



# DLM Braille Form Testlets for Spring 2015

A limited number of students with significant cognitive disabilities read braille. This document describes the braille forms that will be available during the spring testing window in 2015.

## **What grades and linkage levels will be brailled?**

Braille forms are being created for grades 3-5 at the Target and Successor levels and in grades 6-HS at the Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor levels. However, not all parts of the test at every grade level have braille equivalents. Where they are not provided, test administrators will use other approaches to deliver assessments to students who are blind or have visual impairments.

## **How are braille forms transcribed?**

DLM braille forms use uncontracted New English American Edition braille. Math testlets use Nemeth code rather than technical symbols or words for operations. Braille forms are transcribed to be as similar as possible to online testlets, but will have some minor changes to help the student best access the information.

- Page numbers are included on all testlets to help with organization.
- Answer choices are lettered to help student let the teacher know which answer choice they have chosen so the teacher can input the answer choice into KITE.
- ELA text is double spaced to help students whose braille tracking skills are not strong yet.

## **Are tactile graphics provided?**

Based on input from experts in the field and data about the characteristics of students who take DLM assessments, tactile graphics are too complex and abstract for most students with significant cognitive disabilities who are emerging or fluent braille readers. Tactile graphics are not included in braille forms. Instead, DLM typically uses objects for concrete representation of content. Please see the Testlet Information Page (TIP) for each testlet to learn about allowable objects.

## **How are braille forms delivered?**

Braille forms are delivered to states or districts as electronic files (BRF). They are embossed at the school or district level. Contact your state testing representative for additional information regarding form delivery for your district.

- Test administrators indicate a student's need for a braille form by marking that option on the student's Access (Personal Needs and Preferences, or PNP) profile. This step must be completed no later than March 9, 2015, to receive braille files in time for the spring testing window.
- All braille forms are delivered in .BRF format to the assessment coordinator.
- Testlets are assigned to the student by the KITE system, the same way that non-braille testlets are assigned.
- As each testlet is assigned to the student, the teacher or assessment coordinator embosses the testlet.

**How are the student's responses scored?**

When the system assigns a testlet, it delivers a computer-based version through KITE. This version is equivalent to the braille version the student receives. As the student takes the testlet on the braille paper version, the student indicates each answer choice to the test administrator as s/he normally would on other braille assignments. The test administrator inputs each student response into the online version. Responses are scored by the system, the same way as non-braille forms.

**What happens if the teacher marks both *braille* and *alternate form – visual impairment* in the PNP?**

DLM offers alternate forms for students with blindness or visual impairments (BVI), as well as braille forms. The BVI forms are administered by the teacher outside the KITE system, often using objects. If both choices are selected on the student's PNP, the KITE system will first look for a braille version of the testlet. If one is not provided, it will check for a BVI form. If neither is provided, it will assign the general form of the testlet. The test administrator would then read the testlet to the student.

**My student needs a braille test but didn't receive one (or only received braille for part of the test). Why?**

There is not a braille version of every testlets at every linkage level for every grade. Where a braille version is not available, the system will deliver an alternate (BVI) form if there is one available. The test administrator may also read the testlet to the student following the human read aloud guidelines and provide manipulatives as instructed on the Testlet Information Page (TIP).

**How will the braille test still be adaptive?**

Braille tests are delivered one testlet at a time, just like the non-braille versions. Since teachers will enter student responses into the KITE system, the system uses responses to each testlet to recommend the appropriate linkage level for the next testlet. Based on the available braille content and the adaptive system, a student who reads braille may receive a combination of braille and non-braille. Test administrators should use the guidance in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL and each Testlet Information Page (TIP) to deliver each testlet as intended.

**Does the teacher of a student who uses a braille-format test have to be proficient in reading braille?**

Yes, DLM recommends that a test administrator who delivers a braille testlet also be proficient with braille. The test administrator needs to be able to read braille in order to make sure the student has the correct pages of the testlet in the right order.