



Unique Accommodation: Guidance Document on Writer/Scribe CMAS: English Language Arts/Literacy or Colorado Spanish Language Arts Assessment* for Constructed Response

The writer/scribe accommodation for constructed response items on the CMAS ELA or CSLA assessment is available to a very limited number of students who have a neurological¹ or orthopedic impairment, which significantly limits or prevents the students' motor process of **writing**. There must be a direct connection between the student's disability and the ability to access the assessment. Students must have this accommodation on their IEP or 504 plan for instructional and assessment purposes. Only students who meet specific guidance criteria may use this accommodation on the CMAS ELA or CSLA assessment and receive a valid score. Requests for use of this accommodation on CSLA must include data from Spanish evaluations and assessments.

The writer/scribe accommodation is not intended for students with illegible handwriting or poor writing skills (this includes students whose spelling and/or word choice may be below grade level or who may have a language-based disability), students with behavioral issues to avoid writing, or students who struggle with writing due to limited instruction. It is intended for students who have significant difficulties due to a neurological or orthopedic impairment that affects the student's motor process of writing.

Follow the instructions in the Unique Accommodation Request form.

- Enter all the information on the Unique Accommodation Request (UAR) form for CMAS: ELA/CSLA Constructed Response.
 - Complete Criterion 1.
 - Identify the most recent date of the student's IEP or 504 plan. The plan date must be within one year of the submission date. CDE will not review UAR requests with an "Expected implementation" of an IEP or 504.
 - In the "Request" area, indicate if the request is for writer/scribe on:
 - CMAS ELA (grades 3-8) or CSLA (grades 3-4)
 - Confirm that all documentation has been submitted with the UAR form
 - Starting with Criterion 2, the selected answer indicates either "**STOP HERE**" or "**COMPLETE THE SUPPORTING DATA.**" If at any time the selected response indicates "**STOP HERE,**" the team should stop the checklist. "**STOP HERE**" indicates that the student **does not** meet the requirements to receive a valid score when using the requested accommodation.
 - In Criterion 2, a summary of the impairment's impact on the student's ability to access the constructed response **must** be provided.
 - In Criterion 3, a summary of the fine motor evaluation **must** be provided.
 - All supporting evidence, documentation, and diagnostic assessments submitted must be completed within the current school year.

¹ Note: qualifying neurological impairments impede access to the motor process of writing. Neurodivergent disorders that do not impede access to the motor process of writing, such as dyslexia and ADHD are not eligible for the writer/scribe accommodation.



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If all criteria are met, submit the UAR form with **supporting data from the current school year** to CDE for approval. **A UAR submitted without complete information, including current English or Spanish (CSLA) data and documentation, will not be approved.**

- In Criterion 4, submission data must be included. The Criterion 4 data attachment includes:
 - Scribe for computer-based or paper-based test
 - Student writing sample (unsupported) *and* keyboarding sample (unsupported) with the time it took to complete the samples
 - If unable to provide writing and keyboarding samples, submit an explanation of the student’s inability to provide the samples
 - Only submissions with valid documentation will be considered for approval

Do not submit the student’s IEP or 504 plan. Any IEP or 504 plan submitted will not be reviewed and will be discarded.

The state deadline for CMAS UAR submission to CDE is [December 15th](#). Districts may implement earlier deadlines for their staff.

If the request is approved, the student may receive a valid score on the assessment when using this accommodation.

If the accommodation is not approved and the educational team provides the accommodation during the administration of the ELA/CSLA, CDE will instruct the district to indicate that a non-approved accommodation was used on the assessment. This will result in the ELA/CSLA score being invalidated or suppressed and the student being considered a “non-participant” for the ELA/CSLA assessment.

*Prior to submitting a UAR for CSLA, please verify that the student is eligible to take the CSLA using the flowchart located on the [CDE’s Colorado Spanish Language Arts](#) webpage.
