ELPAC

English Language Proficiency Assessments for California

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing:

Preparing for Administration

Initial ELPAC Grades 3–12

Initial ELPAC Administration Notes

Notes to English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Coordinators and Test Examiners:

- This *Preparing for Administration* (*PFA*) document should be used to prepare for the administration of the test prior to the first day of testing. The *Directions for Administration* (*DFA*) is a secure document that contains information for use at the time of test administration. The *DFA* can be found within the Test Operations Management System (TOMS) and accessed through the CAASSP & ELPAC Website.
- Local educational agency (LEA) ELPAC coordinators and site ELPAC coordinators must electronically sign the *Test Security Agreement* and the *Test Security Affidavit* (found within the TOMS that can be accessed through the CAASSP & ELPAC Website) prior to accessing the test materials.
- Test examiners that have access to TOMS must electronically sign the *Test Security Affidavit* prior to accessing the test materials or administering the test.
- Proctors and anyone handling test and training materials that do not have access to TOMS must electronically sign the *ELPAC Test Security Affidavit for Non-TOMS Users* prior to accessing the test materials or administering the test.
- All test materials must be kept secure. *DFA*s may be reused for future administrations.
- Only trained test examiners may administer the ELPAC.
- Students must not be exposed to the test questions or content before the actual testing.

For Questions Regarding the ELPAC or for Additional Assistance:

- All users are encouraged to use the Get Answers web page to look up answers to commonly asked questions.
- Test examiners and other school personnel should contact their site ELPAC coordinator.
- Site ELPAC coordinators should contact their LEA ELPAC coordinator as directed.
- LEA ELPAC coordinators should contact their LEA Success Agent. Refer to the Success Agent Lookup web page to look up the name and contact information for the LEA's assigned representative or the Contact Us web page for all support options.

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Resources for Administering the Initial ELPAC

What's New for 2026–27

There are no changes for the 2026–27 Initial ELPAC.

Important Online Resources

This *PFA* contains hyperlinks to resources essential for test administration. Table 1 includes the URLs for the embedded links in this *PFA*.

Table 1. Resources for Administration of the Initial ELPAC

Category	Resource	URL
Accessibility	*Accessibility Guide*	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/accessibility-guide/introduction/manual-content/
Accessibility	California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/resources/preparation/accessibility-resources/matrix
Getting Help	CAASPP & ELPAC Website	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/
Getting Help	Contact Us web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/help/contact
Getting Help	Get Answers web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/help/get-answers
Getting Help	Success Agent Lookup web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/help/success-agent-lookup
Test Administration	Conducting a Practice Test Session with Students [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rF-kJXNypt0
Test Administration	Data Entry Interface (DEI)	https://ca.cambiumtds.com/student/?a=ResponseEntry
Test Administration	*Directions for Administration* (*DFA*s) [PDF]	https://mytoms.ets.org/
Test Administration	*ELPAC Online Test Administration Manual*	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/elpac-otam/overview/about/
Test Administration	ELPAC Test Navigation Assistant and Designated Interface Assistant Use Scenarios [PDF]	https://www.elpac.org/s/pdf/ELPAC--TNA-DIA-Use-Scenarios.2019-20.pdf
Test Administration	*ELPAC Test Security Affidavit for Non-TOMS Users* [PDF]	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/elpac-non-toms-test-security-affidavit/
Test Administration	*How to Start an ELPAC Test Session* [PDF]	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/s/pdf/How-to-Start-an-ELPAC-Test-Session.pdf
Test Administration	Initial ELPAC: Estimated Testing Times web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/assessments/elpac/initial/estimated-testing-times

Resources for Administering the Initial ELPAC (cont.)

Category	Resource	URL
Test Administration	Initial ELPAC Form Assignments web page	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/resources/administration/form-assignments-second-scoring-rsvp/form-assignments--initial-elpac
Test Administration	Moodle Training Site	https://moodle.caaspp-elpac.org/
Test Administration	Rotating Score Validation Process for the Initial ELPAC	https://www.caaspp-elpac.org/resources/administration/form-assignments-second-scoring-rsvp/rsvp
Test Administration	Teacher Hand Scoring System	https://ca-thss.cambiumast.com
Test Administration	*Technology Readiness Checker for Students*	https://trcs.ets.org/
Test Administration	*Test Administration Roles* section in the *ELPAC Online Test Administration Manual*	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/elpac-otam/overview/test-admin-roles/
Test Administration	Test Operations Management System (TOMS)	https://mytoms.ets.org/
Test Administration	*Using the DEI* chapter in the *ELPAC Online Test Administration Manual*	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/elpac-otam/using-dei/overview/
Remote Test Administration	Administering a Remote Initial ELPAC One-on-One Test Session [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXvUSHumO38
Remote Test Administration	Group Administration of a Remote Initial ELPAC [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17UqKsEcByo
Remote Test Administration	*How to Start a Remote ELPAC Test Session—Grades 3–12* [PDF]	https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/s/pdf/How-to-Start-a-Remote-ELPAC-Test-Session-Grades-3-12.pdf
Remote Test Administration	K–12 Initial ELPAC Remote Test Administration: Speaking [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ7qoZDj2U8
Remote Test Administration	Monitoring a Remote Test Session [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFdAkWBpLmE
Remote Test Administration	Scheduling, Starting, and Stopping a Remote Test Session [video]	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QukThDxsFzc

Test Materials

Assembling Test Materials

Before testing begins, the test examiner should assemble the following materials:

- This *PFA*, if needed
- Printed or electronic copy of the *DFA*
- Electronic device for the student or test examiner to access the test
- Electronic device for the test examiner to begin the testing session
- Headsets (if preferred)
- For the Speaking domain, headsets and splitter for the test examiner and student (if preferred)
- Access to the Data Entry Interface (DEI) if you plan to enter the scores during testing of the Speaking domain
- Access to the Teacher Hand Scoring System (THSS)
- A copy of the Student Score Sheet (if preferred), which can be found at the end of the *DFA*
- Pencil and eraser for test examiner and student
- The student's required logon information (Statewide Student Identifier [SSID] and first name as listed in TOMS), or for Listening, Reading, and Writing, logon tickets containing each student's required logon information for group administration

Additional Information for Remote Administration—Assembling Test Materials

Before remote testing begins, confirm that the student will have access to the following materials:

- Electronic device (for example, computer, laptop, tablet)
- Headphones

Test Materials (cont.)

Additional Information for a Braille Administration—Assembling Test Materials

Before testing begins for a braille administration, the test examiner should also assemble the following additional materials:

- Pencil with eraser and paper for students with low vision (Test examiners may use pencils to point, if applicable.)
- Scratch paper and pencil for note-taking, or braille slate and stylus, or other approved note-taking device
- For test takers who have low vision, screen-magnification software may be necessary (Please refer to the Accessibility Guide for necessary settings when launching with assistive technology.)
- For test takers who are blind, a screen reader with a refreshable braille device
- Perkins Brailler, if applicable
- Embosser, if applicable

NOTE: Job Access with Speech (JAWS), NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA), and voice-over may be used as an accommodation; however, please note that these programs may read everything on the screen depending on the testing device being used.

Administering the Test

Before Testing

Before administering the test, the test examiner must do the following:

- Make sure to have a copy of the *DFA* needed for the test administration.
- Make sure to keep the content of the Initial ELPAC secure. Information about items cannot be shared with students or other educators who are not involved in the test administration.
- Prepare testing devices and materials for the students and test examiners. Be mindful of the 30-minute session time-out that could occur between logon and sound check.
- Select a quiet area to administer the test. Eliminate distractions (for example, extraneous noises, windows, students who are not testing, etc.).
- Check the volume on the student's device prior to logon. After logon, the maximum volume cannot be increased.
- Read through the instructions in the *DFA* that are specific to each domain (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing).
- For the Listening, Reading, and Writing domains, produce logon tickets for the students in your testing session.
- In the case that a student taking the Initial ELPAC has an individualized education program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan that includes testing accommodations, or for any student with designated supports, be sure to set the appropriate test settings (for example, masking, etc.) in the student's profile in TOMS at least two hours prior to test administration. Test examiners will also be able to set some embedded designated supports (for example, color contrast, masking) in the Test Administrator Interface on test day if needed by the student. Domain exemption test assignments must also be set in TOMS if they are designated in a student's individualized education program (IEP).
- To determine if the student is able to navigate the Student Interface independently, students can use the Technology Readiness Checker for Students (TRCS). The TRCS is an engaging, game-like tool that allows students the opportunity to navigate through a variety of screens and create a storyboard. The movements the students use while navigating through the TRCS are similar to the movements used in a computer-based assessment. The TRCS is not an assessment, does not provide scores, and is entirely optional.
- If desired, set up any additional accessibility resources (for example, large mouse cursor) to facilitate administration of the computer-based ELPAC.
- If a student will require the designated support of a Designated Interface Assistant (DIA), that test setting should be set in TOMS prior to testing. A DIA can only be used during a one-on-one administration. For more information on a DIA, refer to the ELPAC Test Navigation Assistant (TNA) and Designated Interface Assistant Use Scenarios document and video on the CAASPP & ELPAC Website.
- If you prefer to enter the Speaking scores after the administration, make copies of the Student Score Sheet located at the end of the *DFA*.

Administering the Test (cont.)

Additional Information for Remote Administration—Before Testing

Before administering the test remotely, the test examiner must also do the following:

- View the remote administration demonstration videos located in the *Videos and Quick Reference Guides* section of the *ELPAC Online Test Administration Manual* and in Moodle.
- It is recommended that the cursor be enlarged prior to a remote test administration for the student to see where the test examiner is pointing.

Remote Testing: Individual vs. Group

- Speaking is always administered one-on-one for both an in-person administration and a remote administration. For the Speaking test, the test examiner is going to remain in full control of the web-based Student Testing Interface. The test examiner will display the test through a nonsecure video-conferencing platform.
- Listening, Reading, and Writing may be administered in groups, and students will log on to the web-based Student Testing Interface for testing. It is assumed that the students will have enough computer familiarity to be in control of the testing interface and share their screen in a video meeting with the test examiner. This allows the test examiner to monitor the student's progress and decide if a test needs to be ended at a stopping marker. If the test examiner determines that the student does not have enough computer familiarity to control the testing interface, the test examiner may follow the same logon process for Listening and Reading as they would for Speaking, logging on as the student to the web-based Student Testing Interface and remaining in full control.
- For remote testing, it is recommended to test no more than four students remotely at a time.

Administering the Test (cont.)

Recommended Seating Arrangement

Figure 1 provides three options for seating arrangements during the Speaking domain for the test examiner and the student.

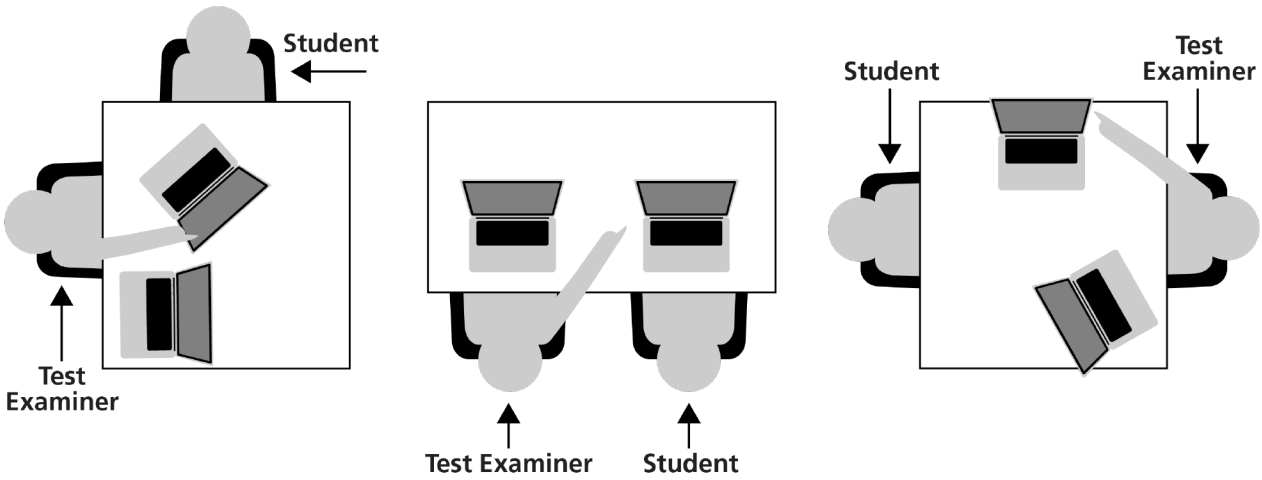

Figure 1. Recommended Seating Arrangement Options

Administering the Test (cont.)

During Testing

- The test examiner should greet students and read the information from the administration script in the *DFA* for that domain (that is, Listening, Speaking, Reading, or Writing).
- Only students who are testing should be in the room.
- The student may not use books, technology outside what is being used for testing unless used for medical purposes and documented in TOMS, or other reference materials during testing. The student's desk should be clear of all items except for the test materials provided by the test examiner.
- If headsets are desired for in-person testing of the Speaking domain, use a splitter to plug in one pair of headphones for the student and one pair for the test examiner so that they can listen to the test together.
- The universal tools (for example, zoom, line reader, etc.) introduced during test examiner training and described in the California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix are available in the Test Delivery System (TDS) for students who need them.
  - During the Listening, Reading, and Writing sections of the ELPAC, the test examiner should monitor students during the testing session and give reminders or recommendations to individual students, as appropriate, about the availability of universal tools.
  - During the Speaking section of the ELPAC, the test examiner should use the universal tools on the student's behalf as the test examiner navigates through the TDS. For example, the zoom is a tool that can make the graphics and text larger on the screen.
  - During the Listening, Reading, and Writing sections, the test examiner may act as a TNA to support students' interaction with the technology. If a student needs assistance typing their writing responses or selecting answer choices, pause the test, select the DIA non-embedded designated support in TOMS, and resume testing. For more information, refer to the *ELPAC Test Navigation Assistant and Designated Interface Assistant Use Scenarios* document and video on the CAASPP & ELPAC Website.
- To minimize the risk of unforeseen usability issues, if any adjustments need to be made to the sound or display settings, use the resources in the TDS rather than those built into the student's device (for example, zoom using the TDS, not the device's track pad or touch screen).
- In the Speaking test, when applicable, pronunciations are provided within the test question for technical terms and frequently mispronounced words.
- If a student needs to pause a Listening or Reading test and the pause is less than 20 minutes, the student will need to log on again to resume testing, and any answers previously submitted can be updated. If a student's Listening or Reading test is paused for 20 minutes or more, the student will need to log on again to resume testing, and any answers submitted before the pause cannot be changed.

Administering the Test (cont.)

- Verify the student's test settings in the Test Administrator Interface.
- On the day of test administration or during the test administration, if a test examiner determines that an Initial ELPAC student needs to have a designated support, the test examiner can select the appropriate test setting in the Test Administrator Interface. If the need to add a designated support arises in the middle of the administration, the test examiner must pause the test by selecting [**Pause**] and log the student off. Then, the test examiner must log the student on again and assign the appropriate test setting before reentering the test. The setting must be applied for each domain-level test in which the resource is needed. A list of embedded and non-embedded designated supports available for student testing can be found in the California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix on the CAASPP & ELPAC Website.

Additional Information for Remote Administration—During Testing

- Greet the student in a video meeting and read the information from the test administration script for that domain (that is, Listening, Speaking, Reading, or Writing).
  - For the Speaking domain, remind students that they should keep their camera on throughout the duration of the test.
  - For the Listening, Reading, and Writing domains, students will leave the video meeting to log on to the secure browser.
- Remind students that no one at home can help them with the test. If students have any questions, they should ask the test examiner for assistance.

When to Stop the Test

There is a stopping marker in the Speaking domain as indicated in the *DFA* by the NOTE icon. If there have been no responses or no correct responses prior to the stopping marker, the test examiner may stop administering the Speaking domain. Both the *DFA* and a screen in the TDS will indicate the point at which the test examiner may end the test (figure 2).

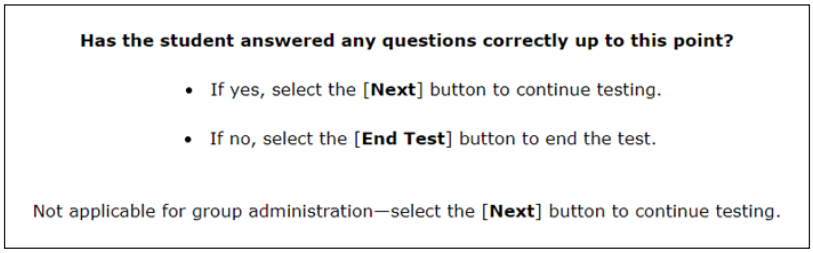

Figure 2. *Stopping-Marker* Screen

For the Listening, Reading, and Writing domains, the [**End Test**] button will appear at the top of the screen in the TDS. If the test examiner is navigating the student's computer, the test examiner may select the [**End Test**] button at the appropriate time. The test examiner should select the button only after the question indicated in the *DFA*.

Administering the Test (cont.)

If the test examiner continues past the stopping marker, they should use their best judgment to determine whether a student should proceed. This means a test examiner may decide to end the test after the stopping marker if the student is no longer responding to the test questions or the student is no longer responding in English.

Stopping markers should not be used in a group administration.

Pause Rules, Advancing the Test, and Expiration Rules

Table 2 contains information for domains that are computer-based.

Table 2.
Pause Rules, Advancing the Test, and Expiration Rules for the Initial ELPAC

Domain	Pause	Moving from Question to Question	Expiration
Listening and Reading	Pausing for less than 20 minutes allows the student to resume and access previously answered questions. Pausing for more than 20 minutes prohibits the student from changing answers.	A response is required to move to the next question.	30 calendar days
Speaking	When Speaking is paused and the test is resumed, the test examiner can access all questions.	Audio capture is not required to move from question to question.	30 calendar days
Writing	When Writing is paused and the test is resumed, the student can access all responses.	Writing response boxes may be left blank.	30 calendar days

- If testing needs to be paused, the student should complete a set of questions associated with a reading or listening passage before pausing the test. If the test examiner needs to pause a student's Listening or Reading test for less than 20 minutes, the student-testing device will need to be logged on again to resume testing, and any answers previously submitted can be updated. If a student's Listening or Reading test is paused for more than 20 minutes, the student-testing device will need to be logged on again to resume testing, and any answers submitted before the pause cannot be changed.
- Each domain test expires after a certain number of calendar days (refer to table 2). Once a test expires, it is sent for scoring.
- If a student's test is submitted before submission was intended or expires before the student completes it, notify the site or LEA ELPAC coordinator to submit an incident report in the Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System (STAIRS).
- The Speaking and Writing DEI will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity. Moving the mouse or selecting an empty space on the screen is not considered activity. If the system times out, log back on to continue entering data. When the test examiner logs on, the system returns to the last question (item).

Administering the Test (cont.)

Coaching and Guessing

- Do not show or suggest the correct answer to any question. If a student asks about a test question (**"Is this right?"** or **"How do you spell _____?"**), give a neutral response, such as, **"You choose the one you think is right and go on,"** or **"Just spell it the best you know how."**
- Do not coach the student. The test examiner should not provide assistance that will inadvertently indicate an answer.
- Encourage the student to do the best they can on all sections of the assessment.

After Testing

- If applicable, collect and securely destroy students' logon tickets.
- All scratch paper must be securely destroyed immediately upon the students' completion of the test to maintain test security.
- A student must log on to all four domains to receive a score report, unless a domain has been exempted in TOMS.
- Enter Speaking scores into the DEI immediately, if not completed during testing.
- Score Writing responses in the THSS.
- All scores must be entered in the DEI and all responses must be scored in the THSS within 30 calendar days of enrollment or before the end of the testing window.
- Even if a student did not complete or respond during the administration of the Speaking or Writing domains, the test examiner must still submit scores in the DEI and in THSS to generate a score report.
- Once all domain scores are completed, the official score report will be available in TOMS under the Reports tab.

Rotating Score Validation Process (RSVP) for the Initial ELPAC

Approximately 10 percent of LEAs in California have been identified by the California Department of Education (CDE) to take part in the RSVP for the Initial ELPAC. These identified LEAs return their scannable kindergarten through grade two Writing Answer Books to the testing contractor, Educational Testing Service (ETS), after all domains have been administered, locally scored Speaking and Writing scores have been entered, and parent/guardian notification of the results has been completed. Writing responses for grades three through twelve students in the TDS are automatically sent to ETS. This process helps to produce item statistics for the Initial ELPAC and validates the LEA's scores for that testing period.