

Inclusive Practice Tool: Accessibility Review

A RESOURCE FOR SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

Inclusive practice refers to the instructional and behavioral strategies that improve academic and social-emotional outcomes for **all students**, with and without disabilities, in general education settings.

To support inclusive practice, the tools of this *Guidebook* are based on the frameworks of [Universal Design for Learning](#), [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#), and [Social and Emotional Learning](#).

How do I use this tool?

Use this tool to analyze common assessments for accessibility through a process to determine whether assessments and assessment items effectively address what is important for students to know and be able to do. This tool will help educators identify elements at the item-specific level that interfere with students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge.

Directions: **Classroom educators** can use this tool to ensure that assessments are accessible and unbiased. **Building administrators** can use this tool to support classroom educators through a review of assessments and to guide professional development activities. **District administrators** can use this tool to support inclusive practice across schools and ensure that all students in a district have an equal opportunity to demonstrate growth through unbiased assessments.

The *Guidebook* tools are designed to strengthen inclusive practices and empower educators to meet the needs of all students by leveraging and augmenting the educator evaluation process. Although each tool is designed as a stand-alone resource, many tools mutually support educator practice. This tool has a strong relationship to the following *Guidebook* tools:

- Tool 2a: [Massachusetts Classroom Teacher Rubric Resource](#)
- Tool 3b: [Student Learning Goal Setting Template](#)
- Tool 4a: [What to Look For—Observations](#)
- Tool 7b: [Considering Growth](#)
- Finally, check the [Job-Embedded PD Planning Guide](#) and [Quick Tips for Guidebook PD](#)

Although some assessment items are designed to measure integrated skills (for example, the goal of some measures will be to assess students' scientific writing skills), educators will need to be clear about the nature of those skills. This review process can help refine the accuracy of assessment data and focus the intent of instructional practice.

It is assumed that all common assessments are aligned to the current curriculum intended to be taught. This tool does not address content or instructional practices. The tool comprises two components:

1. A checklist to determine whether a common assessment is accessible
2. A protocol to drive conversation while reviewing the accessibility of common assessments

Essential Questions to Ask When Reviewing Assessments

1. What knowledge and skills does this item measure?
2. Is this item designed in a way that will allow the student to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specific to the assessment?

Part 1: Assessment Accessibility Checklist

Use the following tables to review your assessments for accessibility. Fill out the item-by-item table and circle yes or no according to each item’s accessibility. **Any item that receives a yes response will need to be revised.** Use the Notes for Revision column to clarify changes required to make the assessment accessible.

Accessibility Type	Primary Consideration	Examples
Language Accessibility	Does the test item, or any associated directions, include language that presents challenges beyond the intent of the item?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vocabulary words on a social studies assessment item that are not related to the concept being assessed and that may present challenges to students, such as advanced academic vocabulary ■ Sentences or phrases that provide background knowledge or other information not necessary for completing the item
Cultural Accessibility	Is the item free of cultural references that present challenges beyond the intent of the assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ References to holidays, sports, or other cultural observances that may not be equally familiar to all students ■ Slang terms, idioms, dialects or technical terms that are not related to the intent of the item
Skill Accessibility	Does the item require students to have and demonstrate skills beyond the intent of the assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Items, not assessing writing skills, that require a significant amount of writing ■ Items not assessing reading comprehension that include complex sentence structures, a large amount of text, or other challenging reading tasks
Test Fatigue Accessibility	Does the item duplicate the content of another item and contribute to unnecessary test fatigue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Multiple items assessing knowledge of the same standard in similar ways ■ Overall assessment design does not account for differentiated levels of endurance among students

Assessment Accessibility Checklist—Item Level

(Notice that circling “Yes” indicates possible need for revision)

	Language Accessibility (Circle One)	Cultural Accessibility (Circle One)	Skill Accessibility (Circle One)	Test Fatigue Accessibility (Circle One)	Notes for Revision
Paste specific items in this column if desired.	Do the test item and directions include language that presents challenges beyond the intent of the assessment?	Does the item include cultural references that present challenges beyond the intent of the assessment?	Does the item require students to have skills beyond the intent of the assessment?	Does the item duplicate the content of another item and contribute to unnecessary test fatigue?	
Item 1	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 2	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 3	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 4	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 5	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 6	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 7	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 8	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 9	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 10	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 11	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 12	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 13	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 14	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 15	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 16	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 17	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 18	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 19	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Item 20	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	

Part 2: Common Assessment Accessibility Review Protocol

Purpose

To identify elements within common assessments that interfere with students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge.

Planning

Time: 15-30 minutes, depending on assessment

Group size: Minimum of four people

Norms

Establish norms for the group.

Process

1. Each person will choose one category (language, cultural, skill, fatigue) from the Assessment Accessibility Checklist to revisit and will review each item on the assessment using that lens. If there are more than four participants, consider dividing the items in the interest of time.
 - a. The person or people reviewing for language accessibility will read the directions and items and make note of items that are wordy, use advanced vocabulary, or present other challenges.
 - b. The person or people reviewing items' cultural accessibility will read directions, items, and (when appropriate) passages to identify any slang, culture-specific content, or other challenges related to culture.
 - c. The person or people reviewing items for skill accessibility will make note of skills required to complete each item and whether these skills present challenges beyond the scope of the assessment. For example, the reviewer(s) might note items that require a large amount of writing or reading not directly related to the concept being assessed.
 - d. The person or people reviewing items fatigue accessibility will make note of potentially duplicative items. Does the item duplicate the content of another item and contribute to unnecessary test fatigue?
2. As a group, participants will review each item, sharing their observations on each element of accessibility. Each participant will note concerns specific to the type of accessibility that was his or her focus. Participants may note any other accessibility concerns that arose as they reviewed the items.
3. If participants note any concerns, the team will suggest revisions for the item that address those concerns. If no concerns are noted, the item will stand as written, and the team will proceed to the next item.

Follow this process until the team has reviewed all items and any necessary revisions to items have been made.