

# i-Ready Diagnostic and Growth Monitoring Universal Accessibility Features and Accommodations

Curriculum Associates Guidance Brief | July 2024

# i-Ready Diagnostic and Growth Monitoring Universal Accessibility Features and Accommodations Guidance

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# Section 1: Overview

The i-Ready Diagnostic and Growth Monitoring include universal accessibility features and supports for numerous accommodations. Throughout this document, the term "i-Ready Diagnostic" refers to both the i-Ready Diagnostic and i-Ready Growth Monitoring unless otherwise noted.

Please reference this guidance brief to find information about:

- 1) Specific supports available in the *i-Ready Diagnostic*
- 2) Guidance for educators on effective implementation with students
- 3) Accessibility supports for the i-Ready Diagnostic for Mathematics, which is available in both English and Spanish, as well as the i-Ready Diagnostic for Reading, which is only available in English

Other tests in the i-Ready Assessment suite, including i-Ready Standards Mastery and the i-Ready Assessment of Spanish Reading, have their own product-specific accessibility guidance documentation that can be found on our accessibility and accommodations resource hub.

#### 1.1: The Curriculum Associates Commitment

At Curriculum Associates, we believe every student has the potential for educational excellence. That's why we're dedicated to creating accessible materials that maximize usability for students with disabilities. We strive to ensure that accessibility and accommodation support considerations are incorporated into our product development process from the very beginning, and we've developed a continual improvement approach to accessibility that ensures we're always improving and learning.

### 1.2: Accessibility Supports and Accommodations

In the i-Ready Diagnostic, universal accessibility features are available to all students and do not require an educator to enable these features.

Conversely, there are processes and tools in the i-Ready Diagnostic that are only used to support students who require accommodations. Accommodations are usually mandated supports provided as a part of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or EL plan. IEP teams and other educators within the school determine which accommodations a student receives. Although Curriculum Associates provides guidance on how to implement various accommodations, it is up to educators who work with individual students to determine which accommodations are needed and how to correctly implement these accommodations.

Please refer to the table and footnotes on the next pages for an overview of current accessibility supports and accommodations across i-Ready. The footnotes contain product-specific details related to the i-Ready Diagnostic as well as other i-Ready products. A complete set of i-Ready accessibility resources are available on our accessibility and accommodations resource hub.



# i-Ready's Accessibility Supports and Accommodations

#### **Accommodations Universal Supports Designated Supports** Available to all students, regardless Available for use by any student as Available to students in accordance with of their disability status, English determined by an educator familiar their IEPs/504 and/or EL plans with the student's characteristics proficiency level, or any other type of documented need and needs **Embedded Embedded Embedded** Embedded universal supports Audio support is available for Audio support is available for the available within the i-Ready the Diagnostic for Mathematics Diagnostic for Mathematics Grades 6+ interface that require no additional Grades 6+ items. As of July 2024, items. As of July 2024, audio support will configuration: audio support will be available be available for Diagnostic for Reading for Diagnostic for Reading items items where universal audio support Audio support<sup>1</sup> where universal audio support is not available. In both Reading and Audio description<sup>2</sup> is not available. In both Reading Mathematics, audio support is available Keyboard access<sup>3</sup> and Mathematics, audio support as either a designated support or an Calculator\* is available as either a designated accommodation.10 Educators need to Color contrast⁴ support or an accommodation.10 enable this feature. To learn more about Closed captioning<sup>5</sup> Educators need to enable this audio support in i-Ready Diagnostic, please • Digital Math Tools<sup>6</sup> feature. To learn more about audio refer to the Feature Overview: Audio Glossary definitions and Spanish support in i-Ready Diagnostic, Support. translations for academic please refer to the Feature vocabulary and key terms<sup>7</sup> Educators have the ability to manually Overview: Audio Support. • Presentation of material for exempt students who are blind, low vision, age-appropriate pedagogy and deaf, or hard of hearing from foundational legibility8 reading domains, such as Phonological Reflow<sup>9</sup> Awareness, Phonics, and High-Frequency • Scaffolded support (i.e., lesson-Words, due to the domains' dependence specific, interactive elements)\*\* on audio or visual content.\* Non-embedded Non-embedded Non-embedded Non-embedded universal supports Educators can make the following Non-embedded accommodations are outside of the i-Ready interface non-embedded designated available to students outside of the include: supports available to students *i-Ready* interface: outside of the *i-Ready* interface: · Audio amplification Abacus • English dictionary (when Bilingual word-for-word Alternate response options dictionary appropriate) Calculator • Noise buffer (e.g., earmuffs, audio • *Magnification device*<sup>11</sup> Extended time breaks and flexible • *Native-language translation of* scheduling directions • Scratch paper (i.e., blank paper) Graphic organizer/reference • Student reads test aloud. • Thesaurus (when appropriate) sheet/checklist Human reader Human signer Multiplication table Scribe Screen readers<sup>12</sup> Tactile graphics<sup>13</sup>

- 1 Universal audio support (i.e., editorially vetted audio of text) is currently available in i-Ready Personalized Instruction either automatically or on demand by pressing audio buttons to support most of the text on screen across lessons. The Assessment of Spanish Reading includes universal audio support in Phonics items for Grades K-3, Vocabulary items for Grades K-1, Phonological Awareness items for Grades K-1, and Comprehension items for Grade K. In the other i-Ready assessments (not including Standards Mastery), audio support is provided for Grades K-5 Mathematics items, Grades K-3 English Language Arts and Vocabulary items, and Grade K Comprehension items.
- Audio description tracks: Students can enable audio description of what is happening visually in the Diagnostic Introductory Videos for Grades 3-5 by selecting the AD button. Audio descriptions are also available in all Reading Comprehension lessons for Grades 3-8 in which screen-reader support is available. This is the first in a series of ongoing releases to add audio descriptions to Diagnostic videos.
- Keyboard access is currently available with documented exceptions in i-Ready assessments. In i-Ready Personalized Instruction, it is available in all Grades K-8 Comprehension lessons, in all Grades 3-5 Phonics and Vocabulary lessons, in Spanish Grades K-1 Phonological Awareness lessons, in most Grades 3-5 Mathematics lessons, and in Grades 6-8 Mathematics lessons. Keyboard navigation is also available in i-Ready Pro's Essential Lessons in Grades 6-8. Additional domains and grades will be added on an ongoing basis. Please refer to the Feature Overview: Keyboard Access to learn about relevant exceptions.
- Contrast requirements: In i-Ready Assessment, we are compliant with WCAG 2.0 AA requirements with documented exceptions. All i-Ready Personalized Instruction lessons created after July 2019 adhere to WCAG 2.0 AA requirements for contrast. For lessons created before July 2019, we are compliant with WCAG 2.0 AA contrast in many places, but the exceptions have not been extensively documented. For the majority of lessons, global lesson navigation controls (i.e., buttons for backward/forward, pause, settings, and the progress bar) now adhere to WCAG 2.1 AA requirements for contrast. In i-Ready Pro's Essential Lessons, backward/forward buttons aren't used.
- Closed captioning is available on all Diagnostic interactive and non-interactive tutorials for Grades K-2, the tutorials and Diagnostic Introductory Videos for Grades 3+, and in all Diagnostic and Growth Monitoring videos embedded in passages. In i-Ready Personalized Instruction, closed captioning is available in English for English lessons and in Spanish for Spanish lessons. 100 percent of My Path lessons for Grades K-8 have closed captioning and/or text on screen. A small percentage of extra lessons (i.e., lessons that can be assigned by teachers but never show in the automated My Path queues) will still have closed-captioning exceptions. To learn more, please refer to the Feature Overview: Closed Captioning.
- <sup>6</sup> **Digital Math Tools** are available on specific items or lessons.
- Glossary definitions and Spanish translations for academic vocabulary and key terms are available in i-Ready Personalized Instruction lessons except for i-Ready Pro's Essential Lessons. Sometime in the 2024–2025 school year, we plan to release glossary support for i-Ready Pro's Essential Lessons in core numeracy, and we anticipate they will support both English and Spanish definitions. This feature is not available in i-Ready Assessment.
- Presentation of material for age-appropriate pedagogy and legibility includes the use of clear, concise, chronological directions, student-friendly fonts, easily legible formatting, graphic organizers, pacing/engagement controls such as chunking of texts, and "slow down" timers.
- <sup>9</sup> **Reflow** applies to *i-Ready Standards Mastery* and *i-Ready Pro's* Essential Lessons.
- <sup>10</sup> Due to differences in state and local policies related to audio support, we offer read-aloud support nationally as both a designated support and an accommodation. Educators can enable it for students in the platform. Educators should reference a student's 504, IEP, or EL plan to determine what accommodations are appropriate and/or use other documented needs to determine what designated supports are appropriate. For both documented supports and accommodations, educators should ensure they are referencing and adhering to their state and district policies around the provision of that support or accommodation. Reports will indicate whether read-aloud support was made available to a student, but i-Ready will not track/indicate if it was used as a designated support or an accommodation.
- 11 We have not tested the use of third-party built-in operating system magnification software extensively for compatibility across browser platform combinations. Educators may find the following documents helpful: For PCs | For Macs® | For iPads® | For Chromebooks™
- <sup>12</sup> Screen-reader support is available for all Comprehension lessons in English for Grades 3–8, in Vocabulary Context Clue lessons in English for Grades 3–5, and in i-Ready Pro's Essential Lessons for Mathematics and for Reading in Grades 6–8. Please reference additional information about i-Ready Personalized Instruction screen-reader support and refreshable braille displays. In most i-Ready assessments, screen readers can be used to respond to most items with documented exceptions. In i-Ready Diagnostic, i-Ready Standards Mastery, and i-Ready Growth Monitoring, exceptions include some tech-enhanced item types, and students may require additional assistance when they encounter items with complicated visual stimuli such as graphs and figures. When taking these assessments in Spanish, screen-reader users will encounter some screen-reader labels and announcements in English. In i-Ready Standards Mastery, alt text is now available in the majority of items with images or graphics. In the i-Ready Assessment of Spanish Reading, alt text is available where needed.
- 13 There are some instances when a student may request or require a tactile graphic to access a test item enhanced by alt text. Because the i-Ready Diagnostic is a computer-adaptive assessment, notification about the need for a tactile graphic cannot be provided to teachers before the assessment is administered. This guidance brief offers information about how to create tactile graphics on demand. We are actively engaged with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) to improve our delivery of tactile graphics to support students who are blind or have low vision.

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### 1.3: Presentation of Material

As indicated previously, the i-Ready Diagnostic has many universal accessibility features built into the program to help address the needs of students with specific accommodations stipulated in their IEPs, 504, or EL plans. These features include:

- A large, easily legible format for all items and passages
- Large, student-friendly fonts
- Clear and concise directions
- Universal keyboard navigation (with documented exceptions—see details in <u>Appendix 4</u>)

The documents i-Ready Accessibility and Accommodations Update and the FAQ: What accessibility features are available in i-Ready Assessment and how can they be enabled? include additional information. These and other i-Ready resources are available on our accessibility and accommodations resource hub.

# 1.4: Audio Support

#### **Universal Audio Support**

The i-Ready Diagnostic includes universal audio support that is professionally recorded, human-voiced audio for certain items. This audio support is curated by our creative and editorial teams to maximize pedagogical impact of the content. This includes some audio that is played automatically and some audio that students can choose to play "on demand." All audio can be replayed by pressing corresponding audio buttons. These universal supports are available to all students regardless of IEP, 504, or EL plan requirements and are directly embedded in the i-Ready system. Unlike designated audio support or read-aloud accommodations (see below and Section 5.1), universal audio support does not require educator assistance or management.

#### **Audio Support as a Designated Support or Accommodation**

Educators can enable embedded audio support as a designated support or accommodation for students in the i-Ready platform. Audio support in the i-Ready Diagnostic uses editorially vetted audio that is curated by our creative and editorial teams to maximize pedagogical impact of the content. Due to differences in state and local policies related to audio support, we offer read-aloud support nationally as both a designated support and an accommodation. Audio support is available as a designated support or accommodation for Diagnostic Grades 6+ Mathematics items and for Diagnostic for Reading items where universal audio is not already available. As a designated support or accommodation, audio support is intended for students with documented needs and must be turned on/off by educators via a setting.

Reports will indicate whether read-aloud support was provided to a student, but i-Ready will not track/indicate if it was used. Also, it will not indicate if it was provided as a designated support or an accommodation. (See Section 5 of this document for more information.) Additional information can be found in the Feature Overview: Audio Support.

#### **Audio Support Coverage by Grade and Domain**

The table that follows provides an overview of audio support coverage by grade and domain. Please note that the grade referenced refers to the designated grade level of the item, and because the test is adaptive, students may encounter items above or below their chronological grade level.

For more information about audio support in the i-Ready Diagnostic, please reference Section 5 of this document or the Feature Overview: Audio Support.



#### Availability of Audio Support by Grades and Domains in Diagnostic Items

In the table below:

Item Grade = Designated grade level of the item. Because the test is adaptive, students may encounter items above or below their chronological grade level.

U = Universal Support

DS/A = Designated Support or Accommodation (Due to differences in state and local policies related to audio support, we offer read-aloud support nationally as both a designated support and an accommodation. See Section 5 of this document for more information about enabling this support.)

Item Grades/ Domains	Phonological Awareness	Phonics	High- Frequency Words	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Math (All Domains)
K	U	U	U	U	U	U
1	U	U	U	U	U and/or DS/A*†	U
2	N/A	U	U	Partial*	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	U
3	N/A	U	N/A	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	U
4	N/A	N/A	N/A	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	U
5	N/A	N/A	N/A	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	U
6+	N/A	N/A	N/A	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	DS/A <sup>†</sup>	DS/A <sup>†</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>Some Grade 1 and Grade 2 passages and items include audio support to provide transitional questions in the bank when students at a Grade 1 or Grade 2 reading level may need support with reading/decoding the written text but are able to comprehend the text when it is read aloud. Other Grade 1 or Grade 2 questions do not include any audio support for when students can read/decode successfully on their own. For Grade 1 or 2 items that don't have universal audio, students with documented needs can access read-aloud support as a designated support or accommodation.

 $^\dagger$ Read-aloud support is intended for students with documented needs. Due to differences in state and local policies related to audio support, we offer read-aloud support nationally as both a designated support and an accommodation. The Read Aloud option either with or without audio support of reading passages is available in the i-Ready platform to be used in accordance with state or local policy.

When provided as a designated support or accommodation, audio support must be turned on/off by educators with permissions to edit Diagnostic settings via a setting titled "Read Aloud" on the educator dashboard. Read Aloud can be enabled at the class, Report Group, or student level. Educators with Teacher (i.e., All Assessment and Diagnostic) permissions will have access to turning on this setting for their students. Similarly, individuals with District Managing Admin, District Admin, School Managing Admin, and School Admin permissions can also edit this setting. Individuals with Teacher (Standard), Teacher (Standards Mastery), District Staff, or School Staff permissions can view but not edit this setting.

Universal audio support does not require additional hardware or software (beyond a standard computer speaker or headphones). The embedded audio support in the i-Ready Diagnostic cannot be slowed or accelerated, and it does not read aloud alternative text for user interface features and test item images. For more information on screen-reader support, which reads aloud alternative text, see Section 2.2. For more information on text-to-speech and/or test-read/ read-aloud accommodations, see <u>Section 5</u>.

# 1.5: i-Ready Diagnostic and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

The i-Ready Diagnostic meets WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards with limited documented exceptions and the majority of WCAG 2.1 and Level 2.2 Level AA criteria with documented exceptions. Appendix 4 of this document provides detailed information about coverage and exceptions. Further information on i-Ready's WCAG documentation is available from your i-Ready Partner Success Manager, and further information about WCAG is available from the W3C® WAI. W3C° is a trademark (registered in numerous countries) of the World Wide Web Consortium; marks of W3C are registered and held by its host institutions MIT, ERCIM, Keio, and Beihang.



# **Section 2:** Accommodations Features and Processes for Students Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

#### 2.1: General Guidance

The *i-Ready Diagnostic* supports a wide range of industry-standard accommodation tools for students who are blind or have low vision. We recommend educators supporting students who are blind or have low vision review the sections below to plan for providing additional support as needed.

For students who are blind or have low vision who are not users of screen readers, a proctor may read the text and describe other on-screen material such as images as needed. In addition to the supported technologies detailed below, there are other options available that may meet the needs of some students without the use of additional technology or process changes. The following options could be helpful for students:

- A larger monitor (or dual monitors)—The size that works best will depend on the individual (24-inch to 27-inch screens seem to be the most common).
- Increased DPI (i.e., dots per inch) from standard 100% to something larger—This maintains the aspect ratio but makes everything very large (some trial and error may be needed to find what works best).
- **Built-in "magnify" option in the operating system**—With larger monitors, this can prove useful to some students to reduce scrolling (see <a href="Appendix 2">Appendix 2</a> for more detail).\*
- Third-party screen magnification software (MAGic®, ZoomText® Magnifier, etc.)—This type of software may provide the custom tools to adjust the settings to suit the needs of the individual.\*
- Use of a supported third-party screen reader (i.e., JAWS®, NVDA, or VoiceOver)\*

\*Please note that except for JAWS on Google Chrome™, NVDA on Firefox®, and VoiceOver on Safari®, Curriculum Associates has not extensively tested the third-party and operating system solutions across all supported browsers and platforms, and we cannot make any claims to their reliability and usability with *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

#### 2.2: Screen Readers

#### i-Ready Diagnostic's Screen-Reader Support

The *i-Ready Diagnostic* is compatible with select screen readers with documented exceptions, as detailed in <u>Appendix 4</u>. This compatibility began at the start of the 2019–2020 school year to provide students with more independence while taking the *i-Ready Diagnostic*. Students who are comfortable using screen readers will likely be able to independently take most parts of the test without educator assistance. However, some students may continue to require additional assistance from educators, including those students who encounter items with graphics that require a tactile alternative, item types with documented exceptions, and embedded videos without audio description tracks.

Please see next page for additional information.

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#### **Alternative Text and Tactile Graphics**

The user interface elements and test item images used in the *i-Ready Diagnostic* have been enhanced with alternative text. This alternative text provides the information that students will need to answer the related questions if they cannot see the images. This text does not appear on screen visually. It can be read using the supported screen-reader software (i.e., JAWS, NVDA, and VoiceOver).

Some test questions—including those that are heavily dependent on complex graphics—will require an educator to supply the student with a tactile graphic or manipulative. For items that require a tactile graphic, the alternative text will briefly tell the student that there is a graphic and direct the student to ask their teacher for a tactile graphic.

In some instances, alternative text is provided for complex graphics. That may be sufficient for some students, but a tactile graphic may be helpful to others. In this case, the alternative text will end with the following language: "A tactile graphic may help with this question."

Due to the computer-adaptive nature of the *i-Ready Diagnostic*, it is not possible to know which items a student will be served in advance, so notification about the need for a tactile graphic cannot be provided in advance of test administration. We recommend that educators who support students who use screen readers have relevant materials/ technology available to create tactile graphics on demand. Please see *i-Ready Diagnostic* Tactile Graphics Guidance for information about how to create tactile graphics on demand. There may be items with which alternative text is insufficient and a tactile graphic or manipulative cannot be provided. In this case, a teacher can advise a student to select a random answer to bypass the item. It is important for teachers to note which item was bypassed and take that into consideration when analyzing the student's score report. We know this situation puts stress on students and teachers, and we are actively engaged with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) to improve our delivery of tactile graphics to support students who are blind or have low vision.

For additional details on *i-Ready Diagnostic*'s implementation of alternative text, see the sections below as well as Appendix 1.

#### How can screen-reader users interrupt audio that automatically plays on the Diagnostic?

Currently, screen-reader users (and all users) can press the escape key to interrupt playback of audio (including that which automatically plays, as outlined in <u>Section 1.4</u>). We recommend instructing screen-reader users in advance of this functionality, as audio playback may at times interfere with screen-reader audio.

#### Is the screen reader compatible with all the domains measured by the i-Ready Diagnostic?

Starting in the 2024–2025 school year, educators have the ability to manually exempt students from foundational Reading domains, such as Phonics and High-Frequency Words, which may be visual dependent. For more information, please reference Section 6.

#### Is the screen reader compatible with all images on the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Mathematics in Spanish?

Alternative text is available in Spanish for images in the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Mathematics in Spanish. However, screen-reader supports, such as screen reader—only labels and announcements, have not been transadapted into Spanish and will be read in English by the screen readers.



#### Screen Readers Tested with i-Ready Diagnostic

The JAWS screen-reader software works with Windows® (best used with Google Chrome) and requires purchasing a license. Information about purchasing options is available for educators at Freedom Scientific's online store.

The following screen-reader software is available for both Windows and Mac at no additional cost:

- Windows (best used with Firefox):
  - NVDA
  - MathPlayer™
- · MathPlayer is required to read any mathematics formatted as Mathematical Markup Language (MathML) using NVDA. Students may encounter this type of mathematics in Grades 1 and higher.
- · Mac (best used with Safari):
  - VoiceOver

For more information about these screen readers, see:

- Surfing the Internet with JAWS!
- NVDA User Guide
- VoiceOver Getting Started

For information on supported keyboard navigation options for each screen reader, see Appendix 2.

#### **Content Types and Recommended Screen-Reader Skills by Grade**

Students may encounter the following types of content when using their screen reader to access the i-Ready Diagnostic:

- Tables
- Headings
- Lists
- MathML (For additional information on MathML, see <u>Appendix 3.</u>)
- Images with alternative text and/or long descriptions
- Dialog boxes

The table below outlines helpful screen-reader skills by grade level.

Grades	Helpful Screen-Reader Skills
K+	Read item by item, forward and backward.
1+	Use tables with a screen reader.
2+	Use headings and lists with a screen reader.
	Understand long descriptions presented as headings followed by a description.
3+ (Mathematics Only)	Read simple mathematics expressions coded as MathML.
4+ (Mathematics Only)	Read and navigate grouped expressions coded as Math ML.

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# 2.3: Refreshable Braille Displays

The i-Ready Diagnostic has been tested with JAWS, NVDA, and VoiceOver with specific browser combinations. For areas of the product that have been optimized for use with screen readers, Curriculum Associates has worked with our consulting partner Perkins Access to test the validity and usability of refreshable braille displays. Each of the screen readers that have been tested can also be used with some refreshable braille displays. Educators should refer to documentation on the student's screen reader and refreshable braille display before determining if the accommodation is appropriate for the student. Further usability updates to our products will be informed by our partnership with Perkins Access, other accessibility and UDL advisors, and our internal Usability Testing team.

For students who are learning braille, educators may wish to consider using this type of braille output for those questions that test a student's ability to match a written word with a spoken representation of that word.

Keep in mind that i-Ready Diagnostic provides test content to screen readers as text, HTML, and MathML. NVDA and JAWS can be set up to convert MathML to Nemeth Braille on a braille display.

# 2.4: Color Contrast/Visual Design

This support does not need to be enabled as these features are built directly into the i-Ready Diagnostic. Examples of color contrast and visual design that will benefit students who have low vision and/or have color blindness include:

- Meeting the WCAG 2.0 AA requirements for color contrast for text against a background and WCAG 2.1 AA requirements in some places for non-text elements against a background
- Minimizing the use of colors that would cause problems for students with color blindness, particularly red-green color blindness
- Presenting items in a large, easily legible format specifically chosen for its readability

Contrast requirements for all new item development are established to ensure compliance in newly authored content. During an audit of our existing item bank, the sampled content met the color contrast criterion, however a known exception is the "selected" state for answer options. Additionally, because all illustrations across all items in the item bank were not holistically reviewed, full support cannot be claimed. Therefore, depending upon the severity of a student's disability, we'd recommend that schools have an adult initially sit with the student to monitor difficulty to ensure there are no issues that would impact the results of the test. See Appendix 4 for documented exceptions that may impact some students.

# 2.5: Audio Description

Audio description describes visual elements of video content to students who may need context if they are unable to visually access what's on screen.

In the Diagnostic Introductory Videos for Grades 3–5, students can access audio description by selecting the AD button. This is the first in a series of ongoing releases to add audio descriptions to Diagnostic videos, and this work will continue on an ongoing basis.

# 2.6: Skip Foundational Domains

For the Diagnostic for Reading, at the beginning of the 2024 school year, a new student setting will allow educators to skip visual-dependent domains (i.e., Phonics and High-Frequency Words) that may not be appropriate for some students who are blind or have low vision. Then, students can access the Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary, and Comprehension domains. The overall Reading score can still be used to make general inferences about students' reading proficiency across the domains that are assessed.

For additional information on how to turn on/off Skip Foundational Domains, please see Section 6.



# Section 3: Accommodations Features and Processes for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

#### 3.1: General Guidance

All audio is optional in the i-Ready Diagnostic for Mathematics, and we recommend the use of this assessment with students who are deaf or hard of hearing who can read. In the i-Ready Diagnostic for Reading, Grade K Comprehension items include universal audio support, so the Diagnostic for Reading may be inappropriate for students who are not working above Grade K.

Please note that closed captioning is available in the i-Ready Diagnostic, with documented exceptions outlined in Appendix 4.

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may have the test directions signed to them. However, signing the questions and response options for the students is not suggested by Curriculum Associates, as it may undermine the validity of the resulting test scores.

The use of auditory amplification devices, noise buffers, etc. are non-embedded universal supports available outside of the *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

In all cases, we continue to recommend that a student's IEP, 504, or EL plan be followed.

# 3.2: Skip Foundational Domains

For the Diagnostic for Reading, at the beginning of the 2024 school year, a new student setting will allow educators to skip audio-dependent domains (i.e., Phonics, Phonological Awareness, and High-Frequency Words) that may not be appropriate for some students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Then, students can access the Vocabulary and Comprehension domains. The overall Reading score can still be used to make general inferences about students' reading proficiency across the domains that are assessed. For students who are not working above Grade K, where comprehension is also measured via audio, the Diagnostic for Reading may not be appropriate.

Skip Foundational Domains only applies to the Diagnostic for Reading. It is not available in Growth Monitoring for reading.

For additional information on how to turn on/off Skip Foundational Domains, please see Section 6.

# Section 4: Accommodations Features and Processes for Students with Learning Disabilities or Differences Such as Dyslexia

Although *i-Ready* cannot be used as a diagnostic tool to identify students with dyslexia, the Early Literacy and Dyslexia Risk Screener from *i-Ready* combines the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Reading with a one-on-one task-based system to screen for potential risk factors for dyslexia. Many states have detailed requirements for dyslexia screening. For more information about how *i-Ready* can help identify and support students in your state, please contact your partner success manager.

For students who have been identified as exhibiting risk factors for dyslexia or have received a formal diagnosis of dyslexia, the *i-Ready Assessment* suite has some relevant characteristics to help those students demonstrate their reading and mathematics proficiency on these assessments. Many of the assessments in the *i-Ready Assessment* suite engage students' auditory, visual, and kinesthetic pathways through multiple approaches, which can be beneficial to students with dyslexia or risk factors for dyslexia. Although these assessments are not instructional tools in that their primary role is not to teach students, they do engage simultaneous multisensory pathways within the limits of computer-delivered assessments. Some of the ways these assessments meet students' multisensory needs include:

- **Virtual manipulatives:** Many of these assessments have technology-enhanced item types that engage students with virtual manipulatives and tools, including:
  - Measurement and geometric tools (e.g., protractors and rulers)
  - On-screen number pads and calculators
- **Tech-enhanced item types:** These assessments include many innovative item types that involve kinesthetic engagement and leverage the value of a digital online assessment platform. Innovative item types include:
  - Drag-and-drop
  - Dropdown
  - Text highlighting
- **Audio and visual:** The assessments have universal accessibility features that address audio and visual sensory needs and are available to all students.
- Attentional anchors: For students who require support for the stamina of their auditory, visual, or cognitive
  attention, the assessment incorporates additional multisensory stimuli to anchor student attention, including:
  - Supporting images
  - Multimedia elements
- Other supporting elements: Students with dyslexia or risk factors for dyslexia may benefit from the *i-Ready Diagnostic*'s untimed administration, adaptive nature, and available audio support.

# Section 5: Designated Audio Support, Test-Read/ Read-Aloud Accommodations, and Text-to-Speech Browser Extensions

# 5.1: Designated Audio Support and Test-Read/Read-Aloud Accommodations

As noted in <u>Section 1.4</u>, *i-Ready Diagnostic* provides editorially vetted, embedded audio that is available as a designated support or accommodation for Grades 6+ Diagnostic items for Mathematics and for Diagnostic Mathematics and Reading items in which universal audio support is not already available.

Due to differences in state and local policies related to audio support, we offer read-aloud support nationally as both a designated support and an accommodation. The Read Aloud option either with or without audio support of reading passages is available in the *i-Ready* platform to be used in accordance with state or local policy.

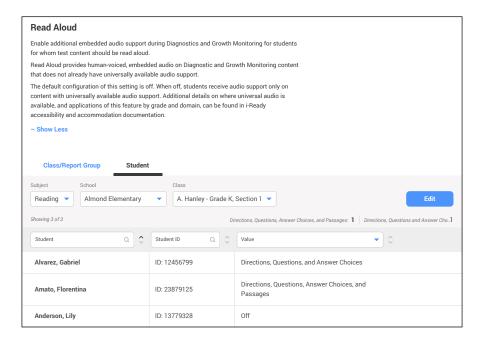
Reports will indicate if read-aloud support was provided to a student, but *i-Ready* will not track or indicate if it was provided as a designated support or an accommodation, or if the student used the support. Icons will indicate whether read aloud support was provided for directions, questions, answer choices, and passages () OR directions, questions, and answer choices ().

The provision of read-aloud/text-to-speech/audio support designated supports or accommodations may be appropriate for individual students for specific content. These options should be considered based on individual student needs and any IEP, 504 plan, or EL plan available for the student.

Districts should carefully review students' individual plans when making decisions about the provision of this (and all) accommodation(s), and should consider which accommodations were provided, and how this data will be used, when interpreting scores. For example, if the data is being used to help gauge performance on a state summative assessment, considering whether students will have access to the same accommodation on the state summative may be helpful in determining appropriate use of the *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

Read-aloud support is intended for students with documented needs; it must be turned on/off by educators with permissions to edit Diagnostic settings via a student setting titled "Read Aloud" on the educator dashboard (pictured below). Read Aloud can be enabled at the class, Report Group, or student level.

Districts can work with their *i-Ready* partner success manager to communicate setting preferences. The partner success manager can hide the read-aloud designated support or accommodation setting across your district or in particular schools. Partner success managers can also control the read-aloud setting separately by subject. For example, a district can hide Read Aloud for Reading while still showing Read Aloud for Math.



Many IEPs and 504 and EL plans include specific guidance about what parts of an assessment can and cannot be read aloud to a student. Considering this information in making accommodations available and/or conveying this information to individuals who are assisting with a read aloud is critical. Once an individual student is determined to have a relevant, documented need, the following features/supports can be made available to them via a human reader\* or embedded, editorially vetted audio to:

- Read aloud text portions of Mathematics items
- Read aloud directions, question stems, and the associated response answer choices of Reading items to students
- Read aloud directions, question stems, the associated response answer choices, and passages of Reading items to students

When audio support is enabled, audio buttons will be displayed on the relevant items and content for students to activate on demand. For more details, please reference the FAQ section that follows or the Feature Overview: Audio Support.

Please note: In some instances of testing, we found the load time for passages when passage read aloud is enabled may be longer than when passage read aloud is not enabled. This experience is due to the number and size of audio files associated with passage read aloud. When planning for test administration, we recommend ensuring each student has access to the minimum recommended bandwidth per student. Please consult with the appropriate person(s) in your district to confirm the latest system requirements.

#### Can I only enable designated audio support and audio support accommodations by student, or can I do it by class or school?

Educators with permissions to edit Diagnostic settings will be able to enable this setting at the class, Report Group, or student level.

#### Does the Read Aloud setting remain for subsequent Diagnostics once it is set?

Yes, the setting defaults to off, but once it is turned on, it will remain on throughout the academic year unless an educator turns it off. Each academic year it would need to be set, presumably based on that student's IEP, 504, or EL accommodations that year.

<sup>\*</sup>Educators providing accommodations, specifically human read aloud and scribing, need to be neutral in responding to the student during test administration and must not lead a student to a particular item response. Each student's response must accurately represent their choice in order to ensure valid, reliable assessment results.



#### Why am I seeing the option to turn on designated audio support/read aloud for Grades 6+ Mathematics items when I'm an elementary school administrator/educator?

Please note that the grades referenced (i.e., Grades 6+) refer to the designated grade level of the items, and because the test is adaptive, students may encounter items above or below their chronological grade level. For this reason, this setting can be enabled regardless of chronological grade levels of students in a school.

#### Why are some of my students hearing audio that does not align with the text on the page?

At this time, if a sentence is split across two pages, the audio will play in its entirety on both pages. In these cases, a student will hear the full audio of the sentence twice, once on the first page and once on the second page that the sentence spans. This only happens in Grades 2+ items with multi-page passages and, overall, will more likely be experienced by older students in older grade levels with longer passages. Please note, this will only occur when students have passage readaloud support enabled. We understand this is not optimal, and we are actively looking into solutions for the future.

#### Could read-aloud support impact test duration?

Due to the number of audio files and the size of assets that are associated with providing read aloud, these items may take longer to load for students using the read-aloud feature than for students who do not have passage read aloud enabled.

#### Does reporting reflect whether designated audio support/read aloud was enabled?

Reports will indicate if read-aloud support was provided to a student, but i-Ready will not track or indicate if it was provided as a designated support or an accommodation, or if the student used the support. Icons will indicate whether read aloud support was provided for directions, questions, answer choices, and passages ( ) OR directions, 

#### Can designated audio support/read aloud be turned on for an in-progress Diagnostic?

Please note that students will not have access to read-aloud support if the setting is turned on while their Diagnostic is in progress. To enable or disable this support for a student whose Diagnostic is already in progress, an educator can use the reset option available on the Diagnostic Results (Student) report (only option for first Diagnostic) or cancel and reassign the test (alternative option for subsequent Diagnostics), ensuring that the read-aloud setting is enabled prior to the student beginning the Diagnostic. If a Diagnostic is assigned but not yet started when the designated audio support/ accommodation is enabled, students will have access to the support without requiring cancelling or resetting.

#### Does content that contains only mathematical characters (e.g., numbers, symbols, and equations but no words) include audio support?

Generally, in both Grades K-5 items and Grades 6+ items, we do not provide audio for content that solely includes mathematical characters, as the meaning of the numbers and symbols is generally part of what is being assessed. There are some older items in our bank that still include audio for content that contains only mathematical characters. Any mathematical content with text/words will include audio support (either universally for Grades K-5 items or when designated in a student setting for Grades 6+ items).

#### Will all educators be able to edit the Read Aloud setting for their students?

Educators with Teacher (i.e., All Assessment and Diagnostic) permissions will be able to edit this setting for their students. Similarly, individuals with District Managing Admin, District Admin, School Managing Admin, and School Admin permissions can also edit this setting. Individuals with Teacher (Standard), Teacher (Standards Mastery), District Staff, or School Staff permissions can view but not edit this setting.

# 5.2: Text-to-Speech Browser Extensions

Although some third-party browser extensions may be able to read aloud some portions of the text in the Diagnostic, the use of these extensions is not recommended at this time, as compatibility and usability show a high degree of variance based on the item type, extension, browser, hardware, etc. For the i-Ready Diagnostic, we recommend using the universal audio support and designated audio support or accommodation outlined earlier in lieu of these extensions.

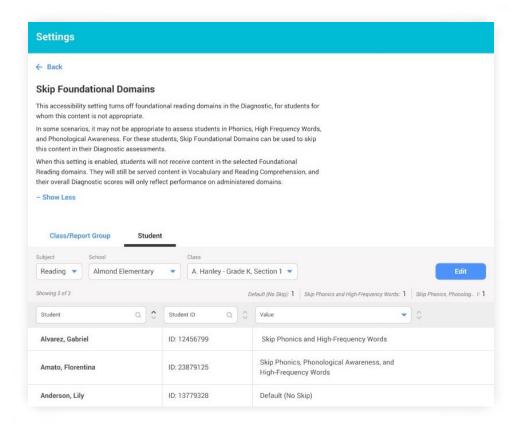


# Section 6: Skip Foundational Domains

Starting in the 2024–2025 school year, educators will have the ability to manually exempt students who are blind, low vision, deaf, or hard of hearing from foundational reading domains, such as Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and High-Frequency Words, due to the domains' dependence on audio or visual content.

Skip Foundational Domains is an accommodation and can be made available to students in accordance with their IEPs or 504 plan. Skip Foundational Domains must be turned on/off by educators with permissions to edit Diagnostic settings via a student setting titled "Skip Foundational Domains" on the educator dashboard (pictured below). Skip Foundational Domains can be enabled at the class, Report Group, or student level.

This accommodation does not apply to Growth Monitoring.



Please note: When a student takes the Diagnostic with Skip Foundational Domains enabled, a test duration of less than five minutes will receive a yellow Rush flag. The standard rule is that a student with a test duration of less than eight minutes would receive a yellow Rush flag.

# **Section 7:** *i-Ready Diagnostic* and Students with Severe Cognitive Disabilities

The degree to which students with severe cognitive disabilities (i.e., those students eligible for their states' Alternate Assessments, also known as 1% Assessments) may be adequately assessed by or benefit from the *i-Ready Diagnostic* depends greatly on an individual student's disabilities, proficiencies, and the target use of the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for these students. For example, educators may find usefulness in administering the *i-Ready Diagnostic* to some students with severe cognitive disabilities for the purposes of understanding these students' foundational skills. The *i-Ready Diagnostic* does not currently have an Alternate Assessment version built on Alternate Achievement Standards (commonly known as AAS). Additionally, *i-Ready Diagnostic* has not been evaluated for use with students with severe cognitive disabilities who are nonverbal.

# Section 8: i-Ready Diagnostic and Print/Paper and Pencil Accommodations

The *i-Ready Diagnostic*, like all modern computer-adaptive tests, adapts to each student's responses, personalizing their assessment experience. As students answer questions correctly or incorrectly, the *i-Ready Diagnostic* responds, adjusting the difficulty of future questions to match the student's individual proficiency level. The strength of this assessment is its ability to continuously adapt, therefore, a paper version does not exist.

In addition, our item bank includes various technology-enhanced items that can't be replicated in paper form.

# **Section 9:** Options for English Learners/Multilingual Learners

The Council of Chief State School Officers recommends that educators on a student's EL team, alongside the student's parents or caregivers, and the student decide the most appropriate and necessary accommodations.

For English Learners with disabilities, all team members collaborate to cite evidence of the student's accommodation needs and document those on the student's IEP, 504, and/or EL plan. We recognize that assessment parameters and laws vary by state. It is imperative that teachers follow the guidelines for their state, district, and school.

Consider the following criteria in determining accessibility supports for English Learners: literacy levels in the student's home language; education received before coming to the US (e.g., limited or interrupted formal education); time spent in English-speaking schools; resources available in the student's home language; and cultural background.

# Appendices

# Appendix 1: Characters, Formats, and Tactile Graphics Used in i-Ready Diagnostic Alternative Text

The table below lists characters and formats students may encounter while using a screen reader that relies on alternative text. If your student's preferred combination of screen reader, voice selection, browser, and settings does not read these as you would like, most screen readers will allow you to customize the pronunciation specifically. For example:

- JAWS: With JAWS running, Press Insert + F2 to open the list of JAWS managers. Select the Dictionary Manager from the list. You can also bypass the list of managers and open the Dictionary Manager at any time by pressing Insert + D.
- NVDA: With NVDA running, Press Insert (or customized NVDA key) N > Preferences > Speech Dictionaries.
- VoiceOver: With VoiceOver running, press Control + Option (or customized VoiceOver key) F8 > Speech > **Pronunciation**. Remember to use the function key (i.e., Fn) to activate F8 if needed.

Character (Symbol)	Grade(s)	Usage	Example Pronunciation: VoiceOver/Safari with Default Settings	Example Pronunciation: NVDA/ Firefox with Default Settings (Using the eSpeak NG Synthesizer That Is Packaged with NVDA)
_	K+ (Math Only)	minus	"minus"	"minus"
pt	4	pint	"point"	"p""t"
OZ	3–5	ounces, sometimes used to test understanding of the abbreviation	"ounce"	"oz"
lb	3–5	pounds, sometimes used to test understanding of the abbreviation	"pound"	"l""b"
4:15	1	time of day, sometimes used to test reading time from a digital source	"four fifteen"	"four colon fifteen"

#### **Tactile Graphics**

In some cases, the alternative text suggests that a tactile graphic or physical manipulative may be helpful or is needed. Please see the *i-Ready Diagnostic* Tactile Graphics Guidance for information about how to create tactile graphics on demand.

### Appendix 2: Keyboard Commands for Common Screen Readers

Screen-reader users who use JAWS, NVDA, or VoiceOver to navigate accessible areas of the i-Ready Diagnostic can use the information below for relevant keyboard shortcuts.

JAWS for Windows Keyboard Shortcuts—Best Used with Chrome Browser: Screen-reader users may reference information on JAWS keyboard shortcuts.

NVDA for Windows Keyboard Shortcuts—Best Used with Firefox Browser: Please note that some keyboard shortcuts require using the NVDA modifier key. Additional information about the NVDA modifier key and keyboard shortcuts in NVDA are available in the NVDA User Guide.

VoiceOver for Mac Keyboard Shortcuts—Best Used with Safari Browser: Please note that keyboard accessibility is NOT enabled by default on a Mac. To set up a Mac for students who rely on keyboard access, or to set up a Mac to try keyboard access as your students will experience it, keyboard accessibility can be enabled as follows:

#### How to Enable Tabbing for Keyboard Navigation in Safari:

- 1. Open the Safari browser.
- 2. Click on the Safari menu.
- 3. Select Preferences.
- 4. Select the Advanced tab.
- 5. Select the checkbox next to "Press tab to highlight each item on a webpage."

#### **How to Enable Tabbing for Keyboard Navigation in System Preferences**



- 1. Open System Preferences.
- 2. Select Keyboard.
- 3. Select the **Shortcuts** tab.
- 4. Select the checkbox for "Use keyboard navigation to move focus between controls."
- 5. The macOS® User Guide provides additional information.

#### **How to Enable VoiceOver on Mac**



- 1. Open System Preferences.
- 2. Select Accessibility.
- 3. Open the **VoiceOver** section.
- 4. Select the checkbox for "Enable VoiceOver" to turn on VoiceOver, or unselect the checkbox to turn it off.

**Hint:** You can also use Command + F5 to turn VoiceOver on or off. Additionally, on newer MacBooks® with Touch ID®, you can turn VoiceOver on or off by pressing and holding the command key while triple-pressing Touch ID. Additional information about the Accessibility Options panel on Mac is

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available here.

#### Reading and Navigation—General Keyboard Shortcuts

Please note that VoiceOver uses the **Control + Option** keys before each command. The combination is referred to as **VO** in the keyboard shortcuts, which can be found in this guide to VoiceOver commands and gestures.

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### Appendix 3: i-Ready Diagnostic—MathML

#### How to Read MathML in NVDA with Firefox and MathPlayer

- To enter mathematics, use Insert + Alt + M.
- To explore in more detail, use the down arrow.
- To explore in less detail, use the **up arrow**.
- When mathematics content is encountered, the full equation will be read.
- To go to the previous or next item/segment, use the left arrow or right arrow.
- To exit mathematics, press the **Esc. key**.

#### How to Read MathML in JAWS with Chrome

- To enter mathematics, press **space** or **enter** while on the math.
- To explore in more detail, use the down arrow.
- To explore in less detail, use the **up arrow**.
- When mathematics content is encountered, the full equation will be read.
- To go to the previous or next item/segment, use the **left arrow** or **right arrow**.
- To exit mathematics, press the Esc. key or Alt + F4.

#### How to Read MathML in VoiceOver with Safari

Mathematics navigation is the same as the default navigation:

- To explore in more detail, use control + option (or customized VoiceOver key) shift + down arrow.
- To explore in less detail, use control + option (or customized VoiceOver key) shift + up arrow.
- To go to previous or next item, use control + option (or customized VoiceOver key) left arrow or right arrow.

# Appendix 4: Coverage/Exceptions

Below is information on the coverage and documented exceptions for various universal accessibility and accommodations-related features available in *i-Ready Diagnostic*:

#### **Keyboard Navigation**

- Available for the system overall and supported in the following:
  - Multiple choice, pulldown menu (Math), number line (Math) item types
  - Reading passages
  - Digital Math Tools—calculator and hundreds chart
- Ongoing improvements to keyboard support are in progress for drag-and-drop (Reading) and short answer (Math) item types. There are known irregularities in the tab order when accessing the number pad on short-answer items.

#### **Exceptions:**

- · Highlight text (Reading) item types
- Digital Math Tools—ruler, protractor, counters, base-ten blocks, coordinate grid, unit squares, and unit cubes

#### **Closed Captioning**

 Closed captioning is available on all Interactive and non-interactive Tutorials for Grades K–2, tutorials and Diagnostic Introductory Videos for Grades 3+, and in all videos embedded in passages.

#### **Exceptions:**

• A limited number of Reading passages have embedded audio-only tracks that do not have captions or transcripts available.

#### **Screen-Reader Support**

- If relying on keyboard access, see the information on keyboard navigation in Appendix 2.
- Available in the i-Ready Diagnostic for Mathematics and for Reading in English
- Limited support is available for the i-Ready Diagnostic for Mathematics in Spanish (This topic is addressed with additional detail in Section 2.2.)
- Alternative text for images is available in Spanish.
- Other screen reader—only labels and announcements are available in English, but they have not been translated into Spanish.
- Available for the system overall and supported in the following:
  - Multiple choice
  - Reading passages, except highlight text within passages (See exceptions below.)
  - Digital Math Tools—calculator and hundreds chart

#### **Exceptions:**

- Screen-reader support is provided for drag-and-drop (Reading), short-answer (Math), and number line (Math). Further usability improvements are planned.
- Pulldown menu (Math) and highlight text (Reading) item types
- Digital Math Tools—ruler, protractor, counters, base-ten blocks, coordinate grid, unit squares, and unit cubes

#### **Color Contrast for Text**

• Text on buttons in their default unselected state, question text, and answer text meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.

#### Exceptions:

- Secondary text colors (e.g., tooltips for ruler and protractor)
- Selected answers

Further information on WCAG is available from W3C. If you need additional information about i-Ready and WCAG, please contact your *i-Ready* Partner Success Manager.

# Appendix 5: Using Magnification Features in Desktop Computers

Magnifier makes part or all of a screen bigger so students can see words and images better.

#### **Enabling Magnifier in Windows**

#### **Turning Magnifier On and Off**

- To turn Magnifier on: Press the Windows logo key and the plus sign (+) on the keyboard.
- To turn Magnifier off: Press the Windows logo key and the Esc key.
- To turn Magnifier on and off using touch or a mouse: Select the Start button, then select Settings > Ease of **Access** > **Magnifier**, and switch on the toggle under **Turn on Magnifier**.

You can also turn off Magnifier by selecting the **Close** button on the Magnifier toolbar.

#### **Zoom In and Out and Use of Magnifier Views**

When Magnifier is on, zoom in and out by pressing the Windows logo key and the plus sign (+) or Windows logo key and the minus sign (-).

You can also zoom in and out using the mouse by pressing **Ctrl + Alt** and rotating the wheel on your mouse.

You can use Magnifier in three different views: full screen, lens, or docked. To change views, use the Views menu on the Magnifier toolbar.

- Full-screen view magnifies the entire screen. You won't be able to see the whole screen at the same time, but you'll see parts of it as you move around.
- Lens view is like moving a magnifying glass around the screen. You can change the size of the lens in Magnifier settings.
- **Docked view** works on the desktop. In this view, Magnifier is anchored to your screen. As you move around the screen, parts of the screen are magnified in the docking area even though the main part of the screen is unchanged.

More information about the Magnifier feature in Windows is available at Magnifier feature in Windows.

#### **Enabling Zoom on the Mac**

If items on the screen are too small, you can zoom in to make content larger and easier to see. You can zoom in on the entire screen or a portion of the screen.

- 1. To set zoom options, choose Apple® menu > System Preferences > Accessibility > Zoom.
- 2. Enable either of the following options:
  - To zoom with keyboard shortcuts, select "Use keyboard shortcuts to zoom."
  - To zoom with your mouse or trackpad, select "Use scroll gesture with modifier keys to zoom."
- 3. Decide where the magnified content appears with the "Zoom style" popup menu. You can display the magnified content in a window near the mouse cursor by selecting the Picture-in-picture option (which allows users to zoom in on a small section while still viewing the entire screen). You also can display it on the entire screen by selecting Full screen.

The <u>macOS User Guide</u> contains guidance on enabling Zoom appearance and control options.

Additional information on built-in operating system Zoom controls for iPads and Chromebooks can also be found at the links below:

- iPads
- Chromebooks