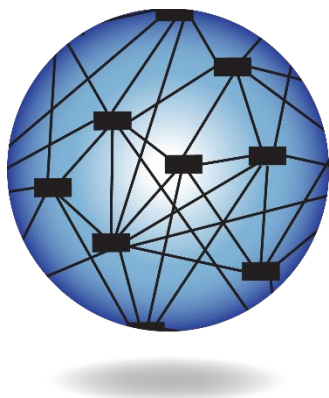




DYNAMIC[®]
LEARNING MAPS

TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

2025–2026

YEAR-END MODEL STATES

Publication Date: 07/31/2025

All screenshots, data dictionaries, and templates shown or referred to in this manual are accurate on the publication date noted above.

When this manual is updated, the publication date will also be updated. An alert will be posted on the Test Updates webpage. A summary of changes is included in the Appendix under Document History.

ABOUT THIS MANUAL

Although this manual contains a large amount of information, it is important to read it in its entirety. To effectively sort information for ease of use, the manual is organized into three categories (Table 1).

Table 1

Test Administration Manual Organization

Category	Information Included
Introduction	Provides an orientation to the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) project, the assessment system, and the DLM testlets.
Assessment	Provides information on the preassessment process, the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, the required spring assessment window, and preparation for future years.
Systems	Provides an overview of Kite® Student Portal, with step-by-step instructions and screenshots. Go to the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE for detailed information on all Educator Portal processes.

FINDING HELP

When the information in this manual and resources from your state Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) webpage do not lead to solutions, these contacts can provide additional support (Table 2).

HINT: Print the following pages and keep them handy!

Table 2

Additional Supports for Users

Local Technology Representative	Local Assessment Coordinator	The DLM Service Desk 1-855-277-9751 (toll-free) or DLM-support@ku.edu
• Installing Kite® Student Portal app • Installing a supported browser to access Educator Portal • General computer support • Internet availability • Display resolution • Issues with sound, headphones, speakers, etc.	• Training requirements • Assessment questions • Assessment scheduling • Test invalidation requirements • Student Individualized Educational Program (IEP) requirements • Test window dates, extensions, requirements, etc. • Testlet resets (may take up to 72 hours)	Only users with an active Educator Portal account can make inquiries to the Service Desk about the following issues: • Data issues (rosters, enrollment, etc.) • Unlocking Student Portal

PLEASE REMEMBER, IF YOU CONTACT THE DLM SERVICE DESK:

- **Do not send any Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** for a student via email or via Live Chat in Educator Portal. This is a federal violation of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). PII includes information such as a student's name or state identification number. Each state has unique PII requirements. Please check with your assessment coordinator to find out what student information can be legally emailed or sent via Live Chat in your state.

- **Do send:**

- Your contact information (email address and name)
- Error messages, including the testlet number if applicable to the problem
- Service Desk ticket number when following up on a previously submitted issue

For all concerns for which the Service Desk requires student-specific information, you must call.

NOTE: All information in an email is taken into consideration when checking for PII violations. The electronic signature for the sender of an email may identify the district or school in which a student resides. If you need to communicate with the Service Desk via email or Live Chat, ensure the information you are providing meets your state's PII policies

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AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

The TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment provides test administrators with the key knowledge and tools needed to prepare for and administer the assessment. Test administrators (e.g., educators, examiners, or teachers) prepare students for the assessment and administer the assessments to them.

WHAT’S NEW IN THIS VERSION

Information about these topics has been added or enhanced in this version (Table 3).

Table 3
Changes in This Version of the Manual

Topic	Starting Page
Number and order of delivery of science field test testlets updated throughout	Page 37

To learn about updates to test administration resources, such as this manual, subscribe to [Test Updates and DLM News](#) on the DLM website.

CHECKLISTS FOR TEST ADMINISTRATORS

HINT: Print the following pages and keep them handy!

The following checklists detail the critical steps for test administrators to follow. Refer to the checklists while reading this manual and while preparing for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment. Follow the provided links to go to topics in this guide for more information or to access other resources. The checklists are organized into four sets of tasks for different parts of the school year:

- 1) Before Beginning Assessments (Table 4)
- 2) Spring Assessment Window (Table 5)
- 3) Preparing for Next Year (Table 6)
- 4) Instructionally Embedded Assessments (optional, but recommended) (Table 7)

This section is a general overview. Specific step-by-step guidance on how to use the system is provided in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

1. BEFORE BEGINNING ASSESSMENTS

Table 4

Before Beginning Assessments Checklist

☒	Step	Resources
☐	1) Confirm your student's eligibility to participate in the DLM alternate assessment. Some states provide additional participation guidelines.	Participation Guidelines in the state appendix of this manual (if provided by your state) or contact your assessment coordinator
☐	2) Read this TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.	N/A
☐	3) Use the resources on your state's DLM webpage to become familiar with the DLM Alternate Assessment System, the subjects assessed in your state, and the procedures to prepare for the assessment.	How to Use the DLM Website, page 32 of this manual

☑	Step	Resources
☐	4) Share information about the DLM alternate assessment with parents or guardians, preparing them for their students' assessment experience.	Go to the DLM website About DLM dropdown DLM Assessments Information for Parents
☐	5) Review the blueprints for each subject being assessed to provide instruction on the Essential Elements.	Instructional Resources select a subject view blueprints
☐	6) Activate your Educator Portal account by following the instructions in the Kite® activation email.	Watch the three-minute helplet video, Getting Started in Educator Portal ; or read the Activate Educator Portal Account section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.
☐	 7) Agree to the annual security agreement in Educator Portal. Test administrators will not have access to any part of Educator Portal until they agree to the security agreement.	Sign in to Educator Portal accept the security agreement
☐	8) Pass the Required Test Administrator Training with a score of 80% or higher.	Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training for Year-End Model States
☐	9) Review your state's guidelines on required and recommended professional development modules. Complete as needed.	TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL state appendix, if provided
☐	10) Use the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL and work with IEP teams to determine the accessibility supports that should be selected for each student taking the DLM alternate assessment.	ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL on the state DLM webpage

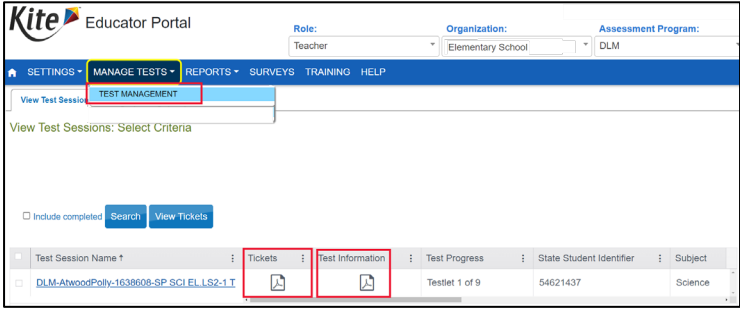
☑	Step	Resources
☐	11) Confirm with your assessment coordinator your state's requirements for documenting DLM accessibility supports.	ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL appendix, if provided by your state, on the state DLM webpage
☐	12) Review student demographic information in Educator Portal for accuracy and edit if needed. a) Ensure student data are correct. b) Ensure roster data are correct. NOTE: The student must be enrolled in the correct grade for grade-appropriate testlets to be delivered in Student Portal. If a student was enrolled in the incorrect grade and has started testing, after the student's enrollment record is corrected, the student will need to begin testing all over again in the correct grade. Previously completed testlets may no longer be available.	View and Check Student Data section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	13) Record and save the chosen supports for each student in their Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile in Educator Portal.	Review the 10-minute helplet video, Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile . Use the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL to read about PNP Profile supports. Use the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE section titled Access the PNP Profile and First Contact Survey.

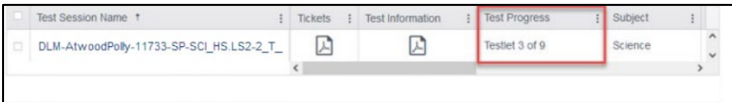
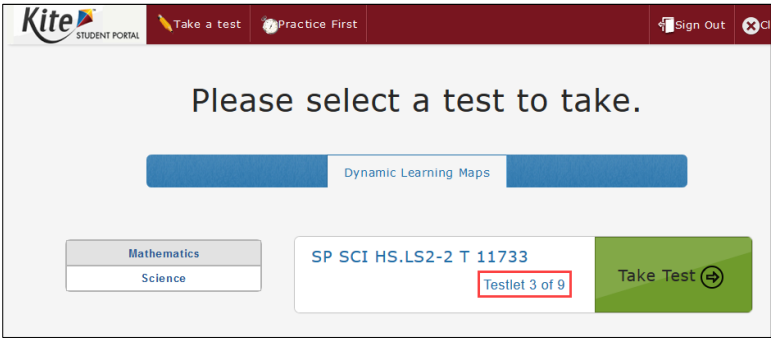
☑	Step	Resources
☐	 14) Complete and submit the First Contact Survey in Educator Portal. Students do not receive testlets if the First Contact Survey is not submitted.	Complete the First Contact Survey section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Review the 10-minute helplet video, Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile
☐	15) Ensure technology personnel have installed the most current version of Kite Student Portal on assessment devices. Macs and PCs with earlier versions of Student Portal must be updated. Chromebooks will update automatically. iPads will update automatically if auto-updates are enabled.	Your assessment coordinator or technology personnel
☐	16) Familiarize yourself and your students with DLM testlets. a) Test administrators must consider how students communicate and which supports students use to communicate. b) Access practice activities and released testlets by using a demo login and the Practice First option in Student Portal. c) Check compatibility of a student's assistive technology device by allowing the student to use the device with the released testlets in Student Portal. Assistive devices include switches, eye gaze devices, whiteboards, etc.	Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets on your state DLM webpage

2. SPRING ASSESSMENTS

Table 5

Spring Assessment Window Checklist

☑	Step	Resources
☐	1) Confirm each student's demographic information is correct, select suitable Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile settings, and complete and submit the First Contact Survey.	Educator Portal Settings Students View Students PNP Profile and First Contact Survey
☐	2) Schedule locations and times for assessment sessions to ensure students complete all DLM testlets during the required spring assessment window.	Check with the assessment coordinator
☐	3) After the spring assessment window opens, retrieve the Testlet Information Page (TIP) for the first testlet in each subject. Gather needed materials before beginning assessments.	Educator Portal Manage Tests Select Test Management View the two-minute helplet video, Test Tickets & TIPs in the Spring Window
☐	4) Retrieve the student's Test Ticket (username and password) from Educator Portal in the Test Management section in the Tickets column. The student's username and password are the same for all testlets. The Test Ticket and TIP are next to each other, as depicted in the following screenshot. 	Educator Portal Manage Tests Select Test Management. Go to the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE section titled View Student Username and Password. View the 2-minute helplet video, Test Tickets & TIPs in the Spring Window .

☑	Step	Resources
☐	5) Assess student on the first testlet.	Go to the Kite Student Portal User Guide section in this manual.
☐	6) As each remaining testlet becomes available, retrieve the TIP, gather materials, and assess the student.	Educator Portal Manage Tests Select Test Management
☐	7) Use the Test Progress column in Educator Portal on the Test Management screen to confirm that all testlets are complete.  Student Portal will also show which testlet the student is on in each subject (e.g., Testlet 3 of 9).  8) Use the extracts in Educator Portal to help ensure all testing is complete. Go to Reports Data Extracts DLM Test Administration Monitoring extract compare columns U and V	Educator Portal Manage Tests Select Test Management EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE

3. PREPARING FOR NEXT YEAR

Table 6

Preparing for Next Year Checklist

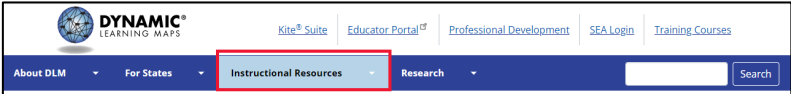
☒	Step	Resources
☐	1) Evaluate accessibility supports (under PNP Profile settings) with IEP teams and make decisions about supports and tools for next year.	ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL on the state DLM webpage
☐	2) Plan academic IEP goals with IEP teams for the upcoming year. Review the test blueprints for the next grade for the student.	DLM webpage For States select your state Teacher Assessment Resources All Blueprints for each subject: ELA, mathematics, and science

4. INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED ASSESSMENTS (OPTIONAL, BUT RECOMMENDED)

Table 7

Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessments Checklist: English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science

☑	Step	Resources
☐	Basic concepts during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window: 1) Participation in this window is optional. 2) Watch the helplet video, Using the DLM Instruction & Assessment Planner During the Optional Instructionally Embedded Window (less than five minutes), to learn how to use the instructionally embedded assessments in the optional window. Blueprint coverage for each subject is not required or tracked during this window. 3) All test administration preparation occurs in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal. 4) All instruction is provided outside of Educator Portal. 5) All testing occurs in Kite Student Portal. 6) Student performance on the testlets during this optional window does not predict nor guarantee a student's performance in a subject during the required spring assessment window. 7) Student mastery results during this window do not contribute to the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports. HINT: Detailed steps for accessing and navigating the Instruction and Assessment Planner for ELA, mathematics, and science are provided in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Blueprints on the state DLM website Go to the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL state appendix, if provided Educator Resource Videos for Year-End Model States

☑	Step	Resources
☐	Basic steps during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window: 1) Review the student's demographic information and ensure the student is enrolled in the correct grade and rostered to the correct subject. Ask the assessment coordinator to make corrections if needed.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	2) Submit the First Contact Survey, which is a requirement. Using the Instruction and Assessment Planner will not be possible until the First Contact Survey is submitted. Choose suitable settings in the PNP Profile and save.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	3) Select an Essential Element in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	4) Accept the system-recommended linkage level for the Essential Element or select a different one.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	5) Access the mini-map in the Instruction and Assessment Planner and develop instructional strategies for the Essential Element.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	6) Use the professional development modules to help design instructional strategies for each Essential Element.	DLM Professional Development Modules
☐	7) Provide instruction on the selected Essential Element outside Educator Portal. Select Instructional Resources and select the subject. 	Instructional Resources for YE Model States Dynamic Learning Maps
☐	8) After instruction has been provided and the student is ready for assessment, assign the testlet for the Essential Element in the Instruction and Assessment Planner.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	9) Select the Credentials icon in the Instruction and Assessment Planner to retrieve the student's username and password for Student Portal.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE

☒	Step	Resources
☐	10) Schedule locations and times for assessment sessions.	N/A
☐	11) Administer the testlet in Student Portal.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	12) Use the Fall Performance Report to review the mastery status of each Essential Element tested for an individual student per subject during this optional assessment window.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	13) Evaluate the student's progress and select the next Essential Element and linkage level to be used for instruction and assessment.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	14) Repeat the above general steps for the newly selected Essential Element.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
☐	15) Resources for tracking students include the DLM Test Administrator Monitoring extract, the Student Progress Report, Class Roster Report, and the Performance Reports. These can be retrieved in the Educator Portal reports and extracts. Go to the Reports Tab Alternate Assessment Reports Instructionally Embedded.	EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE

HINT: All reports are secure documents containing student Personally Identifiable Information (PII). If they are downloaded, they must be securely saved; and if they are printed, they must be securely stored or destroyed after using.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Educators use the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Alternate Assessment System to assess what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities know and can do in the DLM assessed subjects in Grades 3–8 and one or more grades in high school. The department of education policy in each state determines the subjects and grades that are assessed. The DLM Alternate Assessment System provides accessibility by design and is guided by the core beliefs that all students should have access to challenging, grade-level content; and that based on this challenging content, test administrators must adhere to the highest levels of integrity, both in providing instruction and in administering the assessment.

STUDENTS

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities have a disability or multiple disabilities that especially affect intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviors. When adaptive behaviors are significantly affected, students are unlikely to develop the skills needed to live independently and to function safely in daily life when they reach adulthood. The DLM alternate assessment is designed for students for whom general education assessments are not appropriate, even with accessibility supports.

Students taking the DLM alternate assessment require extensive direct instruction and substantial support to achieve measurable gains. They should receive academic instruction aligned to grade-level content standards, but at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity.

Check with your assessment coordinator or review your DLM state webpage for the subjects and grades assessed in your state.

THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS FOUNDATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

The DLM learning maps are highly-connected representations of how academic skills are acquired, as reflected in research literature. Both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics have fully developed learning maps. ELA and mathematics are assessed in Grades 3–8 and one or more grades in high school.

Nodes in the maps represent discrete knowledge, skills, and understandings in either ELA or mathematics, as well as important foundational skills. The maps go beyond traditional learning progressions by including multiple and alternate pathways through which students

may develop content knowledge. The ELA learning maps include more than 2,000 nodes. The mathematics learning maps include more than 2,300 nodes, and both subject maps include more than 150 foundational nodes associated with them. More than 10,000 connections exist between the nodes in the combined maps.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The DLM content standards for ELA, mathematics, and science are called Essential Elements and are the learning targets used for the assessments. The purpose of the Essential Elements is to build a bridge from grade-level content standards to academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. ELA and mathematics have several similarities and will be discussed together, while science will be discussed in its own sections.

ELA AND MATHEMATICS ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

ELA and mathematics Essential Elements are linked to the Common Core State Standards. ELA and mathematics learning maps each have small sections of critical concepts or skills called nodes that are needed to learn the Essential Elements for the subject. These small sections are at different levels of complexity and are called linkage levels.

ELA AND MATHEMATICS LINKAGE LEVELS

The DLM alternate assessment provides testlets for ELA and mathematics at five linkage levels. The Target linkage level is based on nodes that align to the knowledge and skills described by the Essential Element and indicate a student's performance in relationship to the grade-level target. Then, multiple pathways on the map were carefully inspected to identify nodes that link to the Target linkage level, both preceding and extending beyond it.

The least complex linkage level is called the Initial Precursor. Testlets developed at that linkage level reflect foundational nodes in the DLM learning map, which are skills and understandings necessary for learning subsequent academic content (e.g., "focus attention"). Testlets at this level are typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. Initial Precursor testlets are administered by the test administrator, who follows the instructions within the testlet, observes the student's behavior, and then records the student's responses in the testlet in Student Portal.

Two linkage levels are between the Initial Precursor and the Target linkage levels: Distal Precursor and Proximal Precursor. Testlets at the Distal Precursor and Proximal Precursor linkage levels allow students to develop the knowledge, skills, and understandings needed to reach the Target. Testlets at these linkage levels may be either teacher-administered like

For all ELA and mathematics Essential Elements that are available for assessment, resources describing their linkage levels and nodes are provided on the [Instructional Resources](#) page of the DLM website. An Excel workbook, titled [Professional Development Modules Supporting Essential Elements](#), is also available. This workbook cross-references each Essential Element to the relevant professional development modules (Figure 1). The workbook includes one tab for ELA and one for mathematics.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ							
1	Grade	EE	Description	Foundational Modules								Modules Organized by Claims and Conceptual Areas																															
			http://dlmpd.com	DLM Claims and Conceptual Areas	DLM Core Vocabulary and Communication	DLM Essential Elements	IEPs linked to the DLM Essential Elements	Standards of Mathematics Practice	Symbols	Universal Design for Learning	Who are the students with significant disabilities?	Algebraic Thinking	Basic Geometric Shapes and their Attributes	Calculate Accurately with Addition	Calculate Accurately with Division	Calculate Accurately with Multiplication	Calculate Accurately with Subtraction	Composing, Decomposing, and Comparing Numbers	Composing and Decomposing Shapes and Area	Counting and Cardinality	Exponents and Probability	Forms of Number	Fraction Concepts and Models PART 1	Fraction Concepts and Models PART 2	Functions and Rates	Measuring and Comparing Lengths	Organizing and Using Data to Answer Questions	Place Value	Properties of Lines and Angles	Time and Money	Perimeter and Volume and Mass	Patterns and Sequences	The Power of Ten-Frames	Units and Operations	Unitizing								
2				Self-Directed Module #								10	17	2	7	5	8	3	0	39	25	27	47	42	31	24	40	6	34	19	22	23	46	28	48	21	50	36	43	45	15	20	18
3																																											
4	3	3.NBT.2	Demonstrate understanding of place value to tens.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							✓					✓										✓						✓		✓			
5	3	3.NBT.3	Count by tens using models such as objects, base ten blocks, or money.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓							✓		✓										✓						✓		✓			
6	3	3.NF.1-3	Differentiate a fractional part from a whole.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓												✓	✓	✓														✓		✓			
7	3	3.OA.4	Solve addition and subtraction problems when result is unknown, limited to operands and results within 20.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓					✓				✓																	✓		✓		
8	3	3.G.2	Recognize that shapes can be partitioned into equal areas.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓										✓	✓																			
9	3	M.C3.1	Tell time to the hour on a digital clock.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓																										✓							
10	3	3.MD.4	Measure length of objects using standard tools, such as rulers, yardsticks, and meter sticks	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓																																	
11	3	3.MD.3	Use picture or bar graph data to answer questions about data.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓																					✓										
12	3	3.OA.1-2	Use repeated addition to find the total number of objects and determine the sum.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓									✓											✓						✓				
Math				ELA	Sheet1	Sheet2																																					

with DLM staff. Testing all ELA and mathematics Essential Elements in the blueprints is required during the spring assessment window. The blueprints contain Essential Elements from specific ELA and mathematics claims and conceptual areas for each grade. Test administrators are guided by the blueprint requirements when making their Essential Element selections for instruction.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMPONENTS OF THE DLM ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

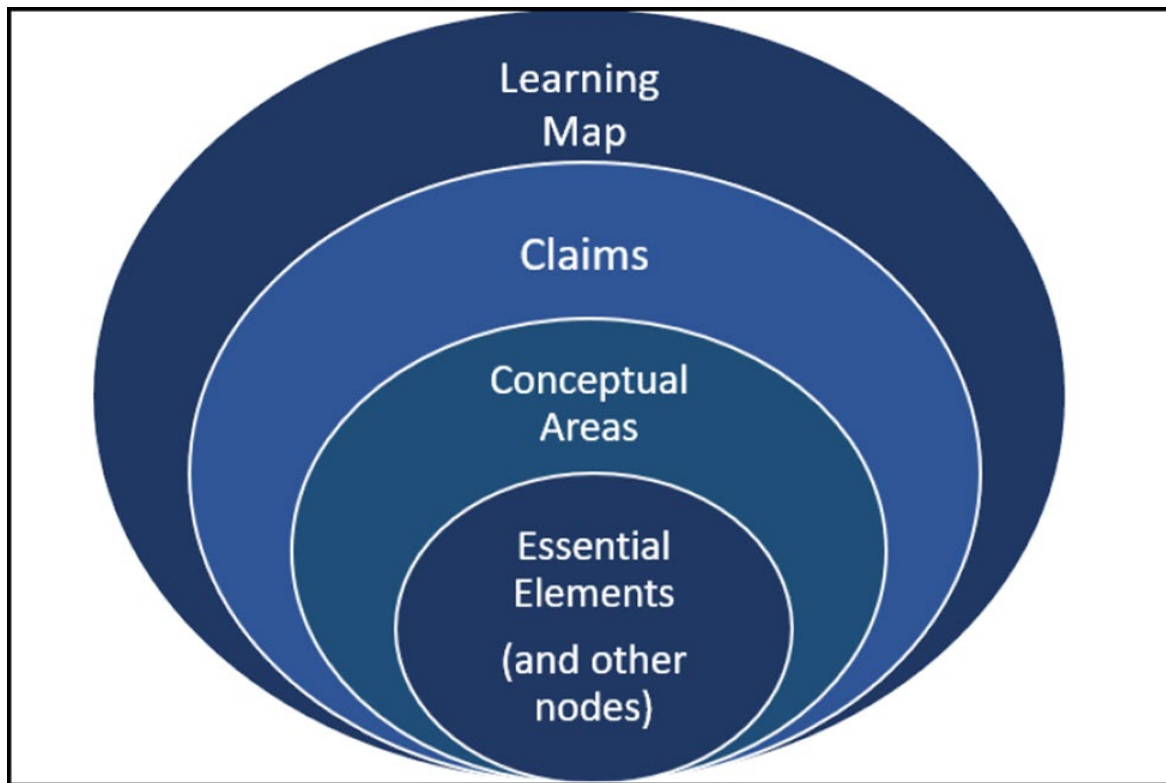
Understanding the DLM alternate assessment involves understanding the relationship between the components of the system. For ELA and mathematics, these components include the DLM learning maps, claims, conceptual areas, Essential Elements, nodes, linkage levels, and mini-maps.

Each DLM learning map is a large and complex representation of how students can develop academic knowledge and skills. These maps highlight multiple potential pathways that students may follow to develop knowledge and skills. The learning maps are organized into claims, conceptual areas, Essential Elements, linkage levels, and individual skills called nodes.

DLM claims are broad statements about what students are to learn and what the assessments measure. Subareas of the claims, called conceptual areas, identify large areas of conceptually-related skills in the DLM learning maps and connect the maps to the overall claims. Conceptual areas are organized around common cognitive processes (Figure 2).

Figure 2

The Components of the DLM Alternate Assessment System

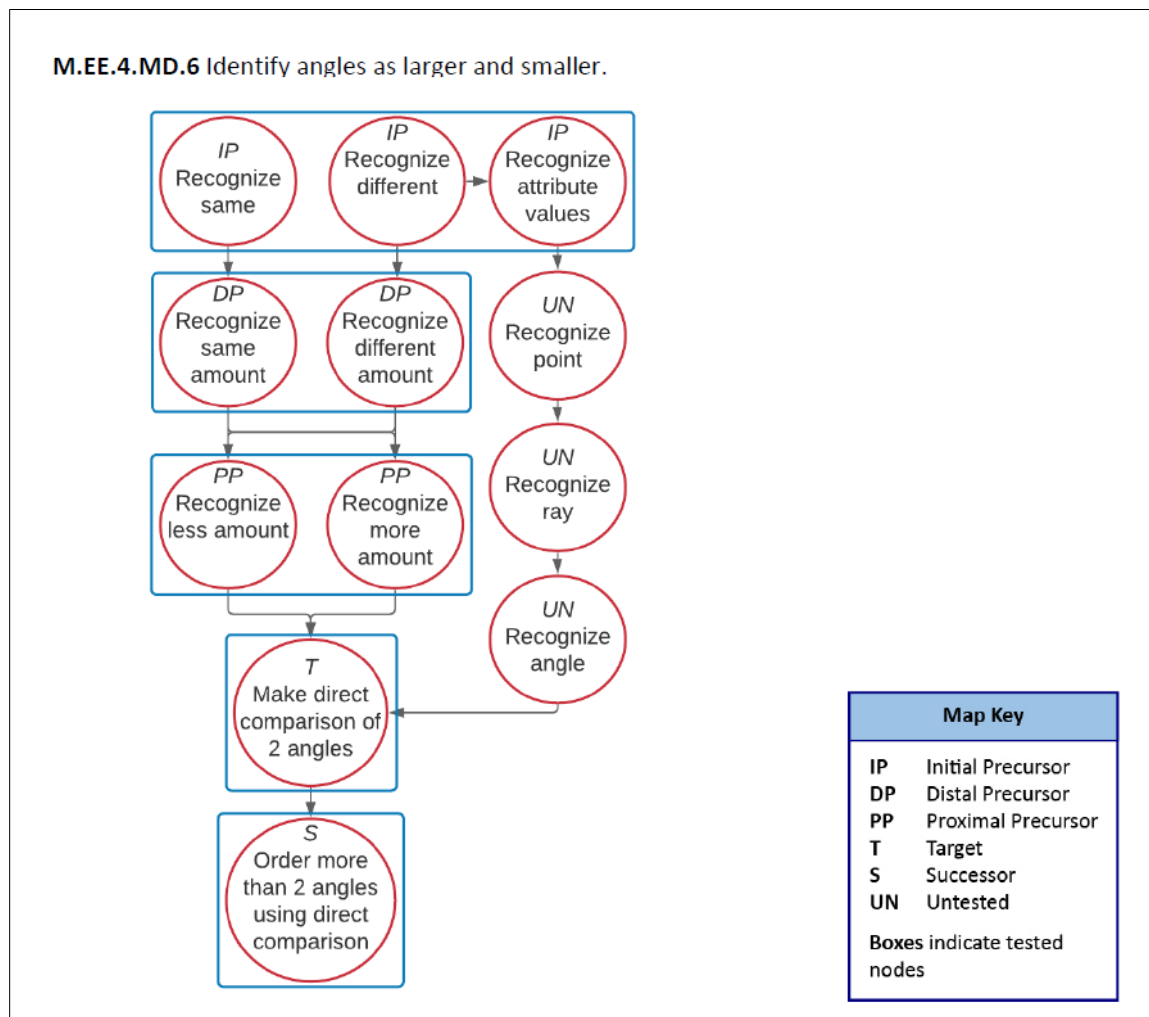


Essential Elements represent grade-level targets for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are embedded in the DLM learning maps and are related to small clusters of nodes within the maps called mini-maps.

Figure 3 is an example of a Grade 6 mathematics mini-map with nodes associated with one Essential Element. The nodes are identified by their linkage levels. Linkage levels are a small section of the DLM learning maps containing one or more nodes that represent critical concepts or skills needed to learn the Essential Element.

Figure 3

Grade 6 Mathematics Mini-Map



Each testlet spans a portion of the DLM learning maps that contain nodes at one linkage level. Each linkage level contains one or more nodes related to an identified Essential Element. Linkage levels precede, correspond to, or go beyond the expectation expressed in the Essential Element. Linkage levels specify a student's performance in relation to the grade-level target.

ELA and mathematics each have five linkage levels:

- 1) Initial Precursor (IP)
- 2) Distal Precursor (DP)
- 3) Proximal Precursor (PP)
- 4) Target (T)
- 5) Successor (S)

The mini-maps also include untested nodes, which are designated with a UN. These untested nodes are an important part of the pathway.

HINT: A PDF with each tested Essential Element and its associated mini-map is available for ELA and mathematics on the [Instructional Resources](#) page of each state's DLM webpage. These mini maps show how students gain the knowledge and skills that help them achieve the Target linkage level for the Essential Element.

SCIENCE

NOTE: Check your state's DLM webpage for the subjects tested in your state.

SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2014, development of science assessments began in two phases, following the DLM model. Phase I included a 2016 spring operational assessment based on alternate science content standards at three levels of complexity for three grade bands. Phase II, which is in progress, includes the development of a learning map for science. Several professional development modules are available, and more are in progress.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR SCIENCE

The DLM science Essential Elements are the learning targets for the science assessments. These Essential Elements are specific statements of knowledge, skills, and understandings, including Science and Engineering Practices, and are linked to the grade-level expectations identified in the National Research Council's Framework for K–12 Science Education. The purpose of the Essential Elements is to build a bridge from the general education content standards in science to academic expectations in science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Science Essential Elements are divided into grade bands: elementary, middle school, and high school. The assessments for each grade band are designed to assess a specific set of science Essential Elements called the blueprints, which are available on your state's DLM webpage.

SCIENCE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BLUEPRINT, ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS, AND LINKAGE LEVELS

In the DLM science blueprints, the major assessed science subjects are called domains and are assessed across all grade bands. The domains in the DLM science blueprints are physical science, life science, and Earth and space science. Within each domain, three to

four core ideas have been selected for use in instruction and assessment. Core ideas are the key organizing principles in science and are taught and learned over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication. Each core idea is further narrowed into topics. Essential Elements were developed from the content in the domains, core ideas, and topics.

Essential Elements specify academic learning targets. In science, each Essential Element has three linkage levels:

- Initial
- Precursor
- Target

The highest science linkage level is the Target linkage level, and it is the most aligned to the content of the grade-level standard. The Initial and Precursor linkage levels are less complex than the Target linkage level, and provide access to the Target at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity.

Testlets at the Initial linkage level are typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. For these testlets, the test administrator observes the student's behavior as directed by the Educator Directions in the testlet in Student Portal. Then in the testlet, the test administrator records their observations of the student or the student's responses.

Testlets at the Precursor linkage level allow students to develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to reach the Target. Testlets at the Precursor linkage level and Target linkage level are most often computer-delivered. More information about teacher-administered and computer-delivered testlet types comes later in this manual, beginning on page 55.

Table 8 is an example of a middle school physical science Essential Element with the corresponding linkage levels. Notice the reduced breadth, depth, and complexity of the expectation from level to level. Also, observe the embedded practices, which focus on carrying out investigations.

Table 8

Middle School Physical Science Essential Element With Corresponding Linkage Levels

Essential Element: EE.MS-PS2-2
Target level: Investigate and predict the change in motion of objects based on the forces acting on those objects.
Precursor level: Investigate and identify ways to change the motion of an object (e.g., change an incline's slope to make an object go slower, faster, farther).
Initial level: Identify ways to change the movement of an object (e.g., faster, slower, stop).

[Instructional Activities](#) are available for science on the state DLM webpage. Filter by Teacher | Instructional Resources | Science.

Professional development modules for science can be accessed by selecting [Professional Development](#) at the top of the DLM website.

ABOUT THE KITE SUITE

The Kite® Suite is an online testing interface. It was designed to deliver the next generation of large-scale assessments and was tailored to meet the needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who often have multiple disabilities. Educators and students will use different parts of the Kite Suite.



Students have accounts in **Kite Student Portal**, the customized, secure interface where students take their assessments. Practice activities and released testlets are also available in Student Portal, using demo usernames and passwords. Once the Student Portal app is launched, other websites or other applications cannot be accessed during the assessment.

Every year, the most current version of the Student Portal app must be installed on the student's testing device. To install Student Portal and view supported platforms, use the links found on the [Kite Suite](#) page on the DLM website. A browser version of Student Portal **cannot** be used when assessing students.

Each student has their own unique username and password. A student's username remains the same from year to year; but for security purposes, each year when the student is enrolled in Educator Portal, the student is assigned a brand-new password. Either the student signs into Student Portal themselves, or their test administrator signs in for them.

Educators and staff do not have accounts in Student Portal.



Staff and educators have accounts in **Kite Educator Portal**.

Educator Portal is the administrative application where educators manage student data and retrieve reports and extracts. Educators will access Educator Portal online using a supported browser. For information about working within Educator Portal, go to the [EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE](#) on the DLM website.

HOW TO USE THE DLM WEBSITE

DLM provides resources for test administrators on the DLM website. Additionally, state-specific resources may also be available.

To access resources for your state and role, follow these steps:

- 1) Go to the [DLM website](#).
- 2) Select **For States** in the top menu banner to reveal a list of states.
- 3) Select your state.

HINT: Bookmark your state page for quick access later.

RESOURCES ON THE DLM WEBSITE

Table 9 lists DLM resources designed for test administrators. These resources are available on most state webpages.

Table 9

DLM Resources for Test Administrators

Resource	Purpose
ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL (PDF)	Provides guidance to state leaders, districts, educators, and IEP teams on the selection and use of accessibility supports that are either programmed in Student Portal (e.g., magnification) or are provided by the test administrator outside Student Portal (e.g., calculator). These supports can be used during the assessment.

Resource	Purpose
Assessment Resources (Teacher role Resource Category)	Includes the Blueprints, Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets, various manuals and videos, and the Materials Collections list for each subject, for each window.
EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE (PDF)	Supports test administrators and other district educators in navigating Educator Portal to access assessment information, including student data and reports.
Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training for Year-End Model States (PDF)	Helps familiarize test administrators with the DLM Required Test Administrator Training and how to access it from Educator Portal.
Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets (PDF)	Supports the test administrator in accessing practice activities and released testlets in Student Portal using demo student accounts.
Instructional Resources (webpage)	Includes additional resources for educators and test administrators, such as test blueprints, currently tested Essential Elements and their associated mini-maps, a Materials Collections list for each subject for each window, and sample Testlet Information Pages (TIPs).
TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL (PDF)	Supports test administrators in preparing themselves and their students for assessments.
Test Updates and DLM News (webpage)	Provides updates on test administration activities. Sign up to receive Test Updates and DLM News and alerts when new resources become available.

HOW THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM WORKS

OVERVIEW

The Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment is designed to help plan and track a student's learning throughout the year. Assessments are available in the optional instructionally embedded assessment window and are required in the spring assessment window.

Instructionally embedded assessments are optional but recommended (Table 10). During the fall and winter months, test administrators access these assessments using the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal. Reporting features are available in Educator Portal to help test administrators plan and adjust instruction. Results from the optional instructionally embedded assessments neither predict nor guarantee students' overall performance during the required spring assessment window. Also, they are not factored into spring assessment window results. The optional instructionally embedded assessment window closes before the opening of the required spring assessment window.

Testing students in the spring assessment window is required. Each state sets dates for the spring assessment window. During the window, all eligible students take testlets that cover all Essential Elements on the blueprint for each subject. Results from the spring assessment window will reflect student performance each school year and are used for federal and state accountability purposes.

Table 10*Spring Assessment and Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessment*

Spring Assessment	Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessment
• Required for all subjects tested in each state • The entire blueprint is covered using six to 10 testlets depending on the grade, subject, and state. • The test is adaptive. • The Essential Elements and linkage levels are system-assigned to the student. • Braille forms of the testlets are available at upper linkage levels for some Essential Elements. • Results are used for end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports. • Zero or one field test testlet may be assigned in ELA and mathematics after all operational testlets are submitted. • Students will receive two science field test forms. Each form contains two field test testlets, for a total of four science field test testlets. The forms will be available when the first operational science testlet is assigned. The field test testlets can be taken any time before the closing of the spring window.	• Optional for all subjects tested in the state • The test administrator selects ELA, mathematics, and science Essential Elements for instruction and assessment. • The system recommends a linkage level for each Essential Element at the opening of the window. The test administrator can accept the recommendations or select different ones. • Results are not used for end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

TESTLETS

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who qualify for the DLM alternate assessment require extensive, repeated, and individualized instruction and ongoing support that is not temporary or transient. These students often have difficulty retaining information in working memory for extended periods of time. Therefore, testlets were created to be brief,

containing only a few items. Each testlet begins with an engagement activity designed to activate prior knowledge, motivate the students, and provide a context (Sinharay et al., 2014).

These small testlets were created to be delivered to students over a period of several weeks to avoid placing undue stress upon the students and to best meet their needs. The long assessment window allows continued instruction to occur throughout the window. Assessing the student should be individualized and should not be conducted in a group setting, as is done with standardized assessments for students who are assessed on the general education standards.

The DLM alternate assessment is delivered in testlets in Kite® Student Portal. Each testlet includes an engagement activity at the beginning of the testlet, followed by items. Most testlets have three to five items. Each testlet assesses only one Essential Element, except for the testlet assessing the writing Essential Elements. This testlet assesses all writing Essential Elements for the grade in a single writing testlet.

Later in this manual, more details about the contents of testlets are described in the sections titled Computer-Delivered Testlets and Teacher-Administered Testlets.

REQUIRED SPRING ASSESSMENTS

During the required spring assessment window, students receive six to 10 testlets in each subject, depending on the grade, subject, and state. The testlets are delivered one testlet at a time in each subject and are administered using Kite Student Portal. (Details are in the Number of Testlets for Spring Assessments table on page 143 of this manual.)

Each testlet is packaged and delivered separately. Each state sets the dates of its own spring assessment window, and the test administrator determines when to schedule the assessment of each Essential Element for each student within that window. Consult your state webpage for more information about those dates.

FIELD TEST TESTLETS

The naming convention for each subject's spring field test testlets will begin with **FT SP** (e.g., **FT SP** ELA RL.3.1 IP 123).

ELA AND MATHEMATICS

During the spring assessment window, after a student completes all the required operational testlets in ELA and mathematics, the student may receive zero or one field test testlet in both subjects to which the student is rostered. The linkage level of the field test testlet may be one linkage level below, one above, or the same as the operational testlets.

SPRING ASSESSMENT WINDOW FOR SCIENCE 2026

- In spring 2026, DLM will administer field tests testlets for the updated Essential Elements that will be used for the operational assessment beginning in the 2026–2027 school year.
- Students will be taking a total of four science field test testlets. They will be delivered in two science field test forms, each containing two field test testlets. The forms will be available when the first operational science testlet is assigned.
- The field test testlets can be taken any time before the closing of the spring assessment window.
- Subsequent operational testlets will continue to be delivered after the previous testlet is completed, regardless of whether the field test forms have been completed.

OPTIONAL INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT WINDOW

Test administrators have the option to administer instructionally embedded assessments during the fall and winter months in the optional window. After completing the First Contact Survey, test administrators may use the Instruction and Assessment Planner to create plans and assign testlets.

During the optional assessment window, test administrators can assess a student at least once on each Essential Element chosen in the Instruction and Assessment Planner. The system recommends a linkage level for each Essential Element based on selections the test administrator made in the First Contact Survey. The test administrator may accept the system recommendation or choose a different linkage level.

Key steps for administering the instructionally embedded assessments begin on page 111 of this manual. Step-by-step procedures are found in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE in the section titled Use the Instruction and Assessment Planner. In addition, a four-minute video demonstration is available: [Using the DLM Instruction and Assessment Planner During the Optional Instructionally Embedded Window](#).

DURATION OF THE ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

Table 11 provides an average total duration in minutes for taking the required testlets in each subject during the spring assessment window. Students may take testlets separately across multiple assessment sessions, as long as they complete all testlets within the assessment window dates designated by each state. Teacher-administered testlets at the lowest linkage levels will likely take more preparation and administration time than computer-delivered testlets.

Table 11

Spring Assessment Duration per Testlet per Subject in Minutes and Total Overall Duration in Minutes

Spring assessment subject	Average duration in minutes per testlet*	Average overall duration in minutes*
Reading	10–15	90–135
Writing	10–20	10–20
Mathematics	10–15	60–120
Science	10–15	90–140

* Average duration **does not** include the preparation time needed by the test administrator.

The duration in minutes of the optional instructionally embedded assessment is listed per testlet, because testing a specific number of Essential Elements is not required during this window (Table 12).

Table 12

Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessment Total Duration per Subject in Minutes per Testlet

Optional instructionally embedded assessment subject	Average duration in minutes per testlet*
Reading	10–15
Writing	10–20
Mathematics	10–15
Science	10–15

* Average duration **does not** include the preparation time needed by the test administrator.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Testlets taken during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window are scored, and the mastery results can be found in three places:

- In the Instruction and Assessment Planner with the Essential Element that was tested (Figure 4)
- In the Fall Performance Report accessed in the Instruction and Assessment Planner
- In the Student Progress Report accessed in reports in Educator Portal

Figure 4

Mastery Results of the Essential Element in the Instruction and Assessment Planner

Essential Element	Initial Precursor	Distal Precursor	Proximal Precursor	Target	Successor
M.EE.7.SP.3 Compare two sets of data within a single data display such as a picture graph, line plot, or bar graph.	Order objects; classify objects	Recognize line plots, bar graphs, and picture graphs  Complete: 04/13 Mastered	Identify variability, outliers, peaks in data, and symmetric distribution	Compare shapes and variability of two data sets	Draw inferences based on shape and spread

The results from the testlets administered during the instructionally embedded assessment window do **not** contribute to nor impact the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

NOTE: Results are not available for writing testlets administered during the instructionally embedded assessment window.

Assessment results from the spring assessment window are provided in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports. More information about score reports can be found on page 106 in the section titled Individual Student Score Reports. How to access these reports is also in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE, in the section titled Access Individual Student Score Reports for All States.

BEFORE BEGINNING ASSESSMENTS

KEY STEPS

Test administrators should prepare for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessments by completing the key steps in Table 13. Gray-shaded steps are described in more detail in this section of this manual. Other steps are defined in the DLM resources listed in the Checklists for Test Administrators on page 13 of this manual.

Table 13

Key Steps in Preparing for the DLM Alternate Assessment

☒	Steps
☐	1) Confirm student eligibility to participate in the DLM alternate assessment.
☐	2) Share information about the DLM alternate assessment with parents or guardians, preparing them for their student's assessment experience.
☐	3) Read this TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.
☐	4) Use the resources on your state's DLM webpage to become familiar with the DLM alternate assessment, the assessed subjects, and the procedures to prepare for the assessment.
☐	5) Sign in to Educator Portal.
☐	6) Agree to the security agreement in Educator Portal.
☐	7) Complete the Required Test Administrator Training.
☐	8) Review state-specific guidelines on required and recommended professional development modules. Complete as needed.
☐	9) Use the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL and work with IEP teams to determine accessibility supports that must be provided for each student taking the DLM alternate assessment. Record the chosen supports in each student's Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile.
☐	10) Review state-specific requirements for documenting DLM accessibility supports. Adjust supports in a student's IEP as necessary.

☒	Steps
☐	11) Review student demographic information in Educator Portal for accuracy and correct if needed. 12) Ensure all student data are correct. 13) Ensure all roster data are correct.
☐	14) Update and save each student's PNP Profile.
☐	15) Complete and submit each student's First Contact Survey.
☐	16) Ensure the latest version of Kite® Student Portal is installed on students' assessment devices. Contact your technology personnel for help.
☐	17) Become familiar with DLM practice activities and released testlets. a) Access practice activities and released testlets using student demo accounts. b) Check compatibility of students' assistive devices with Student Portal by allowing students ample time with released testlets. Released testlets look like real testlets. If a student's assistive device does not work well with the released testlet, consult the technology staff or your assessment coordinator.

AGREE TO THE SECURITY AGREEMENT

Test administrators are expected to deliver the DLM alternate assessment with integrity and to maintain the security of testlets. The security agreement expires the first week of August every year and must be renewed annually in Educator Portal. Test administrators must read and agree to the security agreement, and then select Save. Figure 5 is an example of the security agreement text.

Figure 5

Example of the Security Agreement Text

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "My Profile" with a navigation bar containing tabs: Overview, Edit Display Name, Change Password, Change Default Role, Security Awareness, Security Agreement (selected), and Security Renewal/Expiration. The main content area displays the following text:

The Kite Suite provides opportunities for flexible assessment administration; however, all assessments delivered during the school year are secure. Test administrators and other educational staff who support implementation are responsible for following the Kite test security standards:

1. Assessments (testlets) are not to be stored or saved on computers or personal storage devices; shared via email or other file sharing systems; or reproduced by any means.
2. Except where explicitly allowed as described in the Test Administration Manual, electronic materials used during assessment administration may not be printed.
3. Those who violate the Kite test security standards may be subject to their state's regulations or state education agency policy governing test security.
4. Educators are encouraged to use resources provided by Kite Suite, including practice activities and released testlets, to prepare themselves and their students for the assessments.
5. Users will not give out, loan or share their password with anyone. Allowing others access to an Educator Portal account may cause unauthorized access to private information. Access to educational records is governed by federal and state law.

Questions about security expectations should be directed to the local assessment coordinator.

☐ I have read this security agreement and agree to follow the standards.

[Save](#)

NOTE: If DLM staff discover that an account has been accessed by someone other than the account owner, the account will be considered compromised and will be sequestered until the state assessment administrator contacts the DLM Service Desk requesting the account be reopened.

Contact your assessment coordinator for additional guidance on test security in your state and district, and for procedures for reporting assessment irregularities.

COMPLETE TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The DLM alternate assessment provides required training for test administrators, professional development for instructional support, and supplemental training (Table 14).

Table 14*Available Training and Professional Development*

Required Test Administrator Training	Professional Development for Instruction	Supplemental Training
• All test administrators must pass the Required Test Administrator Training modules with a score of 80% or higher. • Critical content for managing and delivering the DLM alternate assessment is covered. • State administrators decide which format(s) to offer for new test administrator training: self-directed, facilitated, or both. • All returning test administrator training is self-directed only. • Test administrators will not be able to deliver testlets until training is passed with a score of 80% or higher. Test administrators will not be able to deliver testlets until training is successfully completed, and they have selected the link to their certificate.	• All professional development modules are strongly recommended. • The professional development modules support academic instruction for students who take the DLM alternate assessment. • Most modules are created for students at the Target linkage level. Teachers who have students who take testlets at lower linkage levels will need to adjust the module information for their students. • Several modules are available for students at the lowest linkage levels and for those with foundational presymbolic communication. • State and district administrators may recommend or require specific modules. • State administrators decide which format(s) to offer—self-directed, facilitated, or both.	• All supplemental training is strongly recommended. • Supplemental training addresses a variety of DLM materials and system navigation topics. • Supplemental training includes short helplet videos—typically one to five minutes long on a single topic. A few longer presentations are also available. • Supplemental training modules do not include a quiz.

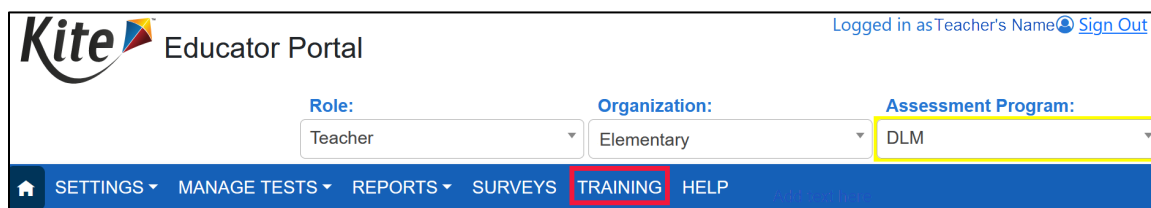
NOTE: Your district assessment coordinator may provide a training plan tailored to your state and for training beyond what is provided by the DLM alternate assessment.

REQUIRED TEST ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

Test administrator training is required for any educator administering the DLM alternate assessment. State policy determines

- the roles in Educator Portal that are automatically enrolled for the required training
- the courses that are offered (new Required Test Administrator Training, returning Required Test Administrator Training, or both)
- the course format to be used (self-directed, facilitated, or both)

After a test administrator signs into Educator Portal, they access the Required Test Administrator Training by selecting the Training tab on the home screen in Educator Portal. Separate login credentials are not needed to access training.



The course content is consistent across the DLM states. In all states, educators assigned the Educator Portal role of Teacher are automatically enrolled in required training.

Test administrators who will be administering the DLM alternate assessments for the first time are enrolled in the new Required Test Administrator Training course. Test administrators who administered the assessments in the immediately preceding year are typically enrolled in the returning Required Test Administrator Training course. A returning test administrator is identified from Educator Portal records. Sometimes, due to state policy, a returning test administrator is required to take the course for new test administrators.

HINT: Go to the [Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training for Year-End Model States](#) located on the DLM website for complete information.

The training for new test administrators consists of four modules that must be completed in order. Only the first module in the course is initially available. Each module ends with a post-test, which must be passed with a score of 80% or higher before the next module becomes available. If a post-test is not passed, test administrators must repeat the module

and its post-test as many times as needed until a score of 80% or higher is achieved for the module.

If a test administrator is unable to complete all four modules in one sitting, after completing a module, they can sign out. Then, when ready to begin again, they sign back in to Educator Portal, select the Training tab, select the course name, and begin the next available module. When all modules are successfully completed, participants receive a certificate of completion, which they **must** select. They are strongly advised to download, print, and save it.

The four required modules in the new Required Test Administrator Training course are as follows:

- 1) Overview of the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment
- 2) Understanding and Delivering Testlets
- 3) Test Administration and Scoring
- 4) Preparing to Administer the Assessment

The returning Required Test Administrator Training course consists of only one module, which takes approximately one hour and is only available in the self-directed format. This module is a review of the four modules in the course for new test administrators. The returning course ends with a post-test. The post-test must be passed with a score of 80% or higher on the **first** attempt. If unsuccessful, additional training on the applicable section(s) will be required. The additional training may take 30 minutes or up to 2.5 hours, depending on the section(s) that must be repeated. When this module is successfully completed, participants receive a certificate of completion, which they **must** select, or they will not be able to test any students. They are strongly advised to download, print, and save their certificate.

New Required Test Administrator Training is available in a self-directed format, a facilitated format, or both formats, depending on the state administrator's decision. All post-tests must be completed. If the required training is delivered in the facilitated format, the test administrator must sign in to Educator Portal, select the Training tab, and take each post-test.

Along with the required training, states may also include one or two additional short helplet videos and one or more professional development modules to assist test administrators.

More information about the contents of each module, training formats, and procedures for completing required training is provided in the [Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training for Year-End Model States](#) on the DLM website.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Professional development for instruction is strongly encouraged. Modules focus on teaching students who have the most significant cognitive disabilities in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and several foundational topics. Other modules provide important information regarding components of the DLM Alternate Assessment System. The modules can be taken as an online self-directed course or as a facilitated course in a group.

- Each online, self-directed module lasts approximately 30 to 45 minutes and focuses on a single topic related to instruction. Post-tests accompany the modules.
- Facilitated modules for groups cover the same content as self-directed modules and have a post-test to complete.
- Instructional resources provide lesson supports, writing resources, and enhanced descriptions of the Initial Precursor and Distal Precursor for the most frequently used Essential Elements. The descriptions provide a clear connection between the Initial Precursor, Distal Precursor, and Target linkage levels.
- Most educators are required to participate in regular, ongoing professional development. Some state agencies give continuing education credits for the DLM professional development modules. If your state gives continuing education credits, then upon completion of each professional development module, print the certificate that is emailed to you and provide the documentation to your assessment coordinator.

SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING

Supplemental training materials include short helplet videos on common Educator Portal procedures and best practices (e.g., [Getting Started in Educator Portal](#)). Go to your state's DLM webpage | filter by the Teacher role | Assessment Resources | scroll to [Educator Resource Videos for Year-End Model States](#).

REVIEW STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Test administrators must have an accurate list of students for whom they are responsible. Before each assessment window, test administrators must review the student names that appear on their rosters in Educator Portal. Check with your assessment coordinator for review deadlines and procedures for correcting records.

Questions to ask include the following:

- Do all my eligible students appear on my rosters for each subject being tested?
- Is each student assigned to the correct grade?

- Are there any students on my rosters who are not assigned to me or who are not eligible for the DLM alternate assessment?
- Do any student records have typos or misspellings?

If any errors are discovered, ask the assessment coordinator to make corrections. Some student information will be in the student's end-of-year Individual Student Score Report (e.g., the student's name). Having the information presented correctly will be important to students and their parents or guardians.

Detailed procedures for checking this information are in the Manage Student Data section of the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

NOTE: The student must be enrolled in the correct grade for grade-appropriate testlets to be delivered in Student Portal. If a student was enrolled in the incorrect grade and has started testing, after the student's enrollment record is corrected, the student will need to begin testing all over again. Previously completed testlets may no longer be available.

COMPLETE OR UPDATE THE PERSONAL NEEDS AND PREFERENCES PROFILE

The DLM alternate assessment offers a variety of accessibility supports, which can be selected in a student's Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile in Educator Portal. The ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL describes a six-step process for evaluating and choosing appropriate supports for each student. Go to the section titled Six Steps to Customize Dynamic Learning Maps Accessibility Supports for Students in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL.

Most states provide guidelines that their IEP teams are required to use when making decisions about accessibility supports for a student during testing. Some states provide their state-specific guidelines as an appendix in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL on their state DLM webpage.

Accessibility supports in the student's PNP Profile in Educator Portal include those required to meet the student's needs in their IEP, and other supports for which a student may show a preference but are not required in the IEP. Some supports become available in Student Portal after they are selected in the PNP Profile (e.g., magnification). Other supports selected in the PNP Profile are provided outside the system (e.g., calculator). Test administrators should review accessibility supports with the IEP team at least once per year.

If the original PNP Profile selections do not allow the student to fully access the content of the testlets as expected, the test administrator may adjust accessibility selections listed in the PNP Profile between testlets to provide more appropriate supports. Go to the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL, in the section titled Changing PNP Profile During Testing, for help in

changing PNP Profile settings. The assessment coordinator can provide further IEP guidance if needed.

Procedures for choosing suitable supports and saving the PNP Profile settings in Educator Portal are in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE in the section titled Complete the PNP Profile.

COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE FIRST CONTACT SURVEY

The First Contact Survey is a series of items that goes beyond basic demographics and covers a variety of areas, including communication, academic skills, and attention. The test administrator enters the responses for each eligible student on their rosters.

Responses to the survey items are used to provide an optimal system match between the student and linkage level for each Essential Element in the blueprint for each subject being tested. The items are categorized into the following sections:

- Special Education
- Sensory Capabilities
- Motor Capabilities and Health
- Computer Instruction
- Communication (Expressive and Receptive)
- Language
- Academics

THE OPTIONAL INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT WINDOW

When the optional instructionally embedded assessment window opens in the fall, the test administrator can easily open the First Contact Survey in the Instruction and Assessment Planner for any students on their roster. The test administrator can respond to items in the survey and then submit it. The data is analyzed and used to determine the **recommended** linkage level for each English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science Essential Element that could be chosen for assessment. After submitting the survey, refresh the screen; then, on the Student View Page, begin the Essential Element selection process. Accept the system-recommended linkage level or select a different one.

THE REQUIRED SPRING ASSESSMENT WINDOW

During the required spring assessment window, the data in the First Contact Survey determines the **assignment** of the linkage level for the first Essential Element in each subject being tested. If a student is rostered 24 hours before the opening of the spring assessment window and if their First Contact Survey was also submitted 24 hours before the opening of the window, the first testlet in each subject will be available on the opening

day of the window. However, if either of these steps is completed after the opening of the window, assignment of the first testlet in each subject will be in the next 24 hours from the time the student is rostered, or the survey is submitted.

Test administrators should review the settings in the PNP Profile and save them 24 hours before the opening of the window. Some settings in the PNP Profile are effective immediately. However, other settings, such as braille or Spoken Audio, will be ready 24 hours from the time the setting is selected.

RESOURCES FOR COMPLETING THE FIRST CONTACT SURVEY

Use the following resources for step-by-step instructions and guidance in completing the First Contact Survey and the PNP Profile. Test administrators can choose to complete these tasks in one of two places: by selecting the icons on the View Student screen in Educator Portal or by selecting the icons in the Instruction and Assessment Planner after the opening of the optional instructionally embedded assessment window.

Use these resources when completing the First Contact Survey:

- **EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE:** Complete the First Contact Survey section
- **A complete list of First Contact Survey questions:** Appendix B of this manual (page 145)
- **[Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile helplet video](#):** A 10-minute demonstration on how to complete the First Contact Survey and the PNP Profile. This video, along with several other short videos, is available on the [Educator Resource Videos for Year-End Model States](#) page of your state DLM webpage.

PREPARE FOR ASSESSMENT WITH PRACTICE ACTIVITIES AND RELEASED TESTLETS

Practice activities and many released testlets are provided to support educators and students preparing for the assessment.

- Practice activities are designed to familiarize users with how testlets appear in Student Portal. One practice activity is for test administrators, and the other is for students.
- Released testlets are similar in content and format to operational DLM testlets.
- Access practice activities and released testlets using Student Portal in the practice section. Use demo student usernames and passwords provided in this manual to complete both types of activities as many times as desired. Go to Student Accounts for Practice Activities and Released Testlets on page 119.

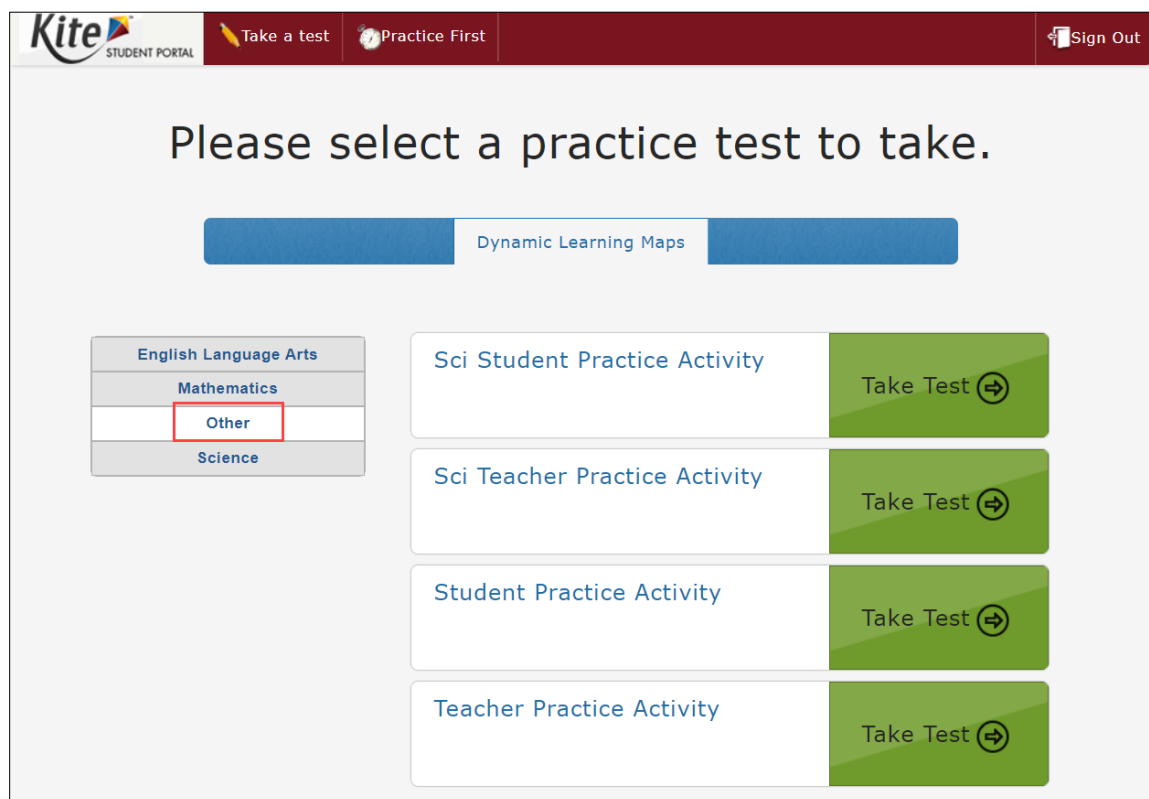
PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Sign in to Student Portal with the demo usernames and passwords. Select **Other** (Figure 6).

NOTE: The practice activities are not subject-specific. They are designed to show how Student Portal functions. Two practice activities are specifically for science.

Figure 6

The Access Screen for Practice Activities in Kite Student Portal



TEACHER PRACTICE ACTIVITY

The teacher practice activity is a tutorial on testlets that are administered directly by the teacher. Teacher-administered testlets are used when the student has presymbolic communication and cannot interact directly with the computer or when the content is difficult to assess on the computer (e.g., some higher linkage level mathematics testlets).

In this type of testlet, the teacher reads the instructions aloud on the testlet screens and follows them. The test administrator observes the student's behavior regarding the items and enters the responses that most closely align with the student's behavior. All activities or exchanges between the test administrator and student occur outside the system. Only the

test administrator works on the computer. The test administrator may go forward and backward within a testlet as much as needed before submitting the responses.

Most teacher-administered testlets require test administrators to gather materials to be used in the assessment prior to the assessment. Testlet Information Pages (TIPs) list those materials. Remember that substitutions can be made as necessary unless expressly noted in the TIP. Directions for how to prepare for the testlet are also provided as Educator Directions on the first screen of the testlet.

HINT: Practice activities and released testlets do not include TIPs. However, sample TIPs are provided on the DLM website. Go to [Instructional Resources](#) | choose a subject | Testlets | Sample Testlet Information Pages.

STUDENT PRACTICE ACTIVITY

The student practice activity is a tutorial designed for students to practice navigating a testlet. Computer-delivered testlets are used when the content can be assessed directly by a computer, and when students can directly interact with the system by selecting their own responses and by using assistive devices or other supports as needed.

Students may navigate using a mouse, Tab and Enter keys on a keyboard, or switches. Students may navigate forward and backward within a testlet as needed before submitting responses. If students can engage with the content but cannot advance the screens or input responses independently, a student and teacher may practice with the teacher navigating the screens and recording the responses on the student's behalf. Specific supports and practices that are not allowed are described further in the Practices Not Allowed section on page 90 of this manual.

Several types of items are available in student practice activities:

- **Single-select multiple-choice items:** The student selects one correct response.
- **Multiple choice-multi-select items:** The student selects all correct responses.
- **Matching items:** The student identifies how pairs of items are related to one another.

RELEASED TESTLETS

Released testlets are publicly available, sample DLM assessments. They are like actual operational testlets and are selected from a variety of Essential Elements and linkage levels from Grade 3 through high school. Each testlet contains items that align to Essential Elements at a designated linkage level. A released testlet is developed using the same standards and methods used to develop testlets that are used in DLM operational assessments. Newly released testlets are added periodically and may be used by students

and teachers as examples or opportunities for practice and to ensure a student's assistive device will perform as expected.

Some released testlets are teacher-administered and some are computer-delivered. Teacher-administered testlets are typically at the lower linkage levels. Also, all writing testlets are teacher-administered. Computer-delivered testlets are typically at the higher linkage levels.

The usernames and passwords for released testlets are available on page 120 of this manual or can be found in the [Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets](#) on the DLM website.

HINT: Some released testlets are available in PDF format on the DLM website. These may be helpful to provide to parents and guardians. Student Portal does not have to be installed on a computer to view these testlets.

If you have questions or technical problems with the practice activities or released testlets, contact your assessment coordinator or local technology personnel.

In Student Portal, all testlets, including released testlets, are identified by subject, Essential Element, grade, and linkage level (Figure 7).

Figure 7

A Testlet Name in Kite Student Portal



Table 15 describes the labels from the image.

Table 15

Definitions of the Codes in a Testlet Name

Subject	Grade	Section and level codes	Linkage level
ELA: English language arts	10	2.D: determine the central idea of the text and select details to support it.	T: Target

To determine the Essential Element and skills assessed in a particular released testlet, use the label in conjunction with the Currently Assessed Essential Elements resources located on the [Instructional Resource](#) pages for ELA, mathematics, and science.

For step-by-step directions on accessing practice activities and released testlets in Student Portal, go to Access Practice Activities and Released Testlets on page 116 of this manual.

TROUBLESHOOT ACCESS IN EDUCATOR PORTAL



IMPORTANT:

Save time and avoid errors by completing these steps before assessing students.

NO ACCESS TO THE INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT PLANNER

Users with the role of Teacher in Educator Portal will not have access to the Instruction and Assessment Planner or the Test Management screen in Educator Portal until

- their state's window has opened
- rosters have been created that link their students to them
- they have passed all Required Test Administrator Training modules with a score of 80% or higher on each post-test

NO ACCESS TO THE STUDENT VIEW PAGE IN THE INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT PLANNER

Test administrators will not have access to create plans or assign testlets to students on the Student View Page until their students' First Contact Survey is submitted.

NO ACCESS TO THE TEST MANAGEMENT SCREEN IN EDUCATOR PORTAL

The same requirements for accessing the Instruction and Assessment Planner described in the previous paragraphs also apply to accessing the Test Management section of Educator Portal.

NO STUDENT TESTLETS IN TEST MANAGEMENT

A student is not assigned testlets until the following steps are completed correctly 24 hours before the opening of the spring assessment window:

- The student is listed on the test administrator's roster for the correct subjects (one roster per subject).
- In states where students take the end-of-instruction high school biology assessments, the student will be rostered to the subject "science" and the course "biology".
- The First Contact Survey was completed and submitted 24 hours before the opening of the window.

Contact your assessment coordinator to help with any issues or questions.

NOTE: The student must be enrolled in the correct grade for grade-appropriate testlets to be delivered in Student Portal. If a student was enrolled in the incorrect grade and has started testing, after the student's enrollment record is corrected, the student will need to begin testing all over again. Previously completed testlets may no longer be available.

INTRODUCTION TO DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS TESTLETS

COMPUTER-DELIVERED TESTLETS

OVERVIEW

Testlets delivered directly to students via a computer are designed with the assumption that students can interact independently with the computer. Students can use special devices as necessary, such as alternate keyboards, touch screens, or switches.

NOTE: Teacher-administered testlets will be described on page 70 of this manual.

Computer-delivered testlets in the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment are most common at the upper linkage levels, where the content being assessed can be appropriate for delivery using the computer. Reading, mathematics, and science assessments include computer-delivered testlets.

Some students may test at upper linkage levels yet cannot interact directly with the computer due to physical limitations. For these students, the test administrator may navigate the screen on behalf of the student and enter the student's responses.

The Testlet Information Page (TIP) that accompanies each computer-delivered testlet may have few, if any, materials to be gathered since everything the student needs for taking the testlet is available on the computer screen. However, the TIP may have other pertinent information for the test administrator to know.

Writing testlets are **always** administered by test administrators outside of the system, even if the student normally receives computer-delivered testlets in English language arts (ELA). Writing testlets are described in the Teacher-Administered Testlets section, beginning on page 70 of this manual.

HINT: Screenshots in the following sections of this manual demonstrate how a testlet is expected to appear on an assessment device. If a testlet is difficult to view on the assessment device, check the device's display settings and the screen resolution. The screen resolution should be 1024 × 768. Also, check the student's Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile settings to ensure the most appropriate settings have been selected. After doing this, if the issues cannot be resolved, contact your technology personnel or your assessment coordinator.

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF COMPUTER-DELIVERED TESTLETS

Testlets in ELA, mathematics, and science are each delivered differently based on research about effective instructional practices for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Testlets in all subjects begin with an engagement activity to motivate students, activate prior knowledge, and prepare students for the cognitive process required in the items.

Computer-Delivered ELA Reading Testlet Structure

Students taking DLM ELA testlets are assessed on both writing and reading skills. Although a writing testlet is always a teacher-administered testlet, a reading testlet can be either teacher-administered or computer-delivered, depending on the student.

During a reading testlet, students participate in two readings of a text. The first reading serves as the engagement activity and provides students with an opportunity to build a mental representation of the entire text before responding to items. The second reading includes items embedded within the text or placed at the end of the text, as appropriate.

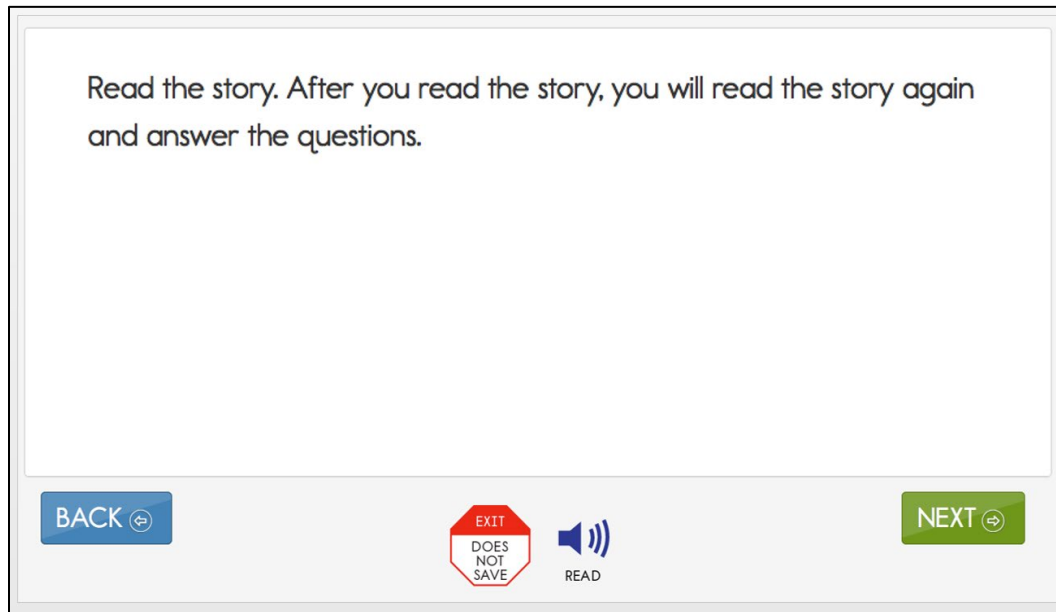
NOTE: Occasionally, in a testlet at the Initial Precursor linkage level, an item is embedded within a text that does not assess reading comprehension of the text itself. Instead, the item addresses the linkage level skill for the Essential Element being assessed.

Foundational nodes represent the core skills and understandings necessary for students to engage in more complicated, content-based thinking and reasoning. Although items written to foundational nodes may be disconnected from the text in certain cases, these items are central to the progression through the ELA linkage levels for a given Essential Element and, more broadly, through the ELA learning maps for a given grade.

The first screen in ELA reading testlets directs students to read the text (Figure 8).

Figure 8

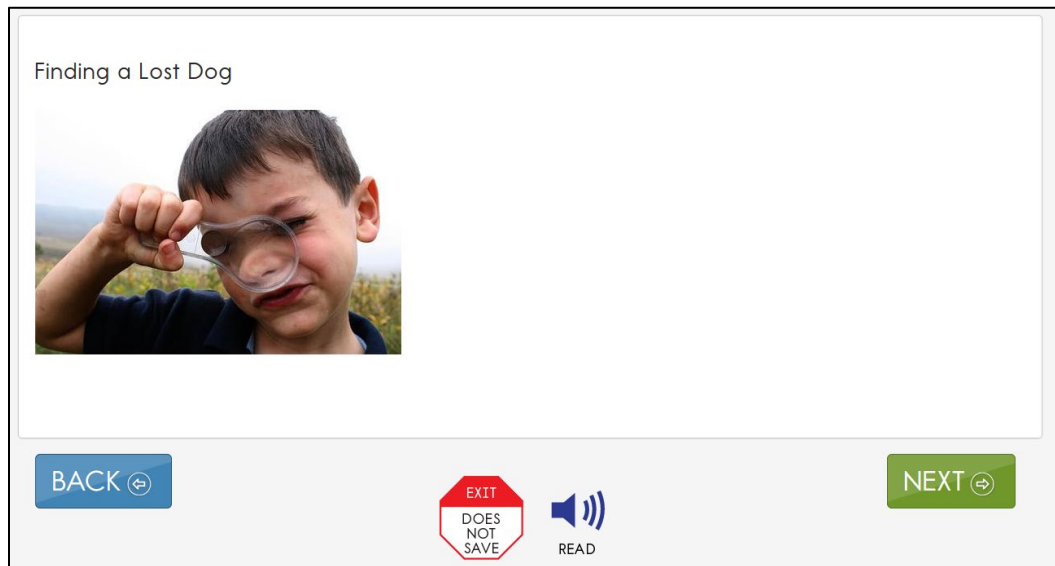
Instructions for an ELA Reading Testlet in Kite Student Portal



Students will read through the text. They may have the text read aloud by the computer if Spoken Audio was selected in the student's PNP Profile (Figure 9). For all testlets, test administrators are permitted to read aloud to students. The student is then directed to read the text a second time and respond to items. Although some students taking computer-delivered reading testlets may require support to navigate from one screen to the next or to enter their responses, most students at the upper linkage levels will independently read the text and respond to the items.

Figure 9

An ELA Reading Testlet in Kite Student Portal Where Spoken Audio (The READ Icon) Is Enabled

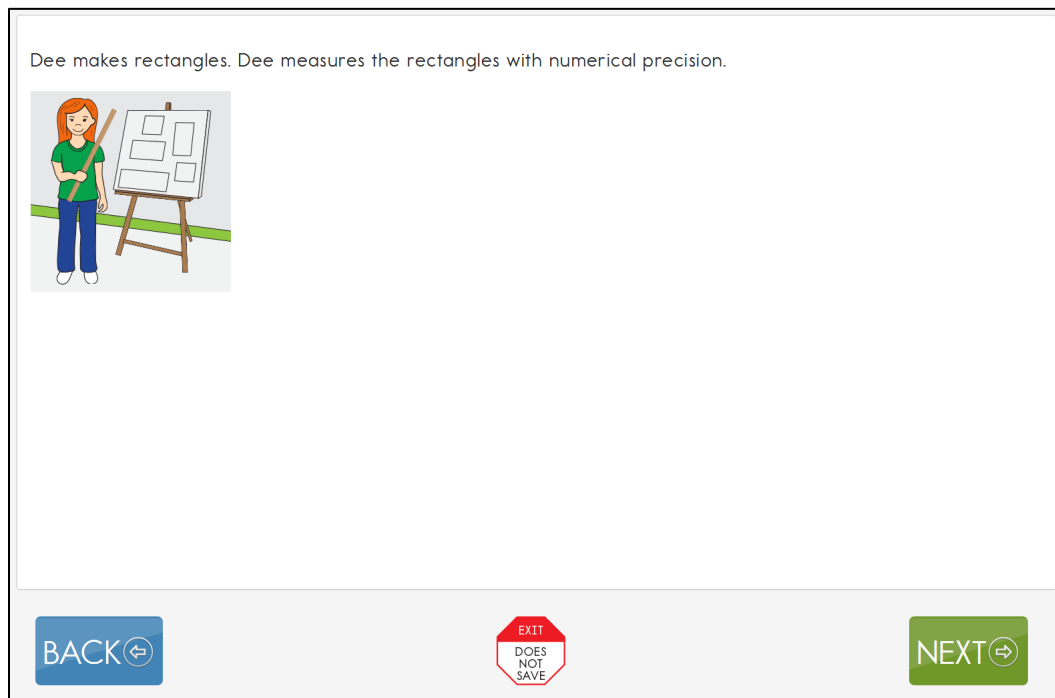


Computer-Delivered Mathematics Testlet Structure

Mathematics testlets start with an engagement activity that provides a context for the items (Figure 10). The engagement activity does not require a response. Mathematics testlets are built around a common scenario or activity to investigate related facets of a student's understanding of the targeted content as shown.

Figure 10

An Engagement Activity in a Mathematics Testlet in Kite Student Portal



Computer-Delivered Science Testlet Structure

NOTE: Check your state's DLM webpage to determine if your state tests DLM science.

Science testlets begin with an engagement activity, just like testlets in ELA and mathematics. Each science testlet bundles together an engagement activity at the beginning of the testlet followed by three to five items. Science engagement activities can be one of four types:

- The first type of engagement activity is simply a single screen with one or two pictures along with a short sentence that introduces the science topic to be assessed. The items assess the Essential Element topic, not the engagement screen itself.
- A second type of engagement activity describes a scenario which taps prior knowledge or experience, introduces the concept to be addressed, and provides context for the items. The items assess information in the engagement activity and the Essential Element topic.
- A third type of engagement activity may be designed around a science story featuring an experiment or classroom activity that is presented twice, with items embedded within the second presentation of the activity or at the end of the second presentation. The items assess information in the engagement activity and the Essential Element topic.

- The fourth type of engagement activity is a short, silent video (up to 30 seconds) and is only found in the upper grade bands and the upper linkage levels. Students will access the short video and then respond to three items that include still-frame photos from the video. The items assess information both from the video and the Essential Element topic.

NOTE: The entire video clip is completely silent.

The following is an example of a science story. The instructions at the beginning of the testlet describe to students what they will be doing in this testlet (Figure 11). In this science story, the student is to read the text and answer some questions.

Figure 11

Instructions for a Science Testlet in Kite Student Portal

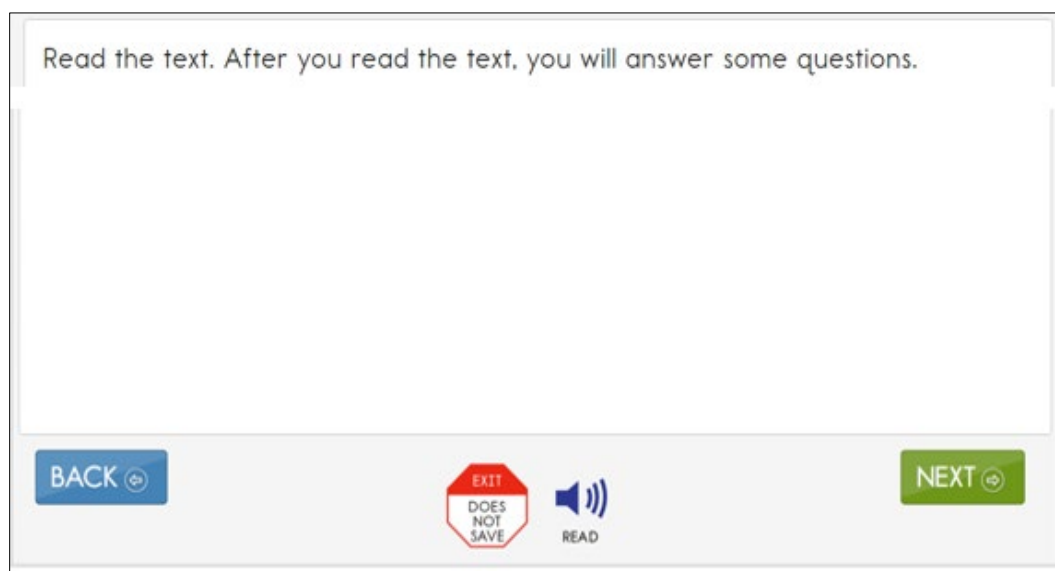


Figure 12 is from a testlet where a short story is presented only once to the student. Although not shown, the testlet items follow the story on the next screen of the testlet.

Figure 12

A Short Story in a Science Testlet in Kite Student Portal



COMPUTER-DELIVERED ITEM TYPES

Students may encounter a variety of item types when taking computer-delivered testlets. Most testlets are designed for students to interact directly with the computer.

ELA and mathematics testlets may include the following item types:

- Single-select multiple choice
- Multiple choice-multi-select
- Select text
- Matching or sorting: in a few upper linkage level testlets, students may encounter matching items

All science testlets are single-select multiple-choice items.

In general, the DLM alternate assessment uses the most straightforward item type that allows for quality assessment of the Essential Element. For this reason, complex item types are used only occasionally at upper linkage levels. The previously described practice activities and released testlets include one or more examples of the above item types.

The most common type of computer-delivered item is a single-select multiple-choice item with text response choices (Figure 13).

Figure 13

A Single-Select Multiple-Choice Item in a Mathematics Testlet in Kite Student Portal

The first cake pan Jenny uses has a length of 9 inches. The pan has a width of 10 inches. The pan has a height of 2 inches.

What is the volume of the pan, in cubic inches? [volume = length x width x height]

- 21 cubic inches
- 90 cubic inches
- 180 cubic inches

Students may also experience single-select multiple-choice items with image response choices (Figure 14).

Figure 14

A Single-Select Multiple-Choice Item in a Mathematics Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Which is a circle?



NOTE: This is an example of an item that would not have alternate text provided to describe the images, because the alternate text would cue the answer.

Multiple choice-multi-select items provide students with the opportunity to choose more than one response (Figure 15).

Figure 15

A Multiple Choice-Multi-Select Item in a Mathematics Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Select all of the coins.

Quarter coin, Dime coin, One-dollar bill, Penny coin

In some items, students may be asked to match responses from two lists (Figure 16).

Figure 16

A Matching Item in an ELA Testlet at an Upper Linkage Level in Kite Student Portal

Match the character to their story.

Mad Hatter	<i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i>
Long John Silver	<i>Treasure Island</i>
Tin Woodman	<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>
	<i>The Jungle Book</i>

The final type of computer-delivered item that students might experience is select text. Select-text items are used only in some ELA assessments. Response choices are marked

with a box around the word, phrase, or sentence. After the student selects their response choice, the outline around the word, phrase, or sentence becomes bold and the response choice is highlighted in transparent yellow (Figure 17). To clear a selection, the student selects it again.

Figure 17

A Select-Text Item in an ELA Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Choose the word that is a number.

Sam likes dogs. Sam has two dogs. Sam plays with his dogs.

BACK EXIT DOES NOT SAVE NEXT

RESPONSE SELECTION FOR COMPUTER-DELIVERED ITEM TYPES

The procedures for selecting item responses in computer-delivered testlets are the same for all subjects. When the student first accesses an item, the responses will appear as shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18

A Single-Select Multiple-Choice Item in an ELA Testlet in Kite Student Portal

What does this text tell about?

how to pet a nice dog
how to feed a hungry dog
how to find a lost dog

BACK EXIT DOES NOT SAVE READ NEXT

Once a student selects a response, a box appears around the response choice (Figure 19). The student can select **NEXT** or **BACK** to navigate through the testlet screens. The response choice will stay selected.

Figure 19

A Selected Response to a Single-Select Multiple-Choice Item in an ELA Testlet in Kite Student Portal

The screenshot shows a digital test interface. At the top, a question asks, "What does this text tell about?". Below the question, there are three multiple-choice options: "how to pet a nice dog", "how to feed a hungry dog", and "how to find a lost dog". The first option, "how to pet a nice dog", is selected and highlighted with a thick black rectangular border. At the bottom of the screen, there is a navigation bar. On the left is a blue button labeled "BACK" with a left-pointing arrow icon. In the center is a red octagonal sign that says "EXIT DOES NOT SAVE" with a speaker icon and the word "READ" below it. On the right is a green button labeled "NEXT" with a right-pointing arrow icon.

If the student wants to change a response at any time during the testlet, they may go back to the screen that displays that item and simply select another response choice (Figure 20).

Figure 20

The Selection of a New Response to a Single-Select Multiple-Choice Item in an ELA Testlet in Kite Student Portal

What does this text tell about?

how to pet a nice dog

how to feed a hungry dog

how to find a lost dog

BACK

EXIT
DOES NOT
SAVE

READ

NEXT

No Response Option

All ELA and mathematics testlets at the Initial Precursor linkage level and all science testlets at the Initial linkage level include **No response** as a response option. The **No response** option is also included in some mathematics testlets at higher linkage levels where performance-based skills are being tested (e.g., measuring, counting). However, not all testlets include **No response** as one of the options.

No response is not a response option in computer-delivered testlets, because the understanding is that the students are interacting with the computer and are able to enter their response or are able to indicate their response to their test administrator to input into the computer. If a student does not provide a response for a computer-delivered item where a test administrator is inputting responses for the student, the test administrator should leave the item unanswered and move on to the next item. On the last screen, any unanswered items will be indicated by showing an “X” for that item number. The student can go back to the unanswered items and try again. However, even if the student provides no response for one or more items in a testlet, the testlet must still be submitted.

Whether **No response** is available for selection for an item or whether the item is left unanswered, the item is scored as incorrect. If the student usually produces an intentional response, but during a testing session does not do so (e.g., due to distractions or behavior

problems), and if state policy allows, the test administrator can use the **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** button and begin the testlet again when the student is more engaged.

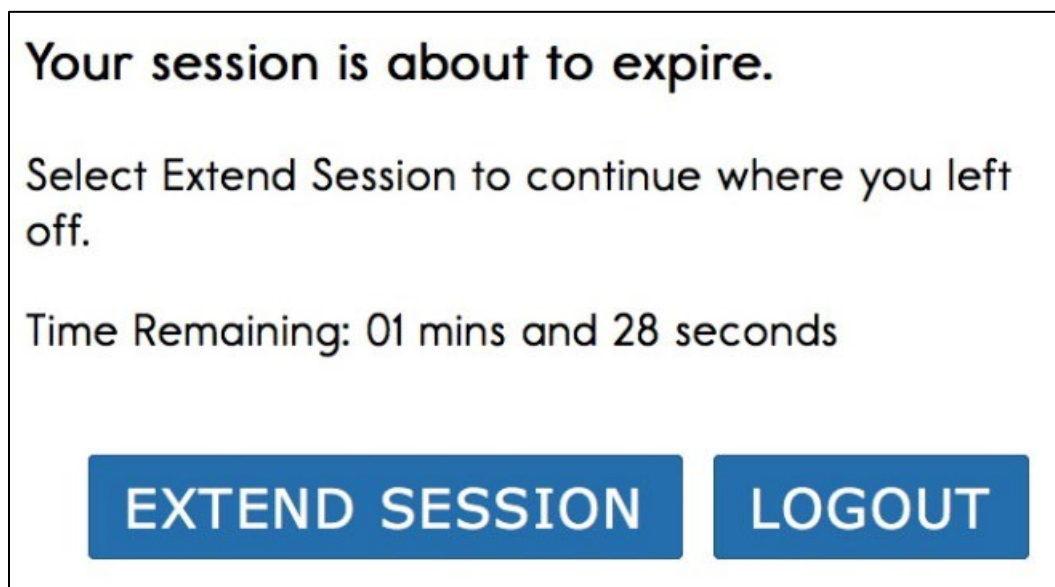
System Timeout

The DLM alternate assessments are administered individually and are not limited to specific timeframes like most general education assessments. Any flexibility a student requires regarding the assessment time is permissible. A student may take as much time as needed and may work in settings that are most appropriate for them. However, if a student needs a significant break during the administration of a testlet, and if Student Portal sits inactive for as long as 90 minutes, it will time out.

This is how the system timeout works. After 88 minutes and 30 seconds of inactivity in the testlet, the system provides the student with this warning message: “Your session is about to expire. Select **Extend Session** to continue where you left off. Time Remaining: XX mins and XX seconds” (Figure 21).

Figure 21

Kite Student Portal Session Expiration Warning



- If no activity occurs before the countdown reaches zero, the system closes the testlet and returns to the login screen. The testlet status returns to **Unused**, and the system retains no answers.
- If **Extend Session** is selected, the system disregards the idle time, closes the prompt, and returns to the screen where the student had been working.
- If **Logout** is selected, the system closes the testlet and returns to the login screen. The testlet status returns to **Unused**, and the system retains no answers.

Educators sometimes question why answers are not saved when a testlet times out. Research has revealed that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who qualify for the DLM alternate assessments require extensive, repeated, and individualized instruction and ongoing supports that are not temporary or transient in nature, and they have difficulty retaining information in working memory for extended periods of time. Therefore, testlets were created to be short with only a few items.

Each testlet begins with an engagement activity that is designed to activate prior knowledge, motivate the student, and provide context. While DLM test administration procedures are designed to be flexible and allow students to take breaks during a testlet, most students who experience an extended interruption during test administration have difficulty retaining information in working memory after that extended interruption. Research has shown that an extended interruption during test administration can adversely affect student performance (Sinharay et al., 2014). Thus, Student Portal was designed to time out after an extended period of inactivity without retaining the responses, allowing the student to begin the assessment afresh when ready.

COMPUTER-DELIVERED ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENT

Prior to test administration, evaluate how to arrange the computer or other assessment devices for the student and test administrator. All arrangements for computer-delivered testlets should maximize the student's independence and interaction with the computer.

Assessing students in a familiar environment is helpful, but the test administrator must ensure that the student is able to concentrate without distractions from other students.

Assessing students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should be individualized and should not be conducted in a group setting.

Maximize Student Interaction With the Computer-Delivered Testlet

The arrangement should maximize student interaction with the testlet using the computer or other assessment devices based on the student's needs. For instance, if the test administrator sits with a student, the student should sit directly in front of the computer and the test administrator should sit off to the side, as shown in Figure 22.

Figure 22

Seating Arrangement of Test Administrator and Student During Assessment Administration



If the test administrator sits next to a student who can use the mouse without assistance, the test administrator should sit on the side of the student opposite from the mouse, so the student has space to move the mouse, and the test administrator is not tempted to move the mouse for the student. A student who takes the assessment on an iPad may be able to hold the iPad and respond to items independently. If not, the test administrator may hold the iPad in a position that provides maximum visibility for the student.

Maximize Student Independence

Although test administrators should continually monitor students, the assessment arrangement should maximize student independence and minimize test administrator involvement. For students who may need assistance during the assessment, the test administrator can sit close to the student to monitor the assessment. On the other hand, if the student can work independently, the test administrator should keep more distance while making sure the student takes enough time and responds to all items.

TEACHER-ADMINISTERED TESTLETS

OVERVIEW

All testlets at the lowest linkage level, some mathematics testlets at higher linkage levels, and all writing testlets are designed to be administered directly by the test administrator. In teacher-administered testlets, the test administrator is responsible for

- setting up the assessment
- delivering it to the student
- evaluating the student's behavior in response to the items
- choosing the testlet response option that best describes the student's behavior
- recording student responses in the testlet in Kite® Student Portal

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF TEACHER-ADMINISTERED TESTLETS

All teacher-administered testlets have some common features:

- The teacher must be able to view the screen, read the instructions, and enter their observations of the student or the student's responses.
- Directions and scripted statements guide the test administrator through the administration process.
- The TIP lists all assessment materials that the test administrator will need and must gather ahead of time. The TIP should be reviewed several hours or even a day or more before testing to enable the test administrator to be ready for test administration.
- The testlet includes an engagement activity and items.
- Teacher-administered testlets at the lowest linkage level include a **No response** item option.
- Science testlets at the Initial linkage level usually have objects that must be gathered or picture-response cards that must be printed ahead of time and used during testing. Best practice is to print these pictures in color.

NOTE: [Go to your state's webpage to determine if your state tests DLM science.](#)

STANDARDIZED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL TEACHER-ADMINISTERED TESTLETS

Teacher-administered testlets are standardized. Anything in quotes and bold print should be presented verbatim to the student. There are two exceptions to this rule:

- When materials are substituted, the test administrator must then use the name of the substituted materials when reading the item to avoid confusing the student.

- When the student uses sign language interpretation or language translation supports as allowable and described in the DLM ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL and on the TIP

NOTE: Language translation is not allowable in some states. Ask your assessment coordinator if it is allowed in your state.

SHOW AND SAY INSTRUCTIONS IN ALL TEACHER-ADMINISTERED TESTLETS

Test administrators will encounter two instructions for presenting items or directions to students: SHOW and SAY. However, because of hearing and vision limitations, some students may not be able to hear what is said, and others may not be able to see what is shown. SHOW means that the test administrator should present the materials to the student using sensory modalities appropriate for that student. SAY may require nonverbal communication appropriate for the student's sensory modalities, such as signing.

Figure 23 is an example of an item screen that may be embedded in the second reading of an ELA text. The Educator Directions tell how to interact with the student. The test administrator must read directly to the student the lines presented in bold after SAY. The administrator also must perform the actions for the student described after SHOW.

Figure 23

An Item Screen That May Be Embedded in the Second Reading of an ELA Text in Kite Student Portal

Educator Directions:

SAY: "Tom had an adventurous day."
SAY: "Which word has a similar meaning to adventurous?"
Read each answer option aloud to the student.

Record student response:

exciting
running

BACK EXIT DOES NOT SAVE NEXT

All teacher-administered items have response options that reflect possible student responses to the statement or questions in the item. The test administrator evaluates the student's response, chooses the best description of what is observed, and records the choice in the testlet. The test administrator should be familiar with the student's typical modes of expressive communication, because any mode of communicating a response is acceptable.

TEACHER-ADMINISTERED READING TESTLETS

In teacher-administered reading testlets, items focus on the cognitive skills that precede conventional literacy. These items are not traditional reading-comprehension questions, but instead are designed to assess the skills identified in the DLM learning map as critical precursors to reading for meaning. These types of items are embedded in the context of a shared reading and are intended to mirror early literacy instruction. Items assess skills such as identifying familiar materials or identifying words that describe familiar people.

Shared reading strategies that an educator might use during the first reading of a text include the following:

- Encouraging engagement and interaction
- Discussing words
- Connecting words or pictures to student background knowledge and experience
- Labeling and pointing out pictures
- Modeling concepts about print (reading left to right, one-to-one correspondence between a spoken and written word, etc.)
- Pointing out rhymes, syllables, and sounds in words
- Asking questions to further engage students
- Modeling how to communicate using a student's communication methods
- Using a think-aloud process to model how to decide whether to make a comment
- Incorporating objects to help make connections

HINT: Text cannot be substituted with pictures or words from a word bank. For more information, go to the section Pictures, Symbols, or Use of a Word Bank on page 79.

STRUCTURE OF TEACHER-ADMINISTERED READING TESTLETS

First, the text is presented in its entirety. The test administrator reads the text aloud using shared reading strategies to maximize student engagement. Then, the text is presented again. This time, the test administrator must refrain from using shared reading strategies and instead focus on administering the items that are embedded in the second reading or placed at its conclusion. For more information about shared reading strategies, go to the

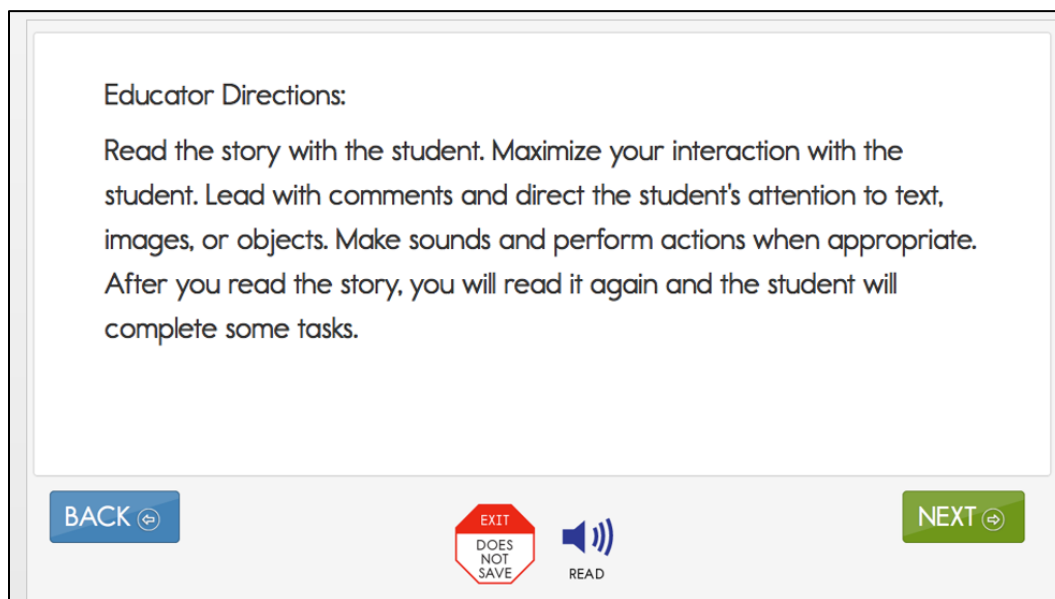
professional development module titled [Shared Reading](#) that is available on the [Professional Development](#) page of the DLM website.

A teacher-administered reading testlet is often used at the Initial Precursor level, where students do not have the skills to directly interact with the computer. Teacher-administered reading testlets are also used for some testlets at higher linkage levels in the lower grades when the student is working with a familiar text.

Figure 24 is an example of the directions provided on the first screen in a teacher-administered reading testlet. This screen provides hints about a shared reading strategy. After this screen, the story screens begin.

Figure 24

The Educator Directions in a Teacher-Administered Reading Testlet in Kite Student Portal

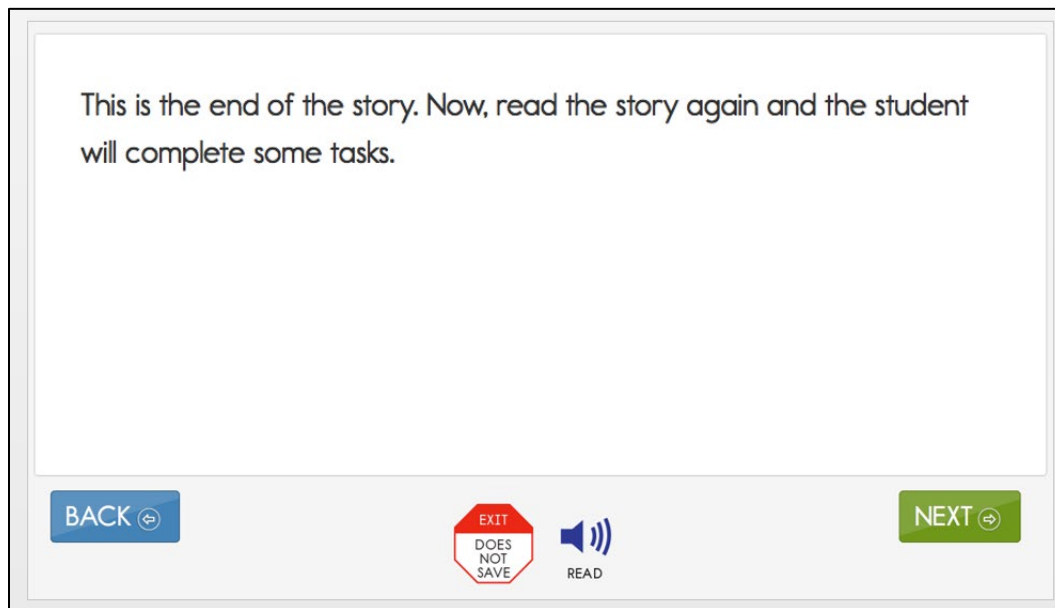


In teacher-administered reading testlets, Educator Directions also appear between parts of the testlet (Figure 25).

The following is an example of a transition screen displayed after the test administrator has read a text with the student for the first time. The transition screen tells the test administrator that the first reading is over, and the second reading is about to begin. During the second reading, the student will respond to items embedded within the second reading or placed at its conclusion.

Figure 25

The Educator Directions in a Teacher-Administered Reading Testlet in Kite Student Portal



ALTERNATE TEXT FOR TEACHER-ADMINISTERED READING TESTLETS

Every TIP that is connected to a testlet with images (either in the text, engagement activity, or items) has alternate text. When administering a testlet to a student who uses human read-aloud support and/or requires verbal descriptions of images, use the alternate text available in supplemental pages of the TIP. The alternate text pages of the TIP show the onscreen text and images for the first and second presentations of the text. Descriptions of the images are printed below the pictures and are labeled Alt Text (e.g., a picture of a dog is presented, then below the picture are the words, “Alt Text: a dog”). For students who require verbal descriptions of the images, read the text on the screen, then read the alternate text description exactly as it appears on the TIP.

ALTERNATE TEXT FOR MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TESTLETS

All testlets that have images (either in text, the engagement activity, items, or picture-response cards) have alternate text for the test administrator to use for students who are blind or visually impaired. The alternate text is in the TIP.

The only exception occurs when the alternate text provides a cue to the answer (e.g., if a student is asked to identify which shape is a triangle). The TIP would not include alternate text that named the shapes in the response options. In that instance, the alternate text page would instruct, “Do not describe.” The teacher would then rely on using objects, tactile graphics, or individual tactile representations of pictures or objects presented onscreen for those students who are unable to rely on the images on the screen. Figure 14 on page 62 is

an example of a mathematics testlet that has images as response options but would not have alternate text, because the alternate text would cue the answer.

CLASSROOM SETUP FOR TEACHER-ADMINISTERED READING TESTLETS

The student, the test administrator, and the computer screen should be arranged in a triangle during a teacher-administered reading testlet. Both the student and test administrator need to have access to the text during the shared reading activity. The test administrator should have the best access to the directions pages and item screens. When the item screens appear, the test administrator needs to be able to enter responses easily. The triangle arrangement usually works, but the test administrator may need to shift position slightly so that screens containing the ELA text can easily be displayed to both student and test administrator. Leave space near the student for any materials that will be used.

TEACHER-ADMINISTERED WRITING TESTLETS

Every day in our classrooms, all students, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, are being prepared for life beyond their school years. A student's ability to communicate about their needs and wants is essential for safety and fulfillment in their adult life. Their ability to communicate includes being able to write in some meaningful way. Therefore, writing Essential Elements and writing assessments were developed. Information about each writing Essential Element is available on the DLM website. Go to [Instructional Resources](#) | Currently Tested Essential Elements in English Language Arts. Alternately, you may also go to your state DLM webpage and filter by Teacher | Assessment Resources | [Currently Tested Essential Elements in English Language Arts](#).

The DLM writing testlet is used to assess students' mastery of the precursor skills that lead to writing and a student's ability to communicate using writing. These skills focus on understanding letters and words and the expression of ideas through words. Testlet response options that refer to "writing" or "the student wrote" can include any method the student uses for writing. The writing testlets all have some common features:

- Writing testlets are always teacher-administered and are required for every student in every grade.
- The student always works outside of Student Portal and interacts with the test administrator. Only the test administrator interacts with the testlet in Student Portal.
- To meet blueprint requirements for this claim and conceptual area, each student receives one writing testlet in the spring assessment window.
- In the required spring assessment window, the system-assigned linkage level for the writing testlet is determined using the test administrator's responses to items in the

writing portion of the First Contact Survey, and not from the student’s performance on any other testlets assessing other ELA Essential Elements.

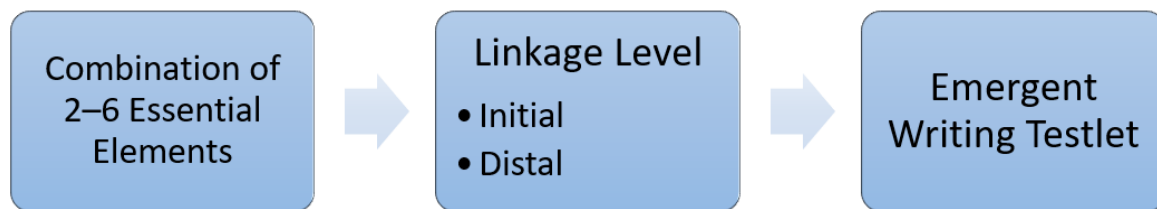
- Writing testlets assess a combination of two to six writing Essential Elements, depending on the grade.
- Writing testlets are at one of two levels: emergent or conventional.

EMERGENT WRITING TESTLETS

- Emergent writing testlets are used for students who do not yet have, or are working on, early symbolic understanding.
- Emergent writing testlets are a combination of the Initial and Distal Precursor linkage levels (Figure 26).
- Students should use the orthography-based tools they use for writing during everyday instruction.
- Students in Grades 3–8 who are assigned the emergent writing testlet are assessed only on the writing process. These students are not expected to produce a written product.
- Students in high school who are assigned the emergent level writing testlets are also tested on the writing process, but these students are expected to produce a written product as well.
- The results for the writing testlet are only provided in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Report Results.

Figure 26

Process for an Emergent Writing Testlet



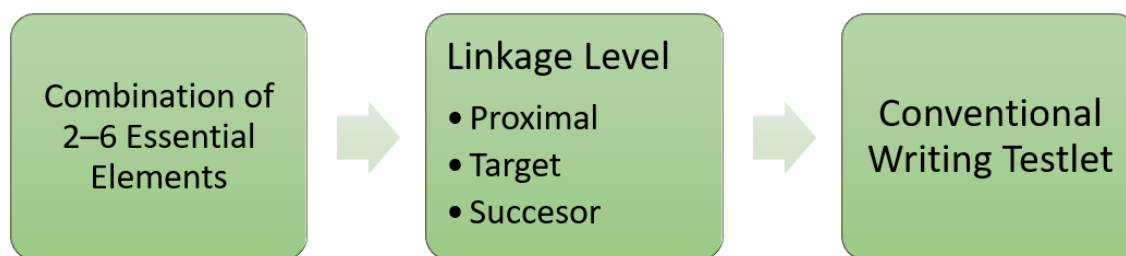
CONVENTIONAL WRITING TESTLETS

- Conventional writing testlets are for students who have symbolic understanding and can use more traditional writing tools to communicate.
- Conventional writing testlets combine linkage levels at the Proximal Precursor, the Target, and the Successor linkage levels.
- Conventional writing testlets are a little more typical of a traditional writing assessment (Figure 27).
- Students should use the orthography-based tools they use for writing during everyday instruction.

- Students taking conventional writing testlets are assessed on the writing process, and they are also expected to produce a written product.
- Many students taking the DLM alternate assessment will need a test administrator to assist them in obtaining a writing tool that offers them access to all 26 letters of the alphabet.
- DLM staff may request test administrators to electronically submit their student's final written product.
- The results (scores) for the writing testlet are only provided in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Report Results.

Figure 27

Process for a Conventional Writing Testlet



ALLOWED SUPPORTS FOR WRITING TESTLETS

The following supports **are allowed** for writing testlets:

- Pens, pencils, markers, crayons
- Whiteboards
- Traditional keyboards using word-processing software
- Adapted keyboards that include all 26 letters of the alphabet
- Tablet computer keyboards using word-processing software
- Alternate keyboard (e.g., onscreen or switch-enabled keyboard)
- Alternate pencils, including alphabet flip charts
- Eye-gaze displays of letters
- Letter-by-letter dictation of any sort
- Word-prediction software*

SUPPORTS NOT ALLOWED FOR WRITING TESTLETS

The following supports are **not allowed** for writing testlets:

- Speech-to-text software**
- Whole-word or sentence dictation; to test the full criteria of writing Essential Elements, students are not allowed to dictate whole words or sentences

- Selection of pictures or words from a word bank

Word prediction and text-to-speech are two very different types of software. Understanding the difference between the two is important to understanding why DLM allows word prediction but not speech-to-text.

***Word Prediction** (allowed for DLM writing testlets)

- Word prediction is a digital tool. It responds to letter-by-letter input from the user. Specifically, word-prediction software uses the letters a student selects to predict the word the student is trying to type. With each new letter the student selects, the tool refines the words in the list. Most word-prediction tools will use the letters selected by the user and any other words that have been written to refine the guesses.
- The number of words in the list can be adjusted (generally a maximum of nine words), and most commercial word-prediction options restrict words in the list to words that are grammatically possible given other words that have already been typed. Other features may be available depending on the specific word prediction application being used. For example, some word-prediction tools make guesses based on the phonemes represented by the selected letters, not just the grapheme.
- Word prediction primarily supports spelling accuracy but can also support syntax (i.e., grammar), while requiring the student to compose text by using letter-by-letter spelling. Word prediction can improve writing fluency for some students with physical disabilities, but it does so without turning the composition task into an oral language task.

****Speech-to-Text** (not allowed for DLM writing testlets)

- Speech-to-text is a digital tool. It responds to spoken input from the user. Like a human scribe, speech-to-text software translates spoken input (letters, words, sentences, and extended text) into text. Speech-to-text software allows students to generate text without letter-by-letter spelling. It supports turning oral language into a written text without requiring any knowledge of the concept of words or the ability to spell.

The distinction between the two supports is important in the DLM alternate assessments in ELA, especially in the context of the writing testlets. In the DLM alternate assessment in ELA, writing is defined as “the process of constructing texts in traditional print or braille that communicate thoughts, feelings, and understandings for diverse purposes and audiences” (go to the video for Year-End model states: [Dynamic Learning Maps Writing Testlets Overview](#)).

The writing testlets in the DLM Alternate Assessments in ELA require students to apply a coordinated set of abilities to communicate thoughts, ideas, or information by attending to

the mechanics of transcription and organization.¹ In most testlets, students select and communicate about a topic using the modes of communication they use across contexts. In each testlet, students are required to use a pencil, keyboard, or letters of the alphabet accessed in some other way to compose text with letter-by-letter spelling. Word prediction supports, but does not eliminate, the need to use individual letters to spell words. Speech-to-text can eliminate this need by allowing students to dictate whole words and sentences.

PICTURES, SYMBOLS, OR USE OF A WORD BANK

Pictures, symbols, or words from a word bank are not allowed and may not be substituted for words in a sentence. This practice is forbidden because the meaning that an individual assigns to a picture or symbol depends upon the individual's motivation; neurological and developmental status; sensory abilities; cognitive, communication, and language skills; and world experience (Mineo Mollica, 2003). Furthermore, the ability to learn the meaning of pictures or symbols is directly related to an individual's understanding of the word associated with the picture or symbol.

In other words, individuals who understand the meaning of the spoken word learn the associated picture or symbol rather easily, while individuals who do not understand the spoken word need more time to learn the meaning of the picture or symbol (Romski & Sevcik, 1996, 2005). Because students who participate in the DLM alternate assessment have universally impaired cognitive and language skills, it is not possible to ensure that each student's understanding of pictures and symbols introduced in the assessment will match the intended meaning.

WRITING TOPIC

For both levels of writing testlets, the test administrator and the student participate in an engagement activity related to choosing a topic on which to write. The testlet does not include preselected topics for writing assessments.

- In emergent writing testlets at the Initial Precursor and Distal Precursor linkage levels, the students often choose from a list of topics that they have been exposed to during instruction.
- In conventional writing testlets, students also write about familiar topics. If able, they independently select a subject on which to write. The topic is to be an informational one that is relevant to instruction and familiar to the student.

¹ Harris, K., Graham, S., Mason, L., & Saddler, B. (2002). Developing self-regulated writers. *Theory Into Practice*, 41, 110–115.

- If the student takes a writing testlet in the optional instructionally embedded window, the student may use the same topic again during the required spring assessment window.

TEST ADMINISTRATOR TASKS IN WRITING TESTLETS

The test administrator has two types of tasks in writing testlets:

- 1) The test administrator evaluates a process used in writing. Testlet items are presented to the test administrator while the student works through the writing testlet.
- 2) The test administrator evaluates the student's final writing product.

For the first type of task, test administrators will perform the following steps (Figure 28):

- 1) Give the student a verbal prompt from the onscreen Educator Directions. As apparent in the following image, the verbal prompt may be "SAY: You are going to write about a person, place, or object today. What would you like to write about?"
- 2) The test administrator may present the student with a list of familiar topics that have been used during instruction, or the student may think of a topic without any prompting.
- 3) The testlet screen prompts the test administrator to ask the student to engage in writing tasks.
 - a) An example of a verbal prompt may be, "SAY: Write about [topic] using words that describe [topic]."
 - b) The test administrator says the prompt aloud to the student, inserting the actual topic selected for the writing testlet.
- 4) The test administrator is directed to WAIT and OBSERVE the student's writing process in response to the prompt. Patiently waiting is a **very important** step for the test administrator to do, so that the student has enough time to respond.
- 5) The test administrator evaluates the student's behavior according to the description in the response options. The test administrator then chooses the description that best matches the student's writing process.

Figure 28

The Educator Directions for a Writing Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Educator Directions:

SAY: "You are going to write about a person, place, or object today. What would you like to write about?"

Give the student time to make a choice about a topic used in shared reading and during instruction. If the student is unable to select a topic, select a topic for the student to write about. When the student is ready to begin, select "NEXT."

EXAMPLE: If the student's behavior could be described by two response options, the test administrator should select the response option that represents the higher of the two options. In the following image, if the student wrote some words related to the topic and some words that were not related to the topic, the test administrator has two response options from which to select: "Wrote at least one word related to the topic," or "Wrote a word or words that were not related to the topic." In this case, the test administrator would select the higher of the two options: "Wrote at least one word related to the topic."

The response options in Figure 29 are as follows:

- Wrote facts, details, or other information related to the topic
- Communicated about facts, details, or other information related to the topic, but did not write
- Wrote at least one word related to the topic
- Wrote a word or words that were not related to the topic
- Wrote letters
- Wrote marks or selected symbols other than letters
- Did not communicate or write about the topic

Figure 29

Response Screen in a Writing Testlet in Kite Student Portal

After the student has finished writing, choose the highest level that describes your evaluation of the final product. Spelling is not evaluated in this item.

- ☐ Wrote facts, details, or other information related to the topic
- ☐ Communicated about facts, details, or other information related to the topic, but did not write
- ☐ Wrote at least one word related to the topic
- ☐ Wrote a word or words that were not related to the topic
- ☐ Wrote letters
- ☐ Wrote marks or selected symbols other than letters
- ☐ Did not communicate or write about the topic

When a student’s performance does not exactly match any response option, the test administrator should select the option that best matches the student’s performance (Table 16).

Table 16

Student Performance and Test Administrator Responses During an Assessment

Student’s Performance	Test Administrator’s Response
The student wrote complete sentences about the topic using at least two descriptive words.	The test administrator selects the response, “Wrote facts, details, or other information related to the topic.”
The student wrote incomplete sentences but still conveyed ideas and information about the topic using at least two descriptive words.	The test administrator selects the response, “Wrote facts, details, or other information related to the topic.”

Student's Performance	Test Administrator's Response
The student did not write anything about a topic.	The test administrator selects the response, "Did not communicate or write about the topic." If that response is not available, the test administrator would choose "No response" if available. If neither of these responses is available, then the test administrator leaves the item blank.

For the second type of task, found in most conventional writing testlets, the test administrator is required to evaluate the student's final writing product. The evaluation items may be in a single-select multiple-choice or multiple choice-multi-select format. The test administrator completes this task only after the student has finished writing. The test administrator will

- look at the writing the student produced
- evaluate the student's writing product
- choose the description that matches the highest level of the student's writing

RETENTION OF THE WRITING PRODUCT

Retention of a student's written product is a policy decision made at the state or local level. The assessment coordinator can provide information about the policy requirements (i.e., how long to store and where to store the students' writing products).

For research and technical documentation, DLM staff may request test administrators to electronically scan and submit their student's final written product. If this request occurs, the test administrators and their assessment coordinators will be informed in advance about how to electronically submit the student's final written product. Writing products should not be mailed using the postal system.

TEACHER-ADMINISTERED MATHEMATICS TESTLETS

Mathematics testlets at the Initial Precursor level are always teacher-administered testlets and will include **No response** as one of the response options. Some testlets at higher linkage levels in mathematics are also teacher-administered when the tested content is over performance-based skills (e.g., measuring, counting). These testlets may also include **No response** as one of the response options.

An example is a procedural node that asks the student to measure volume. Recognizing three-dimensional objects and manipulating them onscreen requires keen perceptual and motor skills, neither of which are essential to the student's cognitive understanding of how to measure volume.

For students who are blind, have visual impairments, or have physical disabilities that impact their ability to take the testlet onscreen, the test administrator should directly administer these types of testlets to make them accessible.

STRUCTURE OF TEACHER-ADMINISTERED MATHEMATICS TESTLETS

All teacher-administered mathematics testlets are similar in their structure. They include instructions to the test administrator called Educator Directions.

- First, the directions tell the test administrator, in a general way, what will happen in the testlet.
- Second, the directions specify any materials that need to be collected.

More information about the materials and recommended substitutions are on the TIP, which the test administrator will need to access before test administration. The teacher-administered math testlets do not have alternate text included because those testlets do not have images associated with them. Those TIPs have only a TIP cover page.

The last part of the TIP's directions page outlines the needed materials, which items need the materials, and in what order the materials are presented in the item. The test administrator may make substitutions if the substitutions do not change what is being measured in the testlet and if the materials are still grouped as indicated in the testlet directions.

Figure 30 is an example of Educator Directions for an Initial Precursor mathematics testlet.

Figure 30

Educator Directions in a Teacher-Administered Mathematics Testlet

Educator Directions:

In this testlet you will present the student with familiar objects of different shapes. It is important that the student can identify the objects through his or her preferred means of communication.

Gather 3 familiar objects, such as a ball, a block, and a book. You may substitute other objects as long as they have different shapes and at least one is round.

For the first item, you will use the ball (or other round object) and the block. For the second item, you will use the ball and the book.

BACK ↩

EXIT
DOES
NOT
SAVE

NEXT ➡

Teacher-administered mathematics testlets begin with an engagement activity, which occurs when the test administrator presents the materials used in the testlet and engages the student in exploring the materials. Figure 31 is an example of an engagement activity in a teacher-administered mathematics testlet.

Figure 31

An Engagement Activity in a Teacher-Administered Mathematics Testlet

Educator Directions:

Present the eight napkins to the student in a way that captures the student's attention. For example:

- Draw the student's attention to the presence of the napkins.
- Talk about how napkins are used.

Once the student has attended to the napkins, stack five napkins together and leave three napkins separated. Indicate to the student that the stacked napkins are in a group and the other napkins are separate.

On the next screens, you will ask the student some questions about the napkins.

BACK ↩

EXIT
DOES
NOT
SAVE

READ

NEXT ➡

TEACHER-ADMINISTERED SCIENCE TESTLETS

NOTE: Check your state's DLM webpage to determine if your state tests DLM science.

Teacher-administered science testlets are at the Initial linkage level and are administered similarly to mathematics testlets. For these testlets, objects must be gathered, or picture-response cards must be printed ahead of time. The student works with the test administrator outside of Student Portal, and the test administrator enters the student's responses in Student Portal. Testlets at the Initial linkage level will include the **No response** answer option.

PICTURE-RESPONSE CARDS FOR TEACHER-ADMINISTERED SCIENCE TESTLETS

Initial linkage level science testlets are structured as a series of statements that the test administrator reads to the student, and the TIP usually includes objects that must be gathered or picture-response cards that must be printed prior to test administration. Best practice is to print the picture-response cards in color. Administration of the testlet will not be possible without the picture-response cards or the objects.

STRUCTURE OF TEACHER-ADMINISTERED SCIENCE TESTLETS

All teacher-administered science testlets are similar in structure. They include instructions to the test administrator called Educator Directions. Figure 32 is an example of Educator Directions for an Initial linkage level science testlet.

Figure 32

Educator Directions for an Initial Linkage Level Science Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Educator Directions:

In this testlet, the student will identify examples of changes in the state of matter.

Before you begin working with the student, print the following pictures included in the Testlet Information Page:

- a solid stick of butter
- a melting stick of butter
- a cup of melting ice
- a cup of steaming water
- a pot of water
- a pot of boiling water

BACK ⏮

EXIT
DOES NOT
SAVE

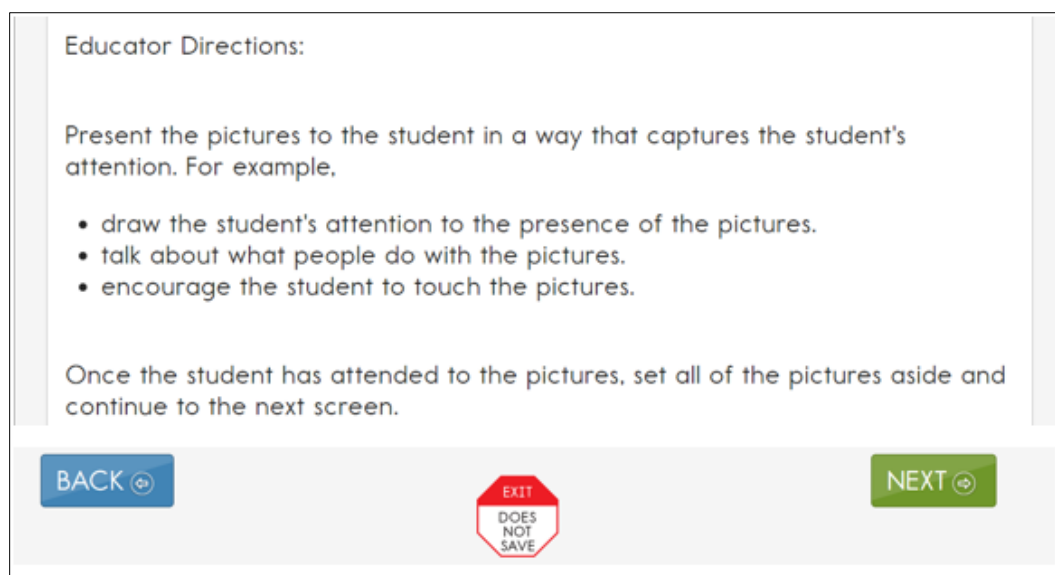
NEXT ⏭

The directions tell the test administrator, in a general way, what will happen in the testlet and will specify any materials that must be collected. The TIP lists these materials and may also list recommended substitutions. The test administrator may substitute materials if the substitutions do not change what the testlet measures. The last part of the directions page outlines the needed materials, which items need the materials, and in what order the item presents the materials.

Additionally, teacher-administered science testlets contain an engagement activity, in which the test administrator presents the picture-response cards or objects and then engages the student in exploring the materials. Figure 33 is an example of an engagement activity in a teacher-administered science testlet.

Figure 33

An Engagement Activity in a Teacher-Administered Science Testlet in Kite Student Portal



PRACTICES ALLOWED

Items in the DLM testlets are designed to assess student knowledge, skills, and understanding related to the Essential Elements. To meet this goal, test administrators will need to use their best judgment and be flexible while administering the assessment, including providing supports beyond PNP Profile options and the allowed practices listed. The following practices are allowed in both computer-delivered and teacher-administered testlets, unless exceptions are noted on the TIP.

BREAKS

Students may take breaks during or between testlets. Test administrators need to use their best judgment about the use of breaks. Although the goal is to complete a testlet in a single

session, breaks may be needed when the student is fatigued, disengaged, or having behavioral problems that may interfere with the student being able to demonstrate what they know and can do.

INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT RESPONSE MODE

The items in the teacher-administered testlets do not limit response modes to certain types of expressive communication; all response modes are allowed. Test administrators may need to represent response options outside of the system to maximize the student's ability to respond. For example, for a student who uses eye-gaze technology to communicate, the test administrator may represent the response options in an alternate format or layout to ensure the student can indicate a clear response. The test administrator must be familiar with the student's typical modes of expressive communication because any mode for communicating a response is acceptable.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT DURING TESTING

Some students may need special equipment to access the assessment material, such as a slant board for positioning or hook-and-loop objects on a communication board. Test administrators should use the equipment to maximize the student's ability to provide a clear response.

NAVIGATION ACROSS SCREENS

For any student who has difficulty interacting directly with the computer because of a lack of experience, limited fine motor skills, or use of interactive devices, the test administrator may help the student navigate across screens.

ENTERING RESPONSES FOR A STUDENT

If a student is unable to enter a response into the computer but can indicate a response in some other fashion, such as through eye gaze, the test administrator may enter the response into the testlet on behalf of the student. Again, the student's method for responding to items should be consistent with the student's usual means of expressing choices.

ENLARGEMENT OF THE ASSESSMENT

Some students have severe visual impairments and need larger presentations of the content than is provided by the 5× magnification setting in the PNP Profile. Also, some students may not have the fine motor skills needed to select a response option on the screen of a typical, average-sized computer device. In these situations, the test administrator may use any device that enables the student to see the assessment or to use

their gross motor skills to indicate their response options, e.g., an interactive whiteboard, a magnification device, or the projection of the assessment to make it larger.

ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIONS OF RESPONSE OPTIONS

Pictures or objects may **not** be used to represent text-based response options. For example, if response options are words (i.e., text), then the responses may not be represented by pictures or objects. However, if the onscreen response option is a picture of a circle, a square, and a triangle, the educator may represent the response options using shapes on a communication board, tactile graphics, or objects that are the shapes.

Additionally, representing the response options in an alternate format is allowed if the representation does not favor one response over another. For instance, the correct response cannot always be closest to the student or in the same position each time.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

If the student is accustomed to using specific graphic organizers, manipulatives, or other supports during instruction, the use of those supports is allowable during the DLM alternate assessment.

BLANK PAPER

If the student requires blank lined or unlined paper, it may be provided to the student. However, once the student has written anything on it, the paper then becomes a secure assessment document. At the conclusion of the assessment session, the paper must be securely destroyed along with the TIP.

USE OF REINFORCEMENT

Natural or direct reinforcement may be used to promote appropriate participation in the administration of the assessment. Tangible reinforcement (e.g., stickers, tokens) or social reinforcement (e.g., praise, high fives) may be used to promote appropriate, on-task behavior. These types of reinforcement should be used only for appropriate and continued participation, but they must not be used to sway or lead the student to the correct response.

GENERIC DEFINITIONS

If the student does not understand the meaning of a word used in the assessment, the test administrator may define the term generically and allow the student to apply that definition to the item in which the term was used. Exceptions to this general rule are noted on the TIP for specific testlets.

PRACTICES NOT ALLOWED

Many supports and practices are allowable for computer-delivered and teacher-administered testlets. However, some practices are not allowed. These practices include the following:

- Repeating the item activity after a student has responded, or in any other way prompting the student to choose a different response
- Using physical prompts or hand-over-hand guidance to direct the student to the correct response
- Removing response options or giving hints to the student
- Rearranging objects to prompt the correct response (e.g., putting the correct response closer to the student)

For questions about whether a particular support is allowable, test administrators must contact their assessment coordinator. If supports outside of those listed are provided for a student, some states require that a description of those supports be provided, using a state reporting system. To avoid invalidating the student's assessment, follow state-specific guidelines and get approval from the assessment coordinator before using other supports.

OTHER ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS

Accessibility supports that are appropriate for use during teacher-administered and computer-delivered testlets are described in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL. The following describes some supports in more detail.

LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

Because disability-related cognitive and communication challenges for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are unique, and because English learners speak a wide variety of languages, the DLM alternate assessment does not provide translated forms of testlets. Instead, the DLM alternate assessment supplies test administrators with instructions regarding allowable supports based on each student's unique combination of language-related and disability-related needs and on the specific construct measured by a particular testlet.

The test administrator will receive a TIP for each testlet. The TIP includes information about exceptions to the general rule of allowable translations. For example, when an item assesses knowledge of vocabulary, the TIP will include a note when the test administrator may not define or translate terms for the student on that testlet.

NOTE: Some states do not allow language translation. Check with your assessment coordinator about language translation.

Unless exceptions are noted in the TIP, test administrators may do the following:

- Translate the text
 - Simplify testlet instructions
 - Translate words on demand
 - Provide synonyms or definitions
 - Accept responses in either English or the student's native language
-

NOTE: Student Portal does not offer a digital dictionary. Students may use their version of a dictionary if needed, such as word lists and communication symbols. This dictionary should be familiar to the student and should have been used during instruction.

SIGN INTERPRETATION

Students who are Deaf or hard of hearing and who participate in the DLM alternate assessment may require additional supports beyond those available via the PNP Profile. Support needs may be different for computer-delivered testlets than for teacher-administered testlets.

Directions in the teacher-administered testlets describe how to organize and present the content to the student. Scripted directions tell the test administrator what to say or sign. For English learners, the test administrator will need to determine if the student can understand a direct translation of the script or if the student will need an interpretation of the directions. If interpretation is needed, in most situations, the TIP will provide the needed information for a test administrator to be prepared for test administration. However, in some situations, other advanced planning may be necessary.

SIGN INTERPRETATION FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED TRANSLATIONS

When necessary for a student who is Deaf or hard of hearing and needs translation, a test administrator is permitted to sign in to Student Portal before beginning the assessment to plan and prepare for appropriate procedures to use with the students. If the need for interpretation is likely, the test administrator is permitted to review the screens to evaluate the need for interpretation. If administration occurs later, the test administrator should use the **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** button to leave the testlet. If **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** is not permitted in your state, special permission may be needed ahead of time. Contact the assessment administrator to report the need in advance.

For teacher-administered testlets, test administrators may do the following:

- Translate the text (American Sign Language, Signed Exact English, or individualized)
- Translate words on demand (e.g., English to American Sign Language)
- Provide synonyms and definitions except when specifically forbidden on the TIP (e.g., when the item assesses knowledge of vocabulary)
- Accept responses in the student's sign language system (American Sign Language, Signed Exact English, or individualized) or through the student's communication device
- Reread the text if the student indicates a need

OTHER PRACTICES ALLOWED

Students who participate in the DLM alternate assessment have access to many accessibility supports. Test administrators may also be flexible with some aspects of testlet delivery. However, testlet delivery must be standardized in certain ways. This section describes general principles for additional allowable practices when the accessibility supports included in the PNP Profile do not meet the student's needs. When possible, the additional supports must be consistent with the student's current needs as documented in the IEP.

When making decisions about additional supports for computer-delivered testlets, test administrators must follow IEP team decisions and these two general principles:

- **Provide flexibility in student access and response mode.** For example, standard administration procedures define typical arrangements for the test administrator, the student, and the computer for different types of testlets. However, the test administrator may need to adapt the physical arrangement based on a student's physical needs and use of special equipment. Another example of this flexibility is the substitution of materials as needed for the testlet.
- **Maintain consistency in the student's interaction with the concept being measured.** All students do not have to interact with identical materials or respond using the same response mode, but all students do complete the same cognitive or linguistic task. Therefore, test administrators cannot rephrase questions or rearrange items. Simplified instructions, definitions, and flexible response modes are allowable practices for all students, except when specifically excluded by the TIP. TIPs for testlets at the lower linkage levels may provide information for material substitutions to help the test administrator maintain this consistency. For a computer-delivered testlet, most of what the student needs is displayed on the screen in the testlet.

To determine whether a practice is allowed, go to Practices Allowed and Practices Not Allowed beginning on page 87 of this manual. Also, in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL, go to Supports: Allowed and Not Allowed.

TESTLETS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

BRAILLE FORM TYPES

DLM alternate assessments are in uncontracted braille. Braille forms are only available for some ELA, mathematics, and science Essential Elements and only at the upper linkage levels. Table 17 on page 94 shows the windows, subjects, and linkage levels where braille forms may be available. Each state assessment administrator decides whether to offer one, two, or all three braille codes in the state. In the student's PNP Profile, the test administrator selects the appropriate braille code for their student.

- EBAE
- UEB with Nemeth
- UEB Math/Science

For more information about braille, go to the [Braille Authority of North America \(BANA\)](#) website. The BANA position statement, [Terminology: UEB Math/Science and UEB with Nemeth](#), was adopted in September 2020 and is available in a PDF on their website.

The DLM alternate assessment is designed to assess a student's knowledge, skills, and understanding of the Essential Elements, not the student's ability to use braille. Therefore, braille should be selected only if the student is proficient in reading braille and should not be selected for emerging braille readers. The Alternate form-visual impairment option may be more suitable for a student with a visual impairment who is not proficient in reading braille.

BRAILLE FORM AVAILABILITY

Braille forms and the Alternate form-visual impairment option are **not** available for all Essential Elements and linkage levels (Table 17). Based on availability for every Essential Element being tested, a student will receive one of three forms of a testlet as shown in the following list:

- A limited number of braille forms for ELA and mathematics are available during both the optional instructionally embedded assessment window and the required spring assessment window.
- A limited number of braille forms for science are available during the spring assessment window and only at the Target linkage level.

- A limited number of the Alternate form-visual impairment option testlets are available during both the optional instructionally embedded assessment window and spring assessment window.
- Standard forms are **always** available for the assessment.

HINT: When braille or the Alternate form-visual impairment option are selected in the PNP Profile, other supports may also be selected, such as Spoken Audio, magnification, and human read aloud.

Table 17

Availability of Braille Forms for Each Subject, Grade, Linkage Level, and Window

Subject	Grades	Linkage Levels	Window
ELA and mathematics	3–5	Target and Successor	Instructionally embedded assessment window and spring assessment window
ELA and mathematics	6–8 and high school	Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor	Instructionally embedded assessment window and spring assessment window
Science	3–8 and high school	Target	Spring assessment window only

BRILLE FORM DELIVERY

The test administrator marks options in the PNP Profile to have the system deliver a braille or alternate form when available. In the PNP Profile, braille is selected under the Language and Braille tab, while alternate form-visual impairment is selected under the Other Supports tab.

When braille has been selected for a student in the PNP Profile, and since a braille form is not available for every Essential Element at every linkage level, the Kite system works through the following process for delivering a testlet.

- First, if a braille form is available for the Essential Element at the linkage level, the braille form of the testlet is delivered.

- Second, if a braille form is not available for the Essential Element at the linkage level, the Kite system will automatically look for an alternate form-visual impairment form of the testlet: a BVI form.*
- Third, if a BVI form is available for the Essential Element at the linkage level, the BVI form of the testlet is delivered.
- Fourth, if a BVI form is not available for the Essential Element at the linkage level, the system will automatically provide a standard form of the testlet.

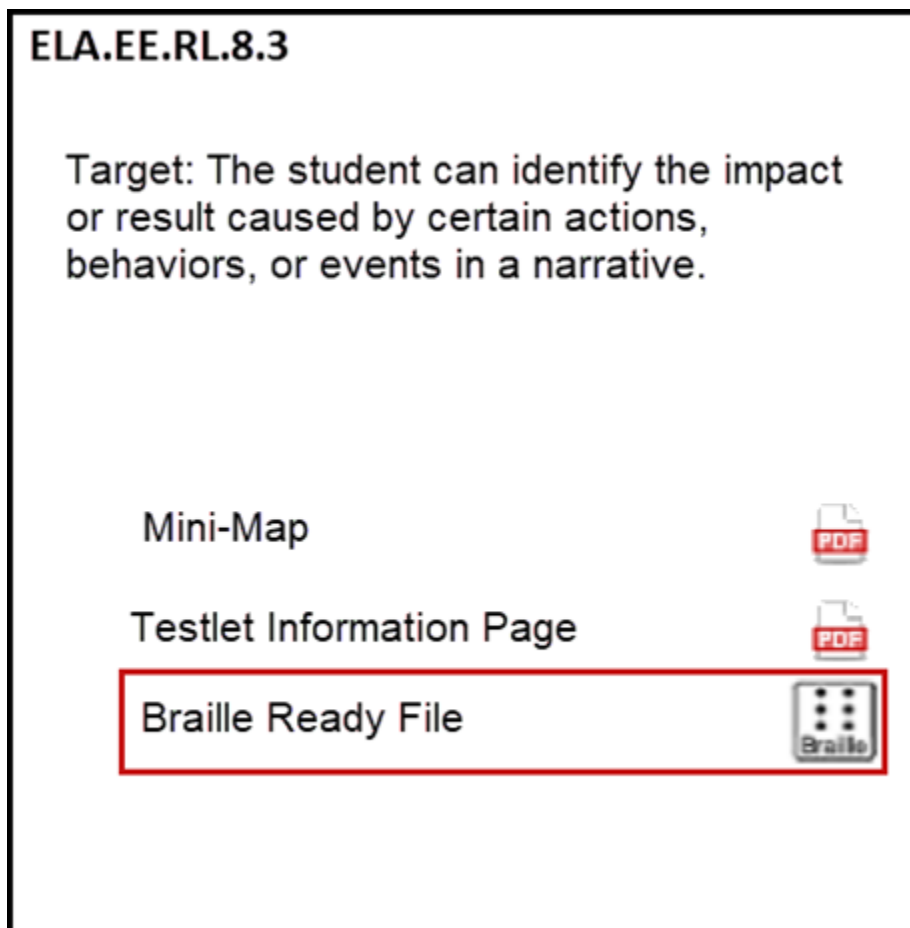
*The BVI form is described in more detail later in this manual.

When a standard testlet is delivered, the test administrator is responsible for making information accessible to the student who is blind or visually impaired, using permissible, familiar methods that were used during normal classroom instruction with the student. When appropriate, the TIP for the standard form testlet may contain information about adaptations for delivering the testlet. Every TIP that is connected to a testlet with images (either in the text, the engagement activity, the items, or the picture-response cards) has alternate text for the test administrator to read to the student. The only exception would be if the alternate text for images in the response options would cue the answer to the item.

When the system delivers a braille ready file (BRF) for ELA or mathematics during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, the BRF displays in the Instruction and Assessment Planner with a braille ready file icon (Figure 34). The same icon is used in Test Management in the spring assessment window for ELA, mathematics, and science.

Figure 34

Option for Braille Ready File in the Instruction and Assessment Planner



The test administrator downloads the braille ready file (BRF) and embosses it. For the steps to retrieve, download, and emboss the testlet, go to the Retrieve Braille Ready File section of the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

Braille forms are transcribed to be as similar as possible to standard testlets, but embossed testlets may contain minor differences to help students more easily access and navigate the information:

- Page numbers are included on all testlets to help with organization.
- Response options are lettered to help students communicate their responses so that test administrators can input the responses in the testlet in Student Portal.
- Science texts are double-spaced to help students whose braille-tracking skills are not yet strong.

BRAILLE TIP

The Braille TIP includes only the TIP cover page. All items in an ELA braille testlet are based on the text portion of the story and not the images. Since the images are not part of the braille form that a student would be reading, the alternate text is not needed for a student using a braille form to answer any items. For a mathematics or science braille form testlet, the test administrator can use objects or tactile graphics when administering the testlet.

TACTILE GRAPHICS

Tactile graphics are a means of conveying non-textual information to students who are blind or have visual impairments. Tactile graphics may include tactile representations of pictures, maps, graphs, diagrams, and other images.

Tactile graphics are not included with the braille forms for the DLM alternate assessments. Instead, the instructions typically direct test administrators to use objects (especially objects that are familiar to the student) for concrete representations of content. Additionally, the test administrator may create tactile graphics to represent graphics that appear onscreen in the testlet. Review the TIP for each testlet to learn about allowable objects.

BRAILLE FORMS IN THE OPTIONAL INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT WINDOW

During the optional instructionally embedded assessment window in the fall and winter months, braille forms are available for some ELA and mathematics Essential Elements at higher linkage levels. After a braille testlet is submitted, the test administrator can begin instruction and assessment on the next Essential Element, which may also have a braille form available. The BRF for the testlet will need to be downloaded and embossed. The time for this process must be considered in the test administration schedule.

Braille forms are **not** available for science Essential Elements in the optional instructionally embedded assessment window.

BRAILLE FORMS IN THE SPRING ASSESSMENT WINDOW

In the spring assessment window, braille forms are available for some ELA, mathematics, and science Essential Elements at the upper linkage levels. All testlets are adaptive in this window, including braille forms of the testlets. After the first testlet is submitted, the next one will take about 15 minutes to arrive. If the next testlet delivered is also a braille form, the testlet will need to be downloaded and embossed. The time for this process must be considered in the test administration schedule. Administrative tasks for accessing the BRF form are in the Test Management section of Educator Portal.

SUBMITTING, SCORING, AND HANDLING EMBOSSED BRAILLE FORMS

Every BRF has an equivalent computer-based version of the testlet in Kite Student Portal. As the student responds to each item on their embossed paper version of the testlet, the test administrator inputs the student's responses into the testlet in Student Portal, then submits the testlet. The system scores the responses in the same way as non-braille forms are scored.

After all testlets are submitted, the embossed paper forms must be securely destroyed. Consult the assessment coordinator about the process used in your district for securely handling and destroying embossed braille testlets.

ALTERNATE FORM-VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OPTION

Most standard DLM alternate assessment testlets are accessible for students who have visual impairments or are blind but do not read braille. However, certain skills are difficult to assess online for students who have visual impairments, even with supports such as Spoken Audio. For these specific Essential Elements and linkage levels, the system may assign the alternate form-visual impairment option, which is often called a Blind Visual Impairment (BVI) testlet. These testlets have alternate item structures and engagement activities to make them accessible for students. The BVI option is only available for certain Essential Elements and linkage levels. The test administrator **must** select the alternate form-visual impairment option in the PNP Profile.

When the BVI option is delivered, the testlet will contain the letters **BVI** in the test ticket, the TIP, and the Student Portal testlet name (e.g., SP **BVI** SCI MS.PS1-2 T 10455).

TIPS FOR A TEACHER-ADMINISTERED ALTERNATE FORM-VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OPTION

The TIP may list materials that may require some advanced preparation by the test administrator. Special materials are recommended in the TIP, but other familiar materials may be substituted as described in the TIP.

TIPS FOR A COMPUTER-DELIVERED ALTERNATE FORM-VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OPTION

If a standard form testlet includes images on the screen, the TIP for a BVI option will have alternate text pages with prewritten language that mirrors the description that the computer would read aloud if the student was using Spoken Audio. Alternate text is only included for images because the onscreen text of the stem (question) and answer options can be read aloud to the student by the test administrator.

The TIP may list materials that require some advanced preparation by the test administrator. It may include instructions for the test administrator on how to use materials to replicate the

images on the screen into tactile options for the student. Instructions inform the test administrator on when to present certain materials (e.g., prior to or after asking the question).

Substitutions are allowed as directed on the TIP.

ADMINISTRATION OF ALTERNATE FORM-VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OPTION TESTLETS

The general procedures for administering alternate form testlets are the same as those described in previous sections. In addition, test administrators may find the following options particularly helpful when administering alternate form-visual impairment option testlets:

- If the student also has a physical disability that makes manipulating objects difficult, take direction from the student or act on the student's behalf by manipulating materials and selecting the responses indicated by the student.
- Spoken Audio can be selected in the PNP Profile.
- Spoken Audio will be available 24 hours after it is selected and saved.
- Human read aloud can always be provided by the test administrator, using the alternate text at the end of a TIP that is connected to a testlet with images (either in the text, the engagement activity, the items, or the picture-response cards).
- If any materials are being substituted, change the language in the testlet to match the substituted object. For example, if the testlet uses cakes in fractional pieces and the student has been learning fractions using pizzas, pizzas may be substituted, then also change the word *cake* to *pizza* when reading the text aloud.

To make a change regarding braille or alternate forms during assessment, consult the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL in the section titled Changing PNP Profile Settings During Testing.

SPRING ASSESSMENTS

KEY STEPS

Test administrators prepare for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) required spring assessment window by completing the key steps in Table 18. Gray-shaded steps are described in more detail in this section. The other steps are defined in other DLM resources listed in Checklists for Test Administrators beginning on page 13 of this manual.

Check your state's DLM webpage or the Appendix to this manual (if provided by your state) for the dates of your spring assessment window.

Table 18

Key Steps During the Spring Assessment Window

☒	Steps
☐	1) Recheck student demographic information.
☐	2) Consider district and school assessment schedules to ensure students complete all DLM testlets during the spring assessment window.
☐	3) Schedule locations and times for assessment sessions.
☐	4) Retrieve the Testlet Information Page (TIP) for the first testlet in each subject. Gather needed materials before beginning the assessment.
☐	5) Retrieve the student's username and password from Educator Portal.
☐	6) Using Student Portal, assess the student on the first testlet in each subject.
☐	7) As other testlets become available, retrieve the TIP, gather materials, and continue assessing the student in Student Portal.

RECHECK STUDENT INFORMATION

Before your state's spring assessment window opens, confirm that you have the correct students on your roster, that each student is assigned to the correct grade, and that their First Contact Surveys were submitted, and their Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profiles are up to date. Contact your assessment coordinator for help editing student information.

SCHEDULE AND ARRANGE ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

Test administrators will likely need to schedule several assessment sessions, including additional make-up sessions in case students are absent or not engaged in the assessment on the days originally scheduled.

Evaluating a student's current behavior is very important in assessment. Not every day is a good day to assess. Therefore, use professional judgment and reschedule the assessment if a student is not having a good day on the intended assessment day. If the student gets tired or distracted during a testlet sooner than expected, allow the student to complete and submit the testlet, and then take a break from testing until the student is ready again. You can also use the **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** button and return later (if your state allows this option). If **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** is chosen during a testlet, any responses the student has made up to that point will not be saved. The testlet will revert to the unused status. When the student is ready again, testing can begin afresh.

Testlets may be administered in a classroom, computer lab, multipurpose room, or other school setting. However, the space must be quiet, free from distractions, and located where the testlet is not visible to other students. The test administrator must supervise the students during testing; students are not permitted to take testlets remotely on their own (e.g., at home). Testing is to be individual, not group testing.

Recommendations for configuration of the computer, test administrator, student, and other materials are provided in Computer-Delivered Testlets on page 55 and in Teacher-Administered Testlets on page 70 of this manual.

For assessment time estimates, go to Duration of the Assessment Administration on page 37 of this manual.

TESTLET DELIVERY FREQUENCY DURING SPRING ASSESSMENT

Only one testlet at a time is available in each subject in Student Portal. After the student submits the first testlet in a subject, the Kite® system evaluates the student's responses, and then the next testlet in the subject becomes available in Student Portal, usually within 15 minutes.

RETRIEVE TESTLET INFORMATION PAGE AND GATHER MATERIALS

TESTLET INFORMATION PAGES (TIPS)

To be prepared for test administration, the test administrator must access the Testlet Information Page (TIP) for each testlet before beginning the test session.

Test administrators can find specific information for each testlet in its TIP. Test administrators access the TIP by selecting the icon after a testlet is assigned to a student. Test administrators must review the TIP before beginning the student’s assessment. After the testlet has been delivered to the student, the TIP is no longer available. If a TIP was printed, it must be securely destroyed. Sample TIPs are available for all three subjects in teacher-administered, computer-delivered, and braille.

The TIP for testlets at the Initial linkage level may contain objects that need to be gathered or picture-response cards that must be printed ahead of test administration. Best practice is to print the picture-response cards in color.

HINT: During the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, the TIP is accessed in the Instruction and Assessment Planner section of Educator Portal.

During the spring assessment window, the TIP is accessed in the Test Management section of Educator Portal. For step-by-step procedures, go to the section titled Retrieve Testlet Information Page in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE. Also, a short helplet video, [Test Tickets & TIPs in the Spring Window for Year-End States](#), shows test administrators how to access the TIPs.

The testlet form name is included on the TIP (outlined in red in Figure 35). This is a sample TIP for an ELA assessment of reading informational text for Grade 11 or 12 for a testlet at the Initial Precursor Level. This same name is on the testlet itself and on the Test Management screen.

Figure 35

Example Testlet Information Page Header With Testlet Form Name

This is a secure testing document. Do not reproduce or redistribute. Shred after use.

**DYNAMIC[®]**
LEARNING MAPS

ELA RI.11-12.8 IP 7125

Testlet Information Page: ELA7125

Testlet Type: Teacher-administered

Number of Items: 4

Information on the TIP states whether a testlet is computer-delivered or teacher-administered and indicates the number of items on the testlet. The TIP for a teacher-administered testlet typically has more information regarding materials to use during testing

than the TIP for a computer-delivered testlet. The materials for a computer-delivered testlet are typically all on the computer screen.

The TIP also provides the following information for each testlet:

- **Materials Needed:** This field lists any materials needed to administer the testlet. A description of any necessary attributes of the materials is provided. For example, the materials may be three different small objects that are familiar to the student, each of which has a single-word name (e.g., ball, pencil, and bag).
- **Materials Used:** This field contains a description of how the materials are used in the testlet to assess the skill. For example, the student will be able to indicate a specific object when the object's name is used.
- **Suggested Substitute Materials:** This section indicates whether materials may be substituted. Sometimes in this section, a test administrator will also find the recommended key attributes of substitute materials. Substitute materials are usually allowed.
- **Accessibility Supports Not Allowed:** Although a test administrator may usually use all PNP Profile supports and take advantage of the flexibility described in the Practices Allowed section of this manual, the TIP will indicate when a support is not allowed (e.g., calculator) or if other limits are included (e.g., when definitions or translations are not allowed).
- **Other Comments:** If a testlet has other unique instructions, they will appear here. Some testlets require special setup before test administration; for example, some mathematics testlets designed for students who are blind or have visual impairments have additional pages of instructions.
- **Alternate Text:** For test administrators who will be delivering a testlet with images (either in the text, engagement activity, items, or picture-response cards), alternate text descriptions of the images are provided as additional pages after the main TIP pages for human read aloud.
- **Picture-Response Cards:** The TIPs for teacher-administered science testlets at the Initial linkage level are usually accompanied by picture-response cards. Picture-response cards are to be printed before test administration because they are used during the assessment. In the best interest of the student, printing in color is highly recommended.

TIPS FOR ELA TESTLETS

TIPs for ELA testlets provide the following information:

- The name of the text
- Whether the text is informational or literature-based

- Whether the text is familiar or unfamiliar (familiar texts may be downloaded from the [Instructional Resources](#) page on the DLM website and used in classroom instruction prior to assessment)
- The name of the grade-level text associated with the DLM alternate assessment text

Teacher-administered reading testlets use texts that should have been used during instruction and are familiar to students. If the student is accustomed to having the familiar text read from a paper copy, the paper copy may be used during assessment. Links to printable versions of familiar texts are provided on the [Instructional Resources](#) page of the DLM website. Choose a grade level to access all texts for that grade.

- For instructions to download and print a familiar text, use Appendix C: Downloading or Printing DLM Familiar Texts.

TIPS FOR MATHEMATICS TESTLETS

TIPs for mathematics testlets provide the following information:

- Any specific mathematics terminology used in the testlet
- Instructions for setting up mathematics testlets for students who are blind or visually impaired
- Whether calculator use is allowed for the testlet:
 - “Yes” means a student can use a calculator if the student is accustomed to using a calculator for instruction. Some items in the testlet may not require a calculator, but the test administrator does not have to remove the calculator once it has been given for the testlet.
 - “No” means a student cannot use a calculator for any portion of the testlet.
 - “Not Applicable” means the items do not involve computation and a calculator does not need to be provided.

TIPS FOR SCIENCE TESTLETS

TIPs for science testlets include:

- Any materials that should be gathered prior to the assessment
- Picture-response cards for testlets at the Initial linkage level that **must** be printed prior to the assessment, since they are used during the assessment. Best practice is to print picture-response cards in color.
- Objects for testlets at the Initial linkage level that **must** be gathered prior to the assessment, since they are used during the assessment

Calculators are not allowed for any science testlets.

MATERIALS

Materials used in testlets should be familiar to the student and are typically readily available. The TIP includes descriptions of the general material properties that are needed to correctly assess the Essential Elements at a linkage level. Materials that are not listed may be substituted if they meet the general requirements for that Essential Element. Also, if a testlet assigned to the student contains materials that are not appropriate for that student, substitutions can be made.

Materials for the testlet must be collected prior to the assessment session. However, if the student has begun a testlet and the materials are not working as anticipated, test administrators can pause testing and retrieve alternate materials. Student Portal can be inactive up to 90 minutes before timing out. Go to System Timeout on page 67 of this manual for more information about the 90-minute timeout.

The Materials Collections are lists of common materials used in testlets, particularly the teacher-administered testlets, per subject and per testing window. The lists are first provided for the optional instructionally embedded assessment window and are then replaced by the ones for the spring assessment window.

To access the Materials Collections lists, go to the DLM website | For States | your state | Teacher role | Instructional Resources | All | scroll to the Materials Collections list for each subject. Review and become familiar with the lists. However, not everything on the lists will be needed. That is why downloading the TIP ahead of time is so important, since the TIP lists the materials needed for the specific testlet.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Regardless of the type of the DLM alternate assessment, test administrators need the following when administering an assessment:

- An assessment device with the most current version of the Kite Student Portal app, **not** the browser version of Student Portal
- The student's username and password
- Assistive devices appropriate to the student (if applicable)
- Headphones for computer Spoken Audio if other students are in the room (if applicable)
- TIP

NOTE: Although a student's username remains the same from year to year, each year when the student is enrolled in Educator Portal, the student is assigned a brand-new password.

MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

During the spring assessment window, students may receive as few as six and as many as 10 testlets, depending on the grade and subject (details are in Number of Testlets for Spring Assessments, on page 143 of this manual).

On the Test Management screen in Educator Portal, the Test Progress column allows the test administrator to monitor a student's testing progress for each subject. For each testlet, the Test Progress column will indicate the number of testlets that have been taken out of the number that are available. For example, on the Test Management screen in Figure 36, the student is on the third of nine required science testlets for the grade.

Figure 36

Test Management Screen in Educator Portal

Test Session Name ↑	Tickets	Test Information	Test Progress	Subject
DLM-AtwoodPolly-11733-SP-SCI_HS.LS2-2_T_			Testlet 3 of 9	Science

Also in Kite Student Portal, testing progress is indicated in the same way (e.g., Testlet 3 of 9) as shown in Figure 37.

Figure 37

Science Assessment Progress in Kite Student Portal



Take a test

Practice First

Sign Out

Close Kite

Please select a test to take.

Dynamic Learning Maps

Mathematics

Science

SP SCI HS.LS2-2 T 11733

Testlet 3 of 9

Take Test ➔

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SCORE REPORTS

The Individual Student Score Reports are generated exclusively from responses in testlets administered only during the required spring assessment window. Responses from field test testlets and testlets administered during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window are not factored into end-of-year results.

The scoring system in the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment is different from that of traditional alternate assessments. Students are not given raw scores, percentage-correct scores, or scale scores. Instead, the system combines a student's responses on operational testlets in the spring assessment window, using a complex algorithm to determine which linkage levels the student has likely mastered.

Results for each linkage level are determined by the probability that the student has mastered the skills at that linkage level. The information about each linkage level leads to a summary of the student's mastery of skills in each conceptual area for ELA and mathematics or each domain for science and then for each overall subject. Results are based on all assessed Essential Elements in the blueprint for ELA, mathematics, and science.

The EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE contains information about retrieving Individual Student Score Reports in the section titled Access Reports and Data Extracts. Scoring and reporting videos are available to help educators interpret score reports. These are located on each state's webpage under the Resource Category, Scoring and Reporting. One example is a ten-minute video titled [How to Interpret and Use DLM Score Reports](#).

Only certain roles in Educator Portal are allowed access to the reports, which are determined by state policy. Test administrators should contact the assessment coordinator or building test coordinator about reviewing students' Individual Student Score Reports.

PREPARE FOR NEXT YEAR

Test administrators and IEP teams need to make certain decisions when preparing for the following school year. Two steps are described in Table 19.

Table 19

Preparation for the Following School Year

☒	Steps
☐	1) Evaluate accessibility supports in the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile settings with IEP teams and make decisions about supports for next year.
☐	2) Plan academic IEP goals with IEP teams. Use sources of information and resources when planning a student's IEP goals, such as the blueprints for the next grade in which the student will be enrolled.

REVIEW BLUEPRINTS

IEP teams are to review the provided blueprints for the next grade level as one source of information to plan the academic goals and prioritize the Essential Elements that will be taught the following year. Blueprints are available through your state's Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) webpage.

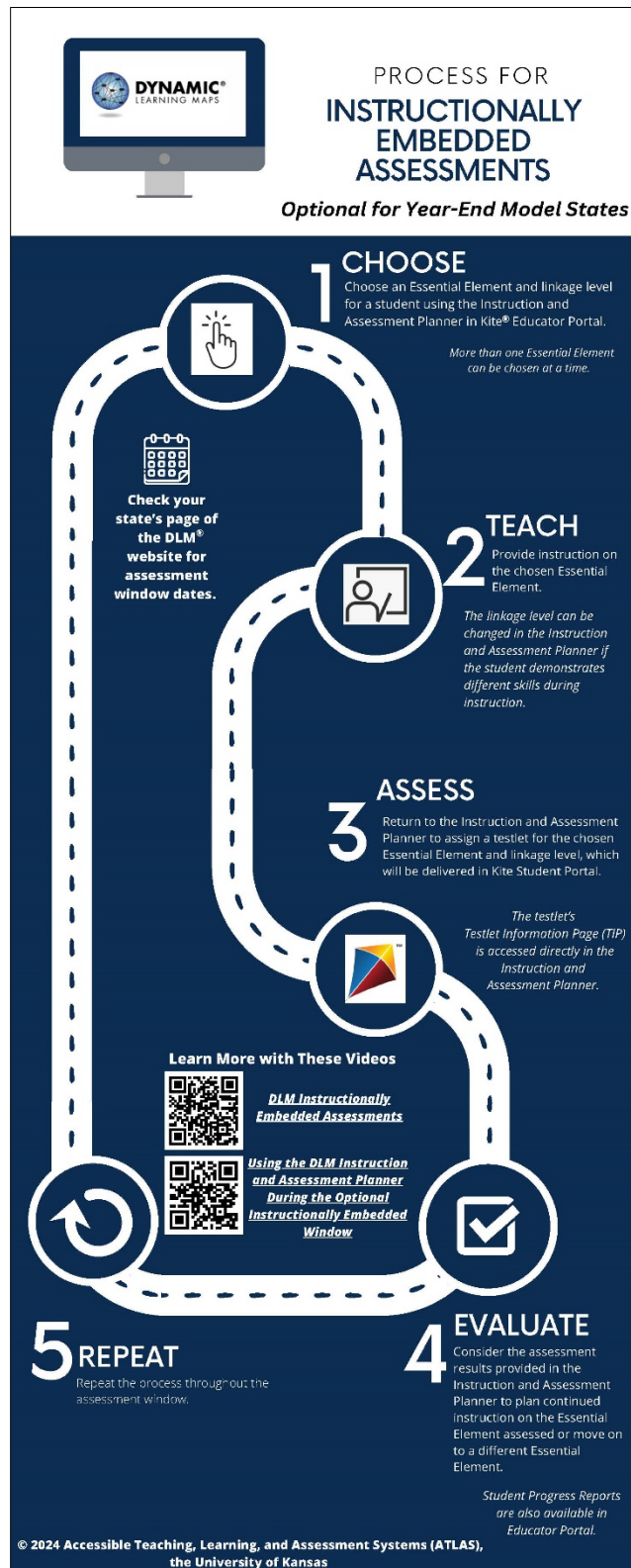
INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED ASSESSMENTS (OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED)

OVERVIEW

Test administrators have the option to administer instructionally embedded assessments during the fall and winter months in the optional window (Figure 38). For an overview and more information about the purpose of instructionally embedded assessments, go to Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessment on page 37 of this manual. Also, two video resources are available:

- [DLM Instructionally Embedded Assessments](#) (16 minutes)
- [Using the DLM Instruction & Assessment Planner During the Optional Instructionally Embedded Window](#) (4 minutes)

Figure 38
The Process for Instructionally Embedded Assessments



KEY STEPS

Test administrators prepare for and deliver optional instructionally embedded assessments by completing the key steps in Table 20. Instructionally embedded assessments are only available during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window that occurs during the fall and winter months. Gray-shaded steps are described in more detail in this section. The other steps are defined in other Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) resources listed in the Checklists for Test Administrators beginning on page 13 of this manual.

Table 20

Key Steps in Preparing for Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessments

☒	Steps
☐	1) Follow state and district guidelines for choosing Essential Elements for instruction.
☐	2) Retrieve instructional information for the Essential Element either on the DLM website or by selecting on the mini-map in the Instruction and Assessment Planner for the Essential Element.
☐	3) Follow the steps outlined in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE to select an Essential Element and linkage level. The Instruction and Assessment Planner is open only during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. Find the dates for your state's optional window at the top of your state's DLM webpage.
☐	4) Deliver instruction until you determine the student is ready for assessment.
☐	5) Schedule a location and time for assessment sessions.
☐	6) Assign a testlet in the Instruction and Assessment Planner and retrieve the Testlet Information Page (TIP). Gather needed materials before attempting to begin the assessment.
☐	7) Retrieve the student's credentials (username and password) in the Instruction and Assessment Planner.
☐	8) Sign in to Student Portal with the student's credentials.
☐	9) Assess the student on the assigned testlet.
☐	10) Review and evaluate the assessment results—did the student master the Essential Element at the linkage level tested?

☒	Steps
☐	11) Choose the next Essential Element for instruction. This may be a new Essential Element or the same Essential Element at the same or a different linkage level.
☐	12) Repeat the instruction and assessment cycle for more Essential Elements during the instructionally embedded assessment window.

HINT: During the optional assessment window, at least one testlet at each linkage level is available for each ELA, mathematics, and science Essential Element. After a student completes a testlet, more testlets for that Essential Element and linkage level may be available. Follow your district's guidance on frequency of assessment.

CHOOSE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR INSTRUCTION

HINT: Each testlet assesses only one Essential Element except for the writing testlet. All students receive only one writing testlet where all the writing Essential Elements are tested.

During the optional assessment window, test administrators will be able to make choices about each of the following:

- Essential Elements
- Linkage levels
- Accessibility supports
- Frequency of testing
- Repeated assessment of a linkage level for an Essential Element (if more than one testlet is available at that linkage level)

Decisions should be grounded in academic priorities for the student, including priorities set in the IEP meetings.

SELECT A LINKAGE LEVEL

For each Essential Element, the system recommends a linkage level based on choices made in the First Contact Survey. The recommended linkage level should provide an appropriate challenge for the student and represent a good instructional target, but the test administrator may override that recommendation and select a different linkage level. Information about the nodes (skills) at each linkage level for ELA and mathematics are found in two places:

- Both short and long linkage level descriptors are provided in the Instruction and Assessment Planner. Go to the step for choosing a linkage level in the Create a Plan section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.
- The list of Learning Outcomes and Linkage Level Descriptions for each Essential Element is available for the Tested Essential Elements PDFs, which are located on the Instructional Resource Page. An example is shown in Figure 39.

Figure 39

An Example of a Grade 6 ELA Essential Element with Learning Outcomes and Linkage Level Descriptions



Mini-Map for ELA.EE.RI.6.5

Subject: ELA

Reading Informational Text

Grade: 6

Learning Outcome

DLM Essential Element	Grade-Level Standard
ELA.EE.RI.6.5 Determine how the title fits the structure of the text.	ELA.RI.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

Linkage Level Descriptions

Initial Precursor	Distal Precursor	Proximal Precursor	Target	Successor
The student can move appropriately to demonstrate an understanding of action words spoken by adults in a familiar routine.	The student can identify concrete details, such as individuals, events, or ideas, in a familiar informational text.	Given a text with a clear structure, the student can determine whether the text tells about an event, gives directions, or provides information on a topic.	The student can understand how the title of an informational text reflects the structure, content, and purpose of the text.	The student can identify that events or facts may be tied together in a sequence in order to communicate steps or the need for a linear process.

REVIEW AND REVISE CHOICES

Test administrators should review the Essential Elements they assigned to their students. A change may be necessary if a student has made considerable growth in the Essential Element, and the test administrator had previously selected a lower linkage level. Change may also be necessary when a student experiences significant regression due to disability or absence. A change can be made by the test administrator unless the testlet has been assigned. Only a user with the Educator Portal role of State Assessment Administrator or District Test Coordinator can cancel an assigned testlet.

HINT: Choosing an Essential Element is part of planning for an instructionally embedded assessment session. This process does not apply to testlets administered during the spring assessment window.

RETRIEVE THE MINI-MAP

Instructional information includes the Essential Element, a list of linkage levels and nodes (skills), and the mini-map. These details are provided in the Tested Essential Elements PDFs located on the Instructional Resources page on the DLM website. This information is also available in the Instruction and Assessment Planner when the user selects the mini-map icon for each Essential Element during the instructionally embedded assessment.

For additional information on providing support for classroom instruction, consider reviewing the Professional Development modules. These modules are designed to support instruction on academic topics associated with many Essential Elements. Go to the [DLM Professional Development](#) website for access to the modules.

ASSIGN A TESTLET

After instruction is complete and the student is ready for assessment, the test administrator returns to the Instruction and Assessment Planner and assigns the testlet for the Essential Element at the selected linkage level. By choosing to assign a testlet to the student, the TIP becomes available to the test administrator. Also, if needed, the test administrator has the option not to assign a testlet for an Essential Element. By using this action, the Essential Element at that linkage level will revert to its original status.

SCHEDULE AND ARRANGE ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

Test administrators will likely need to schedule several assessment sessions during the instructionally embedded assessment window, including additional make-up sessions in case students are absent or not engaged in the assessment on the originally scheduled days.

Recommendations for configuration of the computer, test administrator, student, and other materials are provided in Computer-Delivered Testlets on page 55 and Teacher-Administered Testlets on page 70 of this manual.

For assessment time averages and ranges go to Duration of the Assessment Administration on page 37 of this manual.

PREPARE TO ADMINISTER AN INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED TESTLET

Regardless of the type of the DLM alternate assessment (teacher-administered or computer-delivered), test administrators need the following supplies when administering an assessment:

- An assessment device loaded with the most current version of Kite Student Portal. A browser version of Student Portal must **not** be used to administer testlets.

- The student's username and password
- Assistive devices appropriate to the student (if applicable)
- Headphones for computer Spoken Audio if other students are in the room (if applicable)
- The Testlet Information Page (TIP)

TESTLET INFORMATION PAGES (TIPs)

The type of information included on the TIPs is the same for testlets in both the instructionally embedded assessment and spring assessment windows. For more information on TIPs, go to Testlet Information Page on page 101 of this manual.

ACCESS THE FALL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Fall Performance Report provides information about the student's participation in the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. The report is per student per subject at the time and date the report is retrieved. It shows the status of each Essential Element chosen for instruction: the date instruction began, the date the testlet was assigned, the date the testlet was administered, and whether the student mastered or did not master the linkage level for the Essential Element.

The Fall Performance Report is a PDF that can be downloaded, printed, and saved. Test administrators may find the report useful when planning or reviewing instruction. For ELA and math, the report displays the tested conceptual areas. For science, the report displays the tested domains. This report contains sensitive information, including the student's name, school, grade, and state student ID number, and the report must be treated as a secure document.

HINT: Mastery results for writing testlets taken during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window are not available.

KITE STUDENT PORTAL USER GUIDE

HINT: When using Student Portal, all other screens are locked and cannot be accessed.

KITE STUDENT PORTAL ASSESSMENT DEVICES

HINT: Students access Kite® Student Portal with their own username and password. Staff and educators do not have accounts in Student Portal.

The most current version of Kite Student Portal must be downloaded each year on a student's testing device to take the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment. Student Portal can be downloaded on a variety of devices. Go to the [Kite Suite](#) page on the DLM website for the 2025–2026 Kite Installation Guides.

Only the Kite Student Portal app must be used for testing. A browser version will not display any testlets, and therefore must not be used.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

An internet connection is required to deliver assessments. Your assessment coordinator or technology personnel can help with internet connectivity questions or issues.

KITE STUDENT PORTAL PROCEDURES

NOTE: A testlet **must** begin and end on the **same** testing device. Do not attempt to launch a single testlet on multiple devices. This means a student should not start a testlet on one device and then attempt to launch the same testlet on another device. If the testlet cannot be finished on one device, use **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** to discontinue the testlet (no answers will be saved). Begin the testlet again on a different device.

Check with your assessment coordinator before testing to find out if the use of **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** is permitted in your state.

ACCESS PRACTICE ACTIVITIES AND RELEASED TESTLETS

HINT: The most current version of Student Portal must be installed before accessing practice activities or released testlets. Download instructions for each type of device are available on the [Kite® Suite](#) webpage on the DLM website.

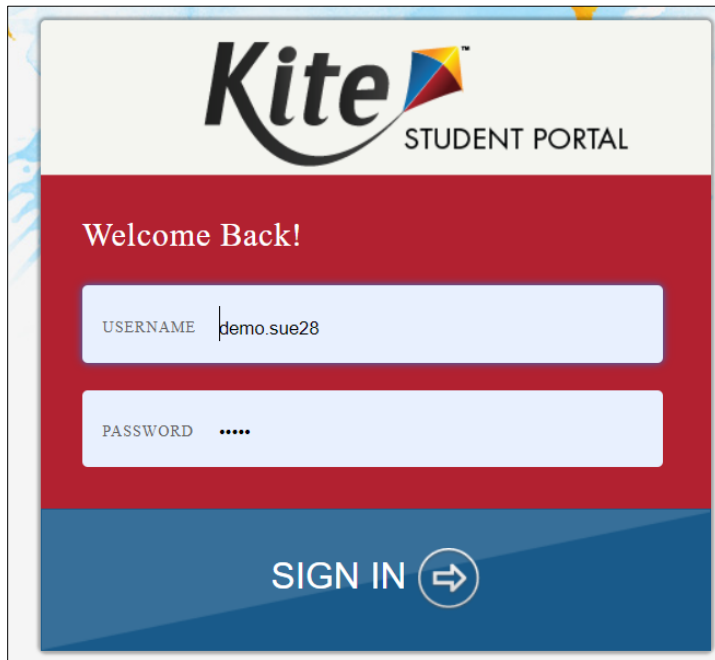
PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

To access DLM practice activities, follow these steps.

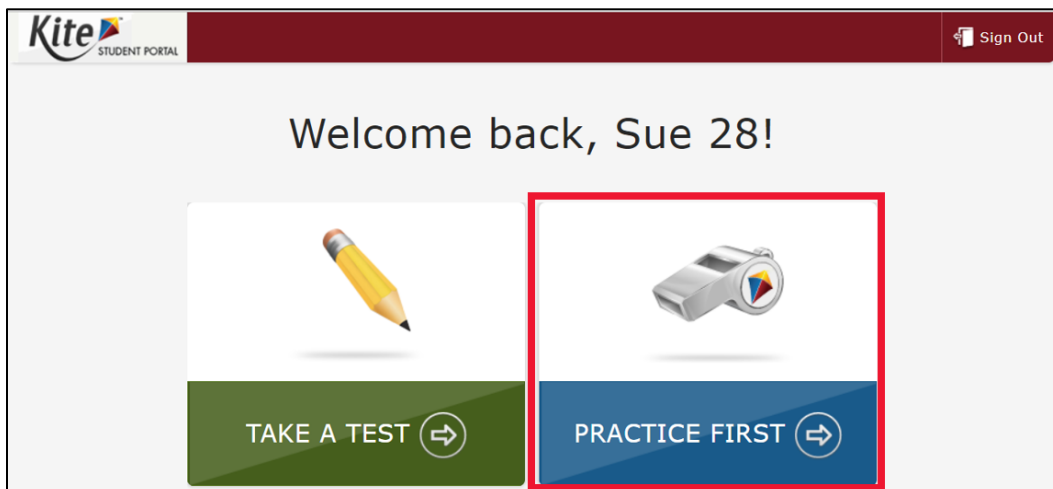
- 1) Select the **Kite Student Portal** icon on the testing device.



- 2) Enter the demo student username and password (Table 21). Select **SIGN IN**.

The login screen for the Kite Student Portal. It features the Kite logo and "STUDENT PORTAL" text at the top. Below is a red banner with "Welcome Back!". There are two input fields: "USERNAME" with the text "demo.sue28" and "PASSWORD" with masked characters ".....". At the bottom is a blue button labeled "SIGN IN" with a right-pointing arrow icon.

- 3) Select **PRACTICE FIRST**.

The dashboard after logging in. It shows the Kite logo and "STUDENT PORTAL" in the top left, and a "Sign Out" button in the top right. The main heading says "Welcome back, Sue 28!". Below are two options: "TAKE A TEST" with a pencil icon and a green button, and "PRACTICE FIRST" with a whistle icon and a blue button. The "PRACTICE FIRST" button and its icon are highlighted with a red rectangular border.

4) Select **Other**, then select one of the four practice activities. Select **Take Test**.

The screenshot shows the Kite Student Portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Kite logo, 'STUDENT PORTAL', and links for 'Take a test', 'Practice First', and 'Sign Out'. The main heading says 'Please select a practice test to take.' Below this is a 'Dynamic Learning Maps' button. On the left, there is a vertical menu with four options: 'English Language Arts', 'Mathematics', 'Other' (highlighted with a red box), and 'Science'. To the right of this menu are four rows, each representing a practice activity. Each row has a text label and a green 'Take Test' button with a right-pointing arrow icon.

Subject	Activity	Action
Other	Sci Student Practice Activity	Take Test →
	Sci Teacher Practice Activity	Take Test →
	Student Practice Activity	Take Test →
	Teacher Practice Activity	Take Test →

5) Select **BEGIN**.

The screenshot shows a screen with the text 'Choose BEGIN to start.' at the top. At the bottom, there are two buttons: a blue 'GO BACK' button with a left-pointing arrow icon and a green 'BEGIN' button with a right-pointing arrow icon. The 'BEGIN' button is highlighted with a red box.

- 6) Continue with the testlet using the **BACK** and **NEXT** buttons to navigate. To discontinue testing in the middle of a testlet, select **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE**.



RELEASED TESTLETS

Released testlets work in a similar way to the practice testlets.

- 1) Choose a username and password associated with the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile supports you want to use for practice with the student.
- 2) Select a subject. Several pages of released testlets at various linkage levels will be available.
- 3) Complete the testlet or select **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** to return to the welcome screen.
- 4) Try a different released testlet.
- 5) Sign out and sign back in with a different username and password to try a different student PNP Profile.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS FOR PRACTICE ACTIVITIES AND RELEASED TESTLETS

Practice activities and released testlets are available using several student demo accounts. Each testlet will display particular PNP Profile settings based on the username and password being used. The supports, as described in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL, are summarized in Table 21.

Demo accounts are available for all English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science practice activities and released testlets.

Table 21*Demo Student Accounts for Practice Activities and Released Testlets*

Name	Password	PNP Profile supports turned on
demo.sue29	wall3	None*
demo.sue28	sand3	Spoken Audio: voice source = synthetic, read at start = false, spoken preference = text and graphics, audio for directions only = false Contrast Color: green text on white background
demo.sue30	swept	Switch: scan speed = 4 seconds, auto scan = manual override, auto repeat scan frequency = infinity**
demo.sue31	topic	2× magnification
demo.sue33	void7	4× magnification and reverse contrast
demo.sue34	nine7	Color Overlay (green)
demo.sue35	jar71	Switch: scan speed = 5 seconds, initial delay = 5 seconds, auto repeat scan frequency = 2**
demo.sue36	stop3	Spoken Audio: voice source = synthetic, read at start = false, spoken preference = nonvisual, audio for directions only = false
demo.sue37	after	5× magnification

* Released testlets are available for ELA reading, mathematics, and science. Demo.sue29 is also available for ELA writing testlets at the emergent and conventional linkage levels.

** No special settings are required for two-switch users. Use **Tab** to navigate and **Enter** to select. Two-switch users may use any of the above demo logins except demo.sue30 and demo.sue35 because those two logins are designated especially for practice for students using single-switch scanning.

BEGIN AN OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

To begin the operational assessment, the assessment window must be open, and the student's credentials (username and password) must be used to sign in to Student Portal. The student's credentials will be the same for all DLM alternate assessments, including all testlets administered during the optional instructionally embedded window, all testlets assigned during the required spring assessment window, and all field test testlets.

STUDENT CREDENTIALS FOR STUDENT PORTAL

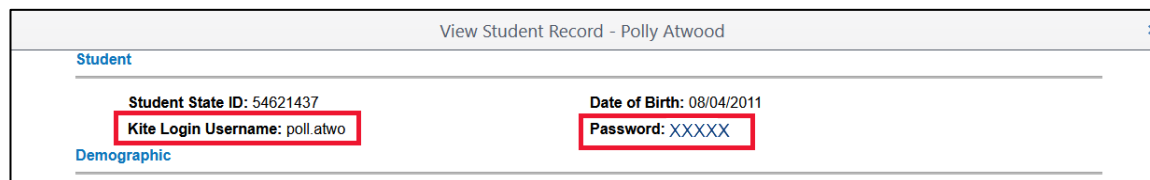
NOTE: In the following screenshots, the procedures being demonstrated are with fictitious student, Polly Atwood.

A student's username remains the same from year to year. However, each year when the student is enrolled in Educator Portal, the student is assigned a brand-new password.

The student's credentials are available in Educator Portal and can be accessed in the Instruction and Assessment Planner after the opening of the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. Select the Credentials icon to access and print the student's username and password.

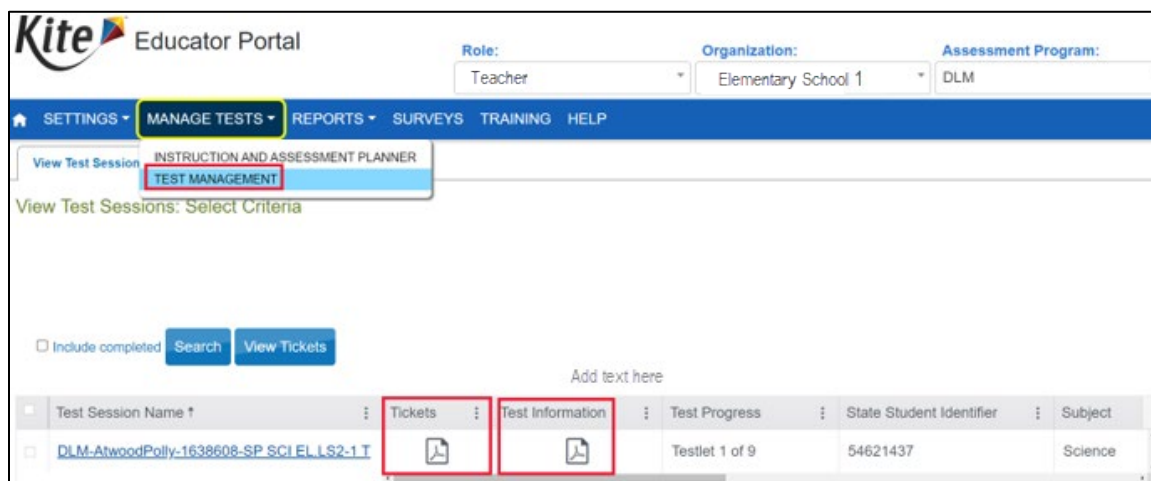


The student's credentials are also available on the View Student Record screen for an educator with the Teacher role in Educator Portal. The student's credentials will not be displayed for other Educator Portal roles. Steps for accessing the View Student Record are available in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.



HINT: Step-by-step directions on how to access a student's username and password before the opening of the instructionally embedded assessment window are described in detail in the View Student Username and Password section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

During the spring assessment window, the student's username and password are available in the Test Management section of Educator Portal. Select the Test Ticket in the column beside where the TIP is accessed.



HINT: Step-by-step directions on how to access a student's Test Ticket are described in detail in the View Student Username and Password section in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE. Also, a short video, [Test Tickets and TIPs in the Spring Window](#), provides helpful visual guidance.

Before the test administrator can assess the student's Test Ticket or TIP in Test Management, three requirements must be met:

- 1) The test administrator must successfully pass the Required Test Administrator Training.
- 2) The student must be rostered to the test administrator.
- 3) The student's First Contact Survey must be submitted.
- 4) The students PNP Profile must be reviewed, and any changes saved.

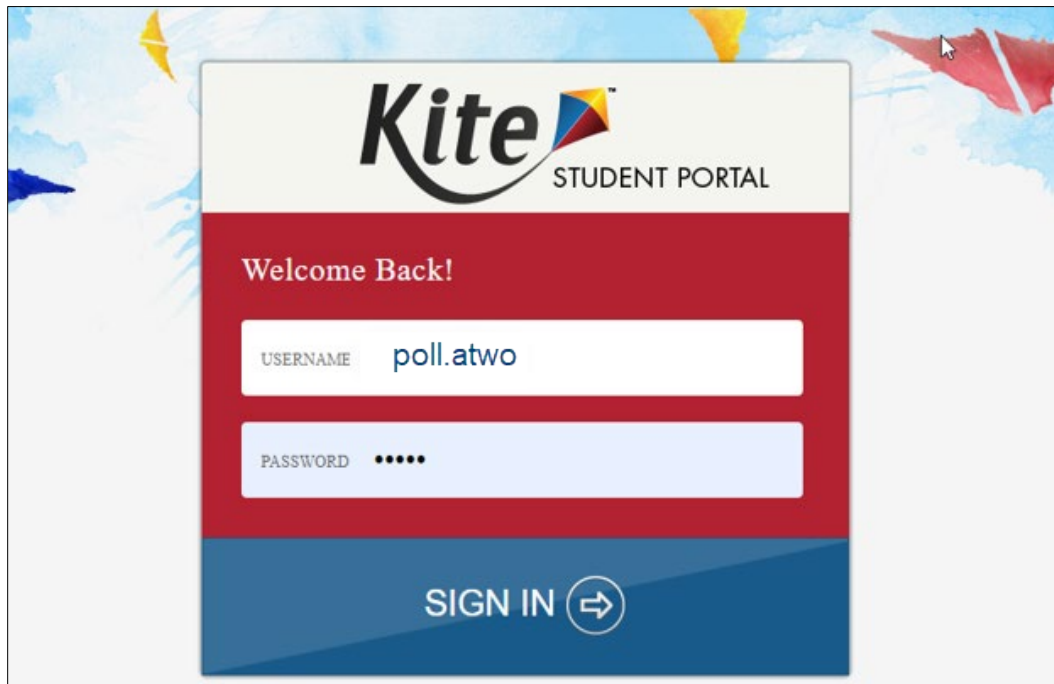
START A TESTLET

To administer a DLM alternate assessment, follow these steps.

- 1) Select the **Kite Student Portal** icon on the testing device.

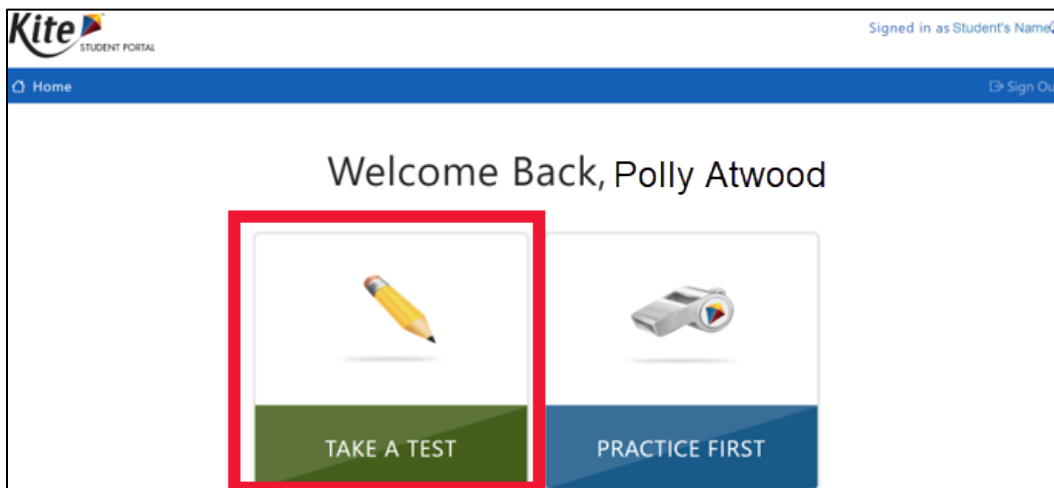


2) Enter the student's username and password. Select **SIGN IN**.

The image shows the Kite Student Portal login interface. At the top, the Kite logo and 'STUDENT PORTAL' text are displayed. Below this, a red banner says 'Welcome Back!'. There are two input fields: 'USERNAME' with the text 'poll.atwo' and 'PASSWORD' with five dots. At the bottom, there is a blue button labeled 'SIGN IN' with a right-pointing arrow icon.

3) The student's name will appear on the Welcome Back screen.

4) Select **TAKE A TEST**.

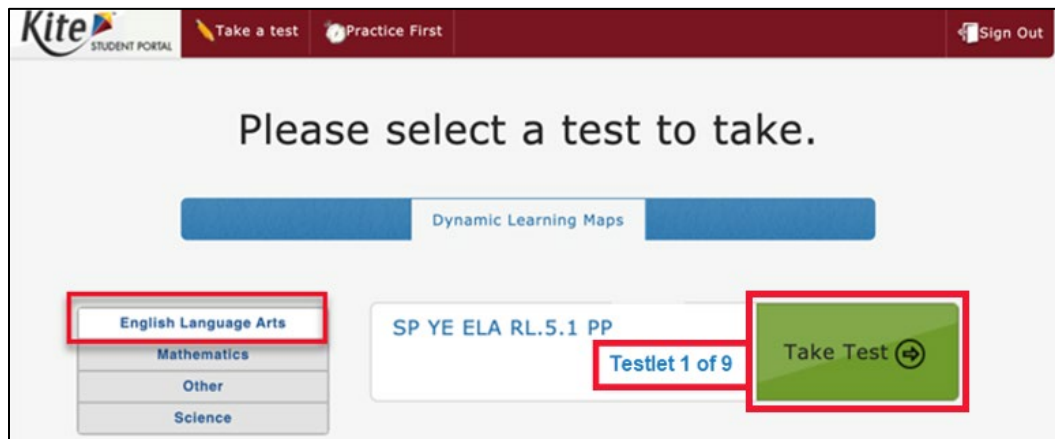
The image shows the Kite Student Portal home screen after login. The top navigation bar includes the Kite logo, 'STUDENT PORTAL', and a 'Signed in as Student's Name' dropdown. Below the navigation bar, the text 'Welcome Back, Polly Atwood' is displayed. There are two main buttons: 'TAKE A TEST' (green) and 'PRACTICE FIRST' (blue). The 'TAKE A TEST' button is highlighted with a red border. Above the 'TAKE A TEST' button is a yellow pencil icon, and above the 'PRACTICE FIRST' button is a calculator icon.

One testlet in each subject to which the student is rostered will be available.

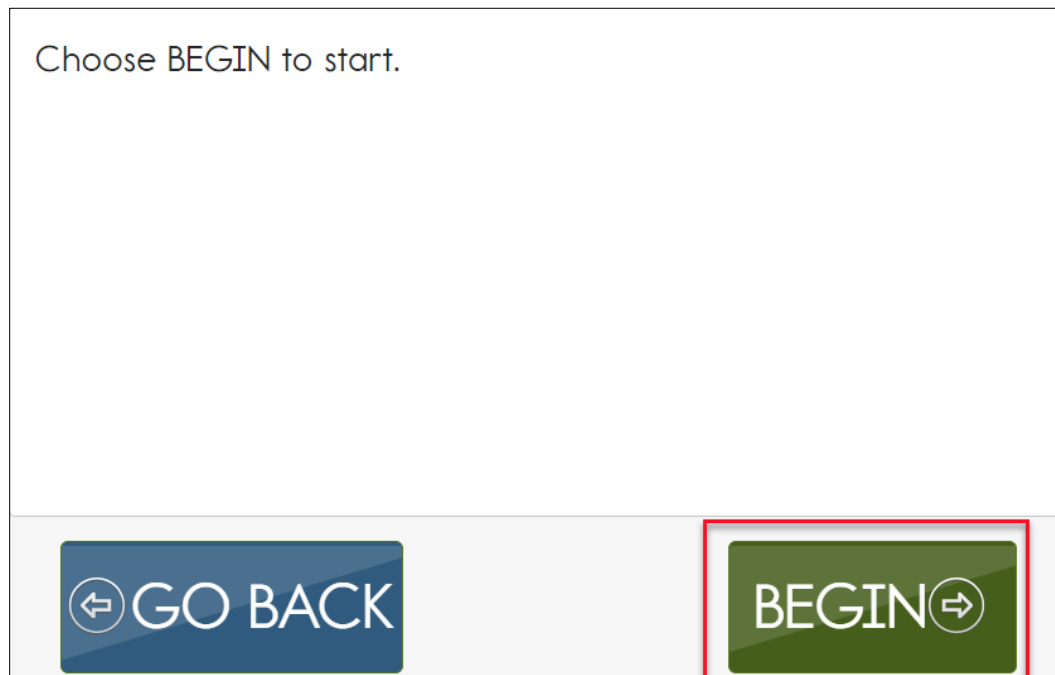
In the spring assessment window, Student Portal will display the number of testlets remaining by subject (Figure 40). In this example, English language arts is the selected subject. The student is starting testlet one of nine.

Figure 40

A Student's Assessment Progress by Subject in Kite Student Portal



5) Select **BEGIN**.



NAVIGATE IN KITE STUDENT PORTAL

To navigate in Student Portal, use the buttons introduced in Table 22.

Table 22

Kite Student Portal Navigation Buttons

Button	Action
	Return to the previous screen.
	Go to the next screen.
	This icon appears when the test administrator selects the Spoken Audio option in the student's Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile. This is a synthetic voice. Select the READ icon to begin the Spoken Audio option. Select again to stop the option.
	Exit the testlet without saving responses. Upon returning, the student will start at the beginning of this testlet.
	Go back to review or change responses for this testlet.*
	Save responses and end this testlet.*

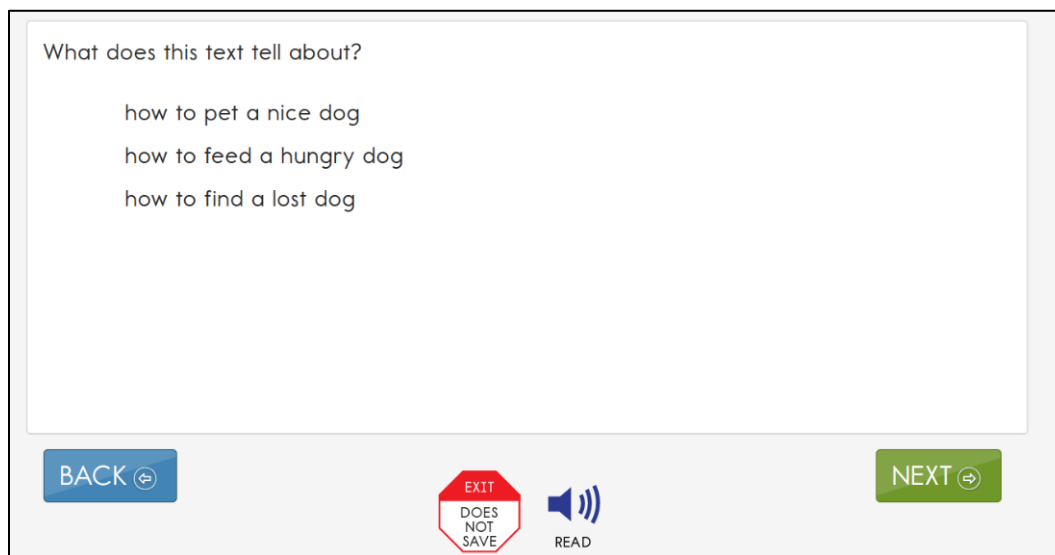
* Available on the review screen at the end of the testlet.

NOTE: Repeatedly pressing the back button will take the user back to the Welcome screen but will not close out the testlet. The testlet will remain in an open status until midnight that night unless the user opens the testlet again and uses **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** or submits the testlet.

Figure 41 shows the buttons available on each testlet screen.

Figure 41

Available Buttons on Each Testlet Screen in Kite Student Portal



SPOKEN AUDIO

When Spoken Audio is enabled in a student's PNP Profile, a **READ** icon will appear at the bottom of the screen. Students may select the **READ** icon to start the Spoken Audio (Figure 42).

Figure 42

The READ Icon in a Testlet in Kite Student Portal



As soon as the **READ** icon is selected, a diagonal red line appears across the icon in the testlet, and the word **READ** changes to **PAUSE** (Figure 43).

Figure 43

Read Icon When Selected



Spoken Audio will continue reading until the selection is finished unless the student selects the icon to stop the reading.

If the student selects **PAUSE**, the Spoken Audio stops. The button changes back to **READ** and the icon becomes uncrossed again. To resume the synthetic voice reading, the student selects **READ** and the Spoken Audio resumes.

Additionally, while the synthetic voice is reading, each sentence or response option on the screen is highlighted in yellow. The screen highlights one sentence or one response option at a time. If the student wants to hear the sentence or response option again, or have the highlighting displayed, the students may select **READ** repeatedly to reactivate Spoken Audio as many times as needed. Once the student is ready to move on, the student selects the **NEXT** button to move to the next screen.

NOTE: If the test administrator selected Overlay Color in yellow in the PNP Profile, the yellow highlighting of Spoken Audio will not be visible.

TAKE A BREAK DURING ASSESSMENT

DLM testlets are not timed and breaks are not limited during assessment. A student may take a break during an assessment in the following three ways:

- 1) **Take a short break (up to 90 minutes).** After 88 minutes and 30 seconds of inactivity in the testlet, the system provides a message with two options: **EXTEND SESSION** or **LOGOUT**. If neither option is selected, after the 90 seconds expires, Student Portal will automatically close the session and does not save any responses.

Your session is about to expire.

Select Extend Session to continue where you left off.

Time Remaining: 01 mins and 28 seconds

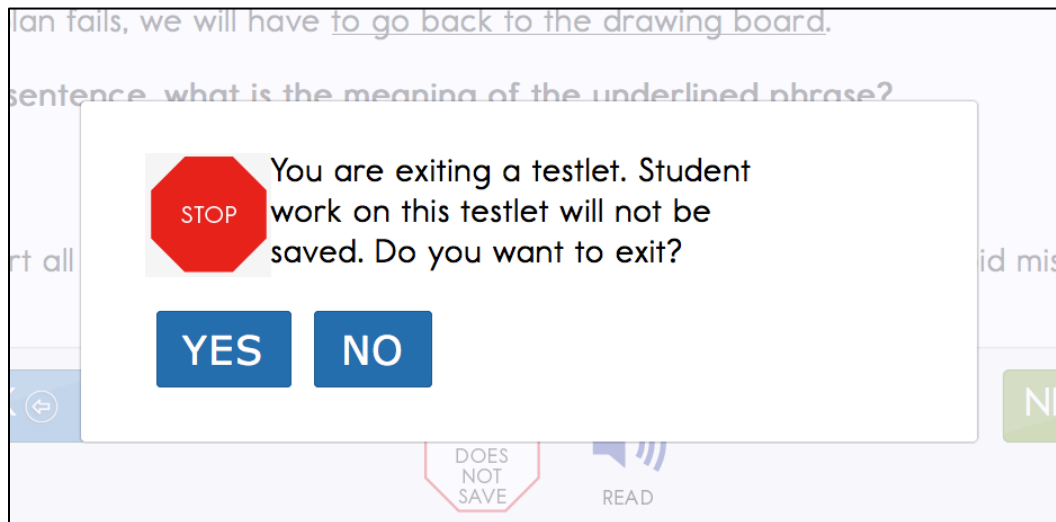
EXTEND SESSION**LOGOUT**

- 2) **Take a break between testlets.** After selecting **END** at the conclusion of a testlet, log out of Student Portal. Log back in when the student is ready to take the next testlet.

- 3) **Stop in the middle of a testlet** using the **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE** button. Student responses will not be saved, and the testlet reverts to unused. The button appears on every testlet screen.



The user receives a confirmation message when choosing **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE**.



- a) If **YES** is selected, the testlet will close without saving the student's work. The testlet will be reset, and when the student returns to the testlet, the testlet will start at the beginning.
- b) If **NO** is selected, the student can continue with the testlet.

NOTE: Not all states allow the use of **EXIT DOES NOT SAVE**. Check with the assessment coordinator about using this option before beginning a testing session with a student.

COMPLETE A TESTLET

A review screen appears at the end of a testlet. Figure 44 is an example of a Grade 5 ELA testlet at the Proximal Precursor linkage level during the spring assessment window. The student did not respond to two of the items. The screen provides an opportunity for the student to go back to those items again unless they were purposefully left unanswered.

Figure 44

The Review Screen at the End of an ELA Testlet in Kite Student Portal

Review: SP YE ELA RL.5.1.PP

Are you done?

Red boxes ☐ mean you are not done. Ask your teacher for help.

Blue dots ☒ mean you are done. You can choose end.

Legend: ☒ Answered ☐ Not answered

Progress indicators: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☒ 4 ☒

Buttons:

To complete the testlet, follow these steps:

- 1) Select **END**.

Buttons:

- 2) A confirmation message displays with the question, “Are you sure you want to end?”

Are you sure you want to end?

Buttons:

- a) If **YES** is selected, all answers will be saved, and the testlet will be submitted and closed.
- b) If **NO** is selected, the student can return to any page and continue working in the testlet.

TROUBLESHOOT IN KITE STUDENT PORTAL

If you encounter scroll bars when magnification was not selected in the PNP Profile, the student's display has technology issues. Contact your district technology staff for help.

For more help with common Student Portal problems, contact the DLM Service Desk.

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GLOSSARY

Table 23 compiles relevant definitions and acronyms for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment.

Table 23

DLM Alternate Assessment Glossary

Term	Description
alternate text	Alternate text is a standardized description of testlet graphics and images (either in the text, the engagement activity, the items, or the science picture-response cards). Alternate text is only needed when administering the testlet to a student who receives the human read aloud support and/or requires verbal descriptions of images in addition to the text. Alternate text is provided on the Testlet Information Pages (TIPs), which must be accessed prior to test administration. After reading the text on the screen, the alternate text descriptions must be read exactly as they appear on the TIP. The only exception when alternate text is not provided in the TIP is when the alternate text provides a cue to the answer (e.g., if a student is asked to identify which shape is a triangle). In that example, the TIP would not include alternate text that named the shapes in the response options. Instead, the alternate text page would instruct, “Do not describe.” The test administrator could then use shapes or textile graphics.
card	A cell on the Student View Page in the Instruction and Assessment Planner for each Essential Element and linkage level. Information about the specific Essential Element and the specific linkage level can be accessed when the user selects the card.

Term	Description
claim	ELA and mathematics: A broad statement about what the DLM program expects students to learn and to be able to demonstrate in English language arts and mathematics. Each claim is subdivided into two or more conceptual areas.
conceptual area	ELA and mathematics: A region within the DLM learning map containing nodes associated with related Essential Elements, representing concepts and skills that support learning the Essential Elements in English language arts and mathematics. Conceptual areas are composed of clusters of connected concepts and skills and serve as models of how students may acquire and organize their content knowledge. Conceptual areas are considered subparts of the overall claims.
connection	ELA and mathematics: The relationship between two nodes (skills) in the DLM maps. Connections are illustrated with arrows in the maps.
core idea	Science: The key organizing principles in science that are taught and learned over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication. For science, within each domain, three or four core ideas have been selected to use for instruction and assessment. Each of the core ideas is narrowed further into topics.
display enhancements	Options that change the testlet appearance on the student's device screen, including magnification, overlay color, invert color choice, and contrast color.
domain	Science: The major science content areas are called domains. The domains that are assessed across all grade bands are physical science, life science, and Earth and space science.

Term	Description
Educator Portal	Educator Portal is a secure administrative application where educators manage student data and retrieve reports and extracts. Users can access Educator Portal using any supported browser via https://educator.kiteaai.org/ . For information on working within Educator Portal, access the DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL and the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE on the DLM website.
engagement activity	ELA, mathematics, and science: An activity at the beginning of a testlet that describes a scenario, taps prior knowledge or experience, or introduces the concept to be addressed. In English language arts (ELA) reading testlets, the first reading of the text often serves as the engagement activity. In mathematics and science, the engagement activity provides context for the items. A few science testlets at the upper linkage levels may include a short video without audio as the engagement activity.
Essential Elements	Essential Elements are the content standards used for the DLM alternate assessments. Essential Elements build a bridge from the grade-level standards to academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity. They are specific statements of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-level expectations identified in K–12 grade-level standards for English language arts and mathematics. Essential Elements in science are linked to the National Research Council’s Framework for K–12.

Term	Description
field test testlets	Field testing is an essential stage in test development. Field-test testlets are administered in the DLM assessments to conduct a preliminary evaluation of item quality for Essential Elements assessed at each grade level for ELA, mathematics, and science. In addition to evaluating item quality, field testing is also conducted to deepen operational pools so that multiple testlets are available in each window, including making more content available at Essential Elements and linkage levels that educators administer to students the most.

Term	Description
First Contact Survey	A survey completed by the test administrator for each student. The survey is used to collect background information about students who are eligible for DLM alternate assessments. The survey goes beyond basic demographic information and includes questions on communication, assistive technology devices, motor and sensory impairments, and academic performance. In the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, data gathered from the survey's core questions together with data gathered from questions in ELA, mathematics, and science are used to recommend the linkage level for each Essential Element in each subject. Data gathered from the core questions plus data from the writing questions are used to recommend the linkage level for the writing testlet. In the spring assessment window, data gathered from the survey's core questions together with data gathered from questions in each subject are used to assign the linkage level for the first Essential Element in ELA, mathematics, and science. After the first tested Essential Element, the linkage level assignment of subsequent testlets is adaptive. In the spring assessment window, data gathered from the survey's core questions plus data from the writing questions are used to assign the linkage level for the writing testlet.

Term	Description
Instruction and Assessment Planner	A section in Educator Portal where test administrators perform assessment functions for a student during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. Test administrators select an Essential Element and linkage level for instruction and subsequent testing. Most assessment data about the student is provided in the Instruction and Assessment Planner during this window, including results of a tested Essential Element at a linkage level. Score results from these testlets are not used for the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports. Blueprint requirements do not have to be met in this optional window.
instructionally embedded assessment	For ELA, mathematics, and science: An optional assessment that is closely integrated with instruction throughout the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. Mastery results are indicated for each Essential Element at a linkage level that was tested, except the writing Essential Elements, which are not provided until the end-of-year individual student score reports are published. Instruction for the student can be adjusted before another testlet is administered.

Term	Description
Kite® Student Portal	Kite Student Portal is the customized, secure interface that test administrators use to deliver the assessment to students. All students taking the DLM alternate assessment will have unique accounts in Kite Student Portal. Educators and staff do not have accounts in Student Portal. The most current version of Student Portal must be used and can be found on the Kite Suite webpage on the DLM website. Once launched, Student Portal prevents students from accessing unauthorized webpages or applications during testing. In addition to operational testing in Student Portal, practice activities and released testlets can be administered using Student Portal. A browser version of Student Portal cannot be used to deliver operational testlets.
linkage level	An incremental level of cognitive complexity toward the learning target where an assessment was developed for the Essential Element. Linkage levels for an Essential Element are always related directly to grade-level content standards but at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity. ELA and mathematics each have five linkage levels: Initial Precursor, Distal Precursor, Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor. These linkage levels are a small section of the DLM learning map containing one or more nodes that represent critical concepts or skills needed to learn the Essential Element. Science has three linkage levels: Initial, Precursor, and Target.

Term	Description
materials	Any objects, manipulatives, and tools used during an assessment. Materials collection lists are specific to each window for each subject. The lists are found on each state's DLM website under Educator Resources.
node	ELA and mathematics: A representation in the DLM learning map of an individual skill or conceptual understanding identified in the research in ELA and mathematics.
Personal Learning Profile	A collective term used to describe a student's personal needs and preferences settings entered in the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile in addition to information about the student entered in the First Contact Survey in Educator Portal.
Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile	A section in Educator Portal where the test administrator selects settings to meet a student's personal accessibility needs and preferences for testing in Student Portal. The PNP Profile includes information about display enhancements, language and braille, and audio and environmental supports. Some settings selected in the PNP Profile are programmed in Student Portal (e.g., magnification). Other selections are provided by the test administrator outside Student Portal (e.g., calculator).
plan	A plan is an administrative function in the Instruction and Assessment Planner section of Educator Portal only during the optional instructionally embedded assessment windows. The test administrator creates plans for ELA, mathematics, and science by selecting Essential Elements and linkage levels and assigning testlets.

Term	Description
released testlets	A released testlet is a publicly available sample DLM assessment. Released testlets may be used by students and teachers as examples or opportunities for practice. Released testlets are developed using the same standards and methods used to develop testlets that are used in DLM operational assessments. New released testlets are added periodically.
stem	The beginning part of the item (question) that presents a problem to solve or a question to which a student responds. The stem may also include other relevant information in the item. A multiple-choice item is a common example in the DLM alternate assessment, consisting of a stem and a set of response options from which a student chooses.
Student Activity Table	The first screen in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal. The Student Activity Table provides an at-a-glance overview for all students rostered to the test administrator in the subjects in which the students are being tested during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. The data in the Student Activity Table populates based on the test administrator's actions on the Student View Page for each student (e.g., how many testlets were administered). The table also includes three icons providing easy access to the First Contact survey, PNP Profile, and the student's credentials (username and password for Student Portal).

Term	Description
Student View Page	A page in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal that displays details for one student at a time, for one subject at a time, for each ELA, mathematics, and science Essential Elements and linkage levels. During the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, the test administrator uses the Student View Page for several actions for each student (e.g., creating a plan). The system will display information about the student's testing progress, including whether the student achieved mastery of an Essential Element at the linkage level tested.
tactile graphic	Tactile graphics are a means of conveying non-textual information to students who are blind or have visual impairments. Tactile graphics may include tactile representation of pictures, maps, graphs, diagrams, and other images. The DLM alternate assessment does not provide tactile graphics with the testlets.
technology-enhanced Items	Computer-delivered test items that require a specialized interaction, such as matching and sorting. A technology-enhanced item is any item that is not answered using direct selection, such as multiple choice. This item type is only used for a few items at upper linkage levels in ELA and mathematics.

Term	Description
testlet	A short assessment that begins with an engagement activity followed by items. Most testlets have an average of five items. Together the items increase the instructional relevance of the assessment and provide a better estimate of a student’s knowledge, skills, and understandings than can be achieved by a single assessment item. Each testlet assesses only one Essential Element except for the writing testlet, which assesses all writing Essential Elements together in one testlet. Testlets are either teacher-administered or computer-delivered. More specific information is found in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.
Testlet Information Page (TIP)	A PDF that is unique to each testlet and provides specific information to guide the test administrator in delivering the assessment. The Testlet Information Page (TIP) for most testlets at the Initial and Distal Precursor linkage levels in ELA and mathematics lists the materials needed or describes the attributes of the materials needed specific to a testlet. The TIP at the Initial linkage level for science may list objects that must be gathered or picture-response cards that must be printed before testing. Best practice is to print them in color. Computer-delivered testlets usually require fewer materials than the teacher-administered testlets.

DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. NUMBER OF TESTLETS FOR SPRING ASSESSMENTS

Table 24 shows the number of operational testlets to expect during the spring assessment window. It is organized by grade for each subject area.

HINT: Check your state's DLM webpage for the subjects tested in your state.

Table 24

Number of Operational Testlets to Expect During the Spring Assessment Window

Grade	ELA Testlets	Mathematics Testlets	Science Testlets
3	9	8	9
4	9	8	9
5	9	8	9
6	9	7	9
7	9	7	9
8	9	8	9
9	9*	7*	9**
10	9*	8*	9**
11	9*	6*	9**
12	9*	6*	9**

*The high school blueprint provides coverage options for students in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 to support the various testing requirements in different states. Each state sets its own policy for which high school grade(s) are appropriate for DLM alternate assessments.

**For states testing end-of-instruction biology in high school, students receive 10 testlets.

Table 25

Number of Field Test Testlets per Student by Subject for Each Grade

ELA Field Test Testlets	Mathematics Field Test Testlets	Science Field Test Testlets
0–1	0–1	4

Field test testlets in the spring for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics are delivered after all operational testlets in both subjects have been submitted.

In spring 2026, DLM will administer field test forms for the updated Essential Elements that will be used for the operational assessment, beginning in the 2026–2027 school year. In spring 2026, students will receive 2 field test forms when their first operational testlet is assigned. Each form contains two field test testlets, and each form is expected to take approximately seven to 10 minutes to complete. The field test forms can be completed at any time during the spring window. Subsequent operational testlets will continue to be delivered after the previous testlet is completed, regardless of whether the field test forms have been completed.

APPENDIX B. FIRST CONTACT SURVEY FOR 2025–2026

Revised August 2024

The questions asked in the First Contact Survey are included here. The test administrator completes the First Contact Survey in Educator Portal. Only users with an Educator Portal role of District Test Coordinator, Building Test Coordinator, or Teacher have permission to enter student information in the First Contact Survey. Other roles have permission only to view.

HINT: The status Not Applicable is possible in the First Contact Survey column, but it is not common. However, because this option is so rare, check that you are logged in as a DLM user and that the student's information has been loaded properly into the system.

Blue and * symbol = Required for all states.

Purple and ** symbol = Required for science states.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Select the student's Primary Disability:

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Developmental delay
- Emotional disturbance
- Hearing impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairment, including blindness
- Non-categorical
- Eligible Individual

Educational Placement: Choose the option that best describes the student’s educational placement. “Regular Class” means a typical, general education classroom, not a resource room or separate special education classroom.

- 80% or more of the day in Regular Class
- 40%–79% of the day in Regular Class
- Less than 40% of the day in Regular Class
- Separate School: includes public or private separate day school for students with disabilities, at public expense
- Residential Facility: includes public or private separate residential school for students with disabilities, at public expense
- Homebound/Hospital Environment: includes students placed in and receiving special education in a hospital or homebound program

HEARING

Hearing

- No hearing loss suspected/documented
- Questionable hearing but testing inconclusive or unavailable
- Deaf or hard of hearing

Classification of Hearing Impairment

- Mild (26–40 dB loss)
- Moderate (41–55 dB loss)
- Moderately Severe (56–70 dB loss)
- Severe (71–90 dB loss)
- Profound (91+ dB loss)
- Unknown

Hearing: Mark all that apply.

- Uses personal or classroom amplification (e.g., personal FM device)
- Uses unilateral hearing aid
- Uses bilateral hearing aid
- Has cochlear implant
- Understands spoken language
- Uses spoken language to communicate with others
- Understands sign language
- Uses sign language to communicate with others

VISION

Vision

- No vision loss suspected or documented
- Normal vision with glasses or contact lenses
- Questionable vision but testing inconclusive or unavailable
- Blind or low vision, including vision that is not completely corrected with glasses or contact lenses

Classification of Visual Impairment: Mark all that apply.

- Low Vision (acuity of 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye with correction)
- Legally Blind (acuity of 20/200 or less or field loss to 20 degrees or less in the better eye with correction)
- Light Perception Only
- Totally Blind
- Cortical Visual Impairment

Vision: Mark all that apply.

- Requires enlarged print
- Requires tactile media (tactile graphics and tactile symbols)
- Requires or uses braille

If the student requires or is learning to use braille, select all types the student uses.

- Uncontracted braille
- Contracted braille
- Unified English Braille (UEB)

Technological Visual Aids: Mark all that apply.

- Screen magnification device (fits over standard monitor) or software (e.g., Closeview for Mac, ZoomText)
- CCTV
- Screen reader and/or talking word processor
- Manual (e.g., Perkins) or electronic (e.g., Mountbatten Brailier) braille writing device
- Device with refreshable braille display
- Light box
- None of these

Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

- Combined vision and hearing loss is documented.
- Combined vision and hearing loss is suspected but not documented.
- No combined vision and hearing loss is suspected or documented.

Subsection: Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Services

- Student is receiving services from a deafblind specialist (or other specialized services that address combined vision and hearing loss).
- Student is receiving services from a teacher of the visually impaired (or other specialized vision services).
- Student is receiving services from a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing (or other specialized hearing services).
- Student is not receiving services for vision or hearing loss.

ARM/HAND CONTROL AND HEALTH

Arm and hand control: Mark all that apply.

- Uses two hands together to perform tasks
- Uses only one hand to perform tasks
- Requires physical assistance to perform tasks with hands
- Cannot use hands to complete tasks even with assistance

Does the student have any health issues (e.g., fragile medical condition, seizures, therapy or treatment that prevents the student from accessing instruction, medications) that interfere with instruction or assessment?

- Yes
- No

COMPUTER OR TABLET ACCESS AND ATTENTION DURING INSTRUCTION

Select the student's primary access to a computer or tablet during instruction.

- Accesses a computer or tablet independently
- Accesses a computer or tablet independently given assistive technology
- Accesses a computer or tablet with human support (with or without assistive technology)
- Has not had the opportunity to access a computer or tablet
- Cannot access a computer or tablet with human support or assistive technology

Why hasn't the student used a computer or tablet during instruction?

- Student's disability prevents them from accessing a computer or tablet.
- Computers or tablets are unavailable.
- Student unwilling to use a computer or tablet
- Assistive technology required to access the computer or tablet is unavailable
- I (or other educators) at this school have not had the opportunity to instruct the student on computer or tablet usage.

How does the student access the computer or tablet during instruction? Mark all that apply.

- Standard computer or tablet keyboard
- Keyboard with large keys or alternative keyboard (e.g., BigKeys)
- Touch screen (e.g., touch screen computer, tablet, iPad, iPod Touch)
- Standard mouse or head mouse
- Eye gaze technology (e.g., Tobii, EyeGaze Edge)
- Scanning with switches (e.g., one- or two-switch scanning)

Select the student's level of attention to computer- or tablet-directed instruction.

- Generally sustains attention to computer- or tablet-directed instruction
- Demonstrates fleeting attention to computer- or tablet-directed instructional activities and requires repeated bids or prompts for attention
- Demonstrates little or no attention to computer- or tablet-directed instructional activities

Select the student's level of attention to teacher-directed instruction.

- Generally sustains attention to teacher-directed instruction
- Demonstrates fleeting attention to teacher-directed instructional activities and requires repeated bids or prompts for attention
- Demonstrates little or no attention to teacher-directed instructional activities

EXPRESSIVE COMMUNICATION

*Does the student use speech to meet expressive communication needs?

- Yes
- No

*Choose the highest statement that describes the student's expressive communication with speech.

- Regularly combines three or more spoken words according to grammatical rules for various complex or abstract purposes (e.g., asking/answering longer questions, giving directions to another person)
- Usually combines two spoken words to communicate for various more complex or abstract purposes (e.g., obtaining things that are absent, social expressions beyond greetings, sharing information, directing another person's attention, asking/answering questions)
- Usually uses only one spoken word at a time to communicate for a limited range of simple purposes (e.g., refusing/rejecting things, making choices, requesting attention, greeting, and labeling)

*Does the student use sign language in addition to or in place of speech to meet expressive communication needs?

- Yes
- No

*Choose the highest statement that describes the student's expressive communication with sign language.

- Regularly combines three or more signed words to communicate for various complex or abstract purposes (e.g., asking/answering longer questions, giving directions to another person)
- Usually combines two signed words to communicate for various more complex or abstract purposes (e.g., obtaining things that are absent, social expressions beyond greetings, sharing information, directing another person's attention, asking/answering brief questions)
- Usually uses only one signed word at a time to communicate for a limited range of simple purposes (e.g., refusing/rejecting things, making choices, requesting attention, greeting, and labeling)

Select the student's primary sign system.

- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Signed Exact English (SEE)
- Hybrid or idiosyncratic/personalized signing system

*Does the student use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) in addition to or in place of speech or sign language to meet expressive communication needs?

- Yes
- No

*Choose the highest statement that describes the student's expressive communication with AAC.

- Regularly combines three or more symbols according to grammatical rules for various complex or abstract purposes (e.g., asking or answering longer questions, giving directions to another person)
- Usually combines two symbols to communicate for various more complex or abstract purposes (e.g., obtaining things that are absent, social expressions beyond greetings, sharing information, directing another person's attention, asking/answering brief questions)
- Usually uses only one symbol at a time to communicate for a limited range of simple purposes (e.g., refusing/rejecting things, making choices, requesting attention, greeting)

How many symbols does the student choose from when communicating using AAC? Mark the highest that applies.

- 10 or more at a time
- Five to nine at a time
- Three or four at a time
- One or two at a time

What types of symbols does the student use? Mark all that apply.

- Real objects
- Tactual symbols
- Photos
- Colored symbols (e.g., Boardmaker, PCS, SymbolStix)
- Other symbol sets
- Text (i.e., print or braille)

What forms of AAC technology does the student use? Mark all that apply.

- Single message devices (e.g., BIGmack)
- Simple devices with recorded speech (e.g., GoTalk, QuickTalker, SuperTalker)

- Speech-generating device or app on tablet (e.g., Accent, GoTalk Now, TD Snap, Tobii-Dynavox, Unity, LAMP Words for Life, Proloquo2Go)
- None

If the student does not use speech, sign language, or AAC, which of the following statements best describes the student's expressive communication? Choose the highest statement that applies.

- Uses conventional gestures (e.g., waving, nodding and shaking head, thumbs up/down), looking, pointing, and/or vocalizations (e.g., yah, nah) to communicate intentionally
- Uses only unconventional gestures (e.g., opening mouth wide to indicate hunger), unconventional vocalizations (e.g., grunts), and/or body movement (e.g., pushing or turning away) to communicate intentionally
- Exhibits behaviors that may be reflexive and are not intentionally communicative but can be interpreted by others as communication (e.g., crying, laughing, reaching for an object, pushing an object away)

RECEPTIVE COMMUNICATION

Receptive communication: **Mark each one** to show how consistently the student uses each skill **independently**. (1) Almost never (0%–20% of the time), (2) Occasionally (21%–50% of the time), (3) Frequently (51%–80% of the time), and (4) Consistently (more than 80% of the time)

If the student previously mastered the skill, mark “More than 80%.”

- Follows two-step directions presented verbally or through sign (e.g., when told, “get your book and go sit with Ms. Ryan,” the student performs both steps with no other supports or reminders; when told, “explore these objects and tell me two things about them,” the student performs both steps with no other supports or reminders; gets journal and begins to work, looks at requested or desired item, and then looks at location where it should go)
- Responds appropriately in any modality (sign, gestures, facial expressions) to phrases and sentences that are spoken or signed
- Responds appropriately in any modality (sign, gestures, facial expressions) to single words that are spoken or signed
- Responds appropriately in any modality (sign, gestures, facial expressions) when offered a favored item that is not present or visible (e.g., “Do you want some ice cream?”)

- E. Can perform simple actions, movements, or activities when asked (e.g., comes to teacher's location, gives an object to teacher or peer, locates or retrieves an object)
- F. Can point to, look at, or touch things in the immediate vicinity when asked (e.g., pictures, objects, body parts)

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Is English the student's primary language?

- Yes
- No

Is English the primary language spoken in the student's home?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Is English the primary language used for the student's instruction?

- Yes
- No

READING SKILLS

*Reading skills: **Mark each one** to show how consistently the student uses each skill **independently**. (1) Almost never (0%–20% of the time), (2) Occasionally (21%–50% of the time), (3) Frequently (51%–80% of the time), and (4) Consistently (more than 80% of the time)

If the student previously mastered the skill, mark "More than 80%."

- A. Explains or elaborates on text (i.e., paragraph or longer) read in print or braille
- B. Reads sentences in print or braille without symbol support and **with** comprehension (e.g., locates answers in text, reads and answers questions, retells after reading, completes maze task)
- C. Reads sentences in print or braille without symbol support but **without** comprehension
- D. Identifies individual words without symbol support (e.g., recognizes individual words in print or braille)
- E. Reads words, phrases, or sentences in print or braille when symbols are paired with the words
- F. Understands the relationship between individual letters (i.e., presented in print or braille) and the sounds they represent.

- G. Understands the purpose of print or braille (e.g., understands that print carries meaning)
- H. Recognizes environmental print (e.g., logos, business signs, food labels)
- I. Recognizes some individual letters
- J. Participates in shared reading (e.g., responds to questions, offers opinions or preferences)
- K. Attends to stories or texts when read aloud

*Student's approximate **independent** level of text comprehension: Mark the highest one that applies.

- Third-grade level or above
- Second-grade level
- First-grade level
- Primer (kindergarten)
- Pre-primer (reads only individual words or familiar phrases and sentences)
- Does not read any words when presented in print or braille (not including environmental signs or logos)

WRITING SKILLS

*Writing includes any method the student uses to write using any writing tool that includes access to all 26 letters of the alphabet. Examples of these tools include pencils, pens, traditional keyboards, alternate keyboards, alphabet flip charts, and eye-gaze displays of letters.

Indicate the highest level that describes the student's **independent** writing skills. Choose the highest level that the student has demonstrated independently even once during instruction, not the highest skill demonstrated consistently.

- A. Writes paragraph-length text (or longer) using mostly correct spelling (with or without word prediction) **without copying**
- B. Writes words, phrases, or sentences using mostly correct spelling (with or without word prediction) **without copying**
- C. Writes words using letters to logically represent at least the beginning and ending sound of most words **without copying**
- D. Writes words using letters to represent some sounds **without copying**
- E. Writes or selects strings of letters using spaces to group letters into word-like units **without copying**
- F. Writes using word banks, picture symbols, copying, or tracing

- G. Scribbles, draws, or randomly selects letters and/or other symbols
- H. Does not engage when asked to write

MATH SKILLS

*Math skills may be demonstrated through any method the student uses to generate, select, or respond to mathematical information to indicate their understanding.

Math skills: **Mark each one** to show how consistently the student uses each skill **independently**. (1) Almost never (0%–20% of the time), (2) Occasionally (21%–50% of the time), (3) Frequently (51%–80% of the time), and (4) Consistently (more than 80% of the time)

If the student previously mastered the skill, mark “More than 80%.”

- A. Multiplies and/or divides using numerals
- B. Forms equal groups of objects for multiplication or division
- C. Adds and/or subtracts using numerals
- D. Adds or subtracts by joining or separating groups of objects
- E. Counts more than two objects
- F. Sorts objects by common properties (e.g., color, texture, material, size, or shape)
- G. Identifies simple shapes in two or three dimensions (e.g., square, circle, triangle, rectangle, cube, cone, cylinder, or sphere)
- H. Creates or matches repeating patterns of objects or images
- I. Uses a calculator
- J. Uses an abacus
- K. Uses common measuring tools (e.g., ruler, measuring cup, or scale)
- L. Tells time using an analog or digital clock
- M. Uses a schedule, agenda, or calendar to identify or anticipate sequence of activities

SCIENCE SKILLS

Science skills: **Mark each one to show how consistently the student uses each skill **independently**. (1) Almost never (0%–20% of the time), (2) Occasionally (21%–50% of the time), (3) Frequently (51%–80% of the time), and (4) Consistently (more than 80% of the time)

If the student previously mastered the skill, mark “More than 80%.”

- A. Uses a given model or diagram to describe parts, systems, and interactions (e.g., food chain or web)

- B. Understands that models represent concrete events, processes, relationships, or relative scales (e.g., the water cycle, Fahrenheit temperature)
- C. Uses information to design a solution to a problem (e.g., ways to recycle or reduce waste, protect an egg from breaking when dropped, increase plant growth)
- D. Uses patterns (e.g., a harder push makes a ball roll farther) to identify cause-and-effect relationships or make a prediction
- E. Identifies information (e.g., observations, measurements, or text) to answer a question or support a claim
- F. Observes and compares conditions to determine if something changes (e.g., temperature change across days, height of plants over time, speed of balls of different weights)
- G. Uses senses to observe and collect information
- H. Recognizes patterns in the natural world (e.g., day versus night, seasons)
- I. Understands the functions of different body parts (on humans or other animals)
- J. Recognizes similarities and differences in the natural world (e.g., animal structures, types of plants)
- K. Sorts objects or materials by common properties (e.g., color, size, shape, material state [solid versus liquid], weight, temperature)

End of Survey

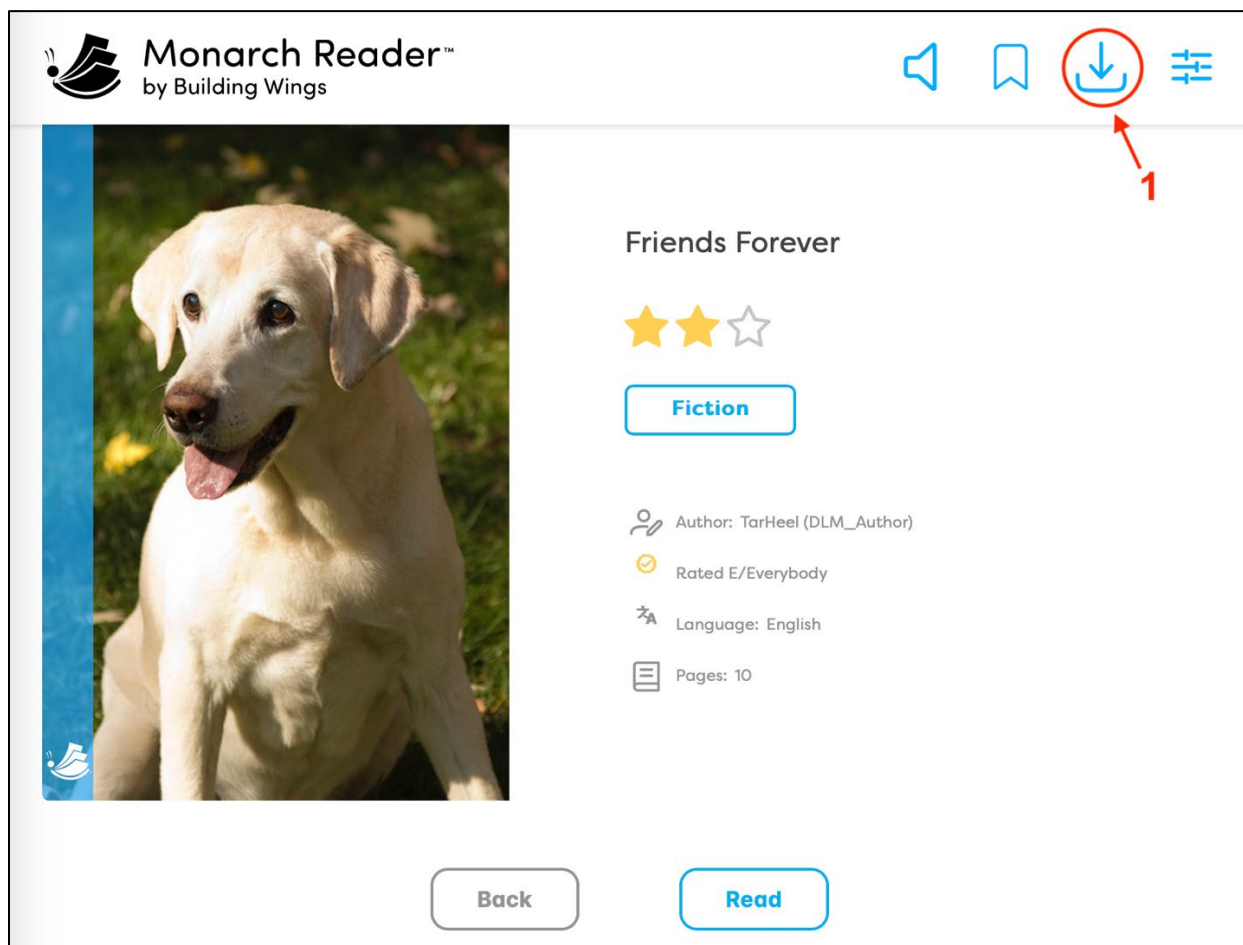
APPENDIX C: DOWNLOADING OR PRINTING DLM FAMILIAR TEXTS

A link to the DLM Familiar Texts is provided on each state's page of the DLM website. DLM Familiar Texts can also be accessed under the Instructional Resources tab on the site's main menu. A button for each grade is provided at the bottom of the Familiar Texts page. Three source book titles are provided for each grade. Selecting a title reveals links to the DLM Familiar Texts associated with that title, both stories and informational texts.

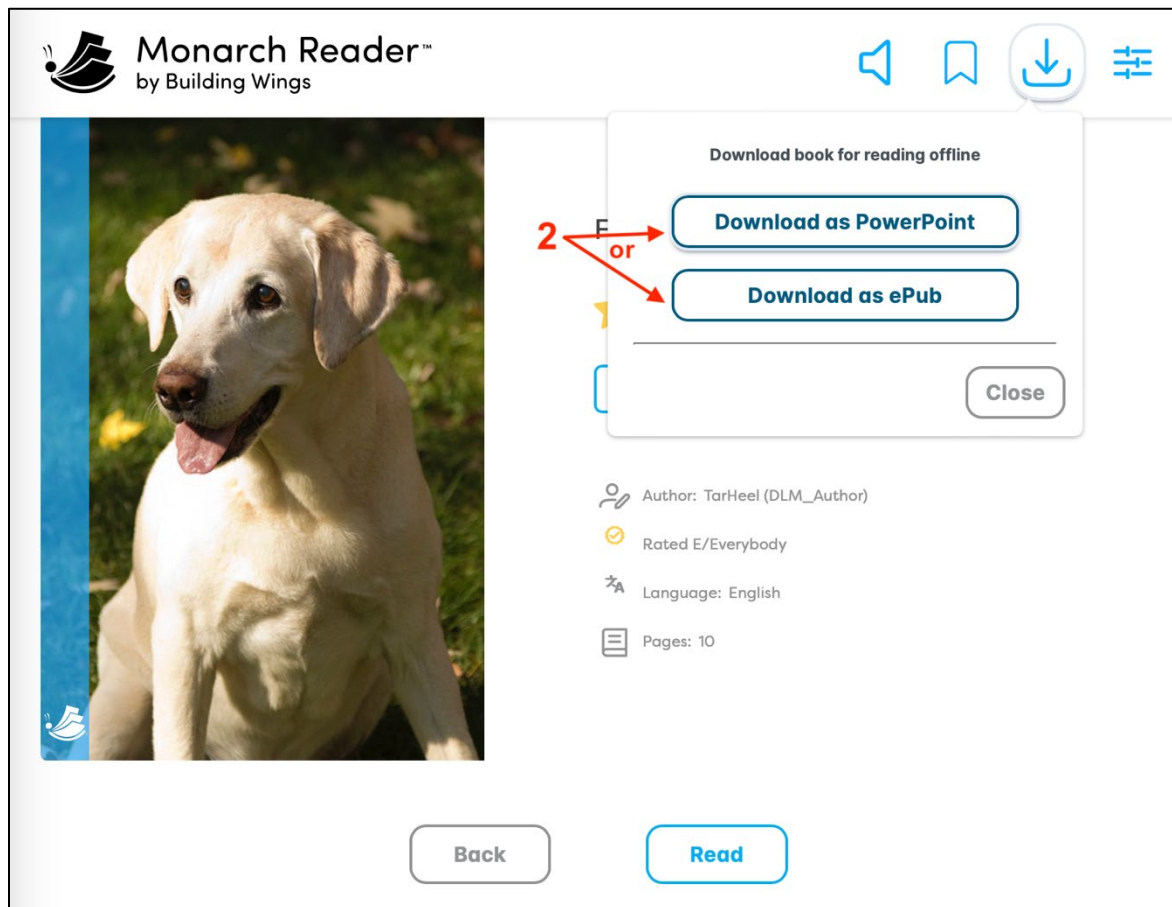
When selecting a DLM Familiar Text, it opens automatically in its browser version. However, the text can then be downloaded as an ePub file for use on a tablet with an electronic book reader application, or it can be downloaded as a PowerPoint file that can be printed.

ACCESS DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF A DLM FAMILIAR TEXT

- 1) Select the download icon in the top right corner of the screen. A menu will appear.



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STATE APPENDICES

DOCUMENT HISTORY

NOTE: Page numbers are valid ONLY for the date and version noted (Table 26). They may change in future versions.

Table 26

Document History of Changes

Date	Section Name/ Summary of Changes	Starting Page
07/31/2025	Number and order of delivery of science field test testlets updated throughout	Page 37