) or security violation occurs during testing, contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator as soon as possible for next steps.

Specifically for test security, while you are encouraged to raise your concerns within the district, you can report suspected incidents of cheating or other improper or unethical behavior on statewide assessments to MDE using the online [Test Security Tip Line](#) (education.mn.gov > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching & Learning > Statewide Testing).

Enter Student Responses Online

In order for a paper test to be scored, district or school staff **must enter** student responses from the test book **into a Data Entry form in TestNav** during the testing window. Student responses in MCA paper test books will **not** be scanned and scored when they are returned to Pearson; **only student responses entered online are scored**.



Designated staff are responsible for entering student responses from the test book into TestNav. **Students cannot enter their own responses into TestNav, and student test books cannot be mailed to Pearson for scoring.** If student scores are not entered online by the end of the testing window, there is a \$200 fee for late student response entry.

After testing, staff must break the test book stickers to enter student responses online. Test books must remain secure before being returned to Pearson, but do not need to be resealed.

Student responses must be entered exactly as the student responded, without edits or changes. The test items include specific instructions for students on how the item should be answered, and the student answers cannot be modified if they did not follow these instructions. If the student missed an item and it is not discovered until responses are entered, the student may not go back to complete the item.

For more information on how to enter student responses online, refer to the [MCA Data Entry User Guide](#) on the Minnesota Assessment Hub (Minnesota Assessment Hub > Resources & Training > User Guides).