Text-to-Speech for the Initial and Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California

What Is Text-to-Speech?

Text-to-speech (TTS) is an assistive technology that reads digital text aloud. This embedded technological accommodation allows a student's testing device to use a built-in voice pack to read aloud on-screen content, such as text and alternative text of an image, to the student during tests. Text-to-speech is available only for the Listening, Speaking, and Writing domains in the Initial and Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC).

Considerations for Using TTS

There are audio files provided for many items in the ELPAC Listening, Speaking, and Writing domains. TTS will override these files with the digital voice, versus the more natural language recorded in the default files. Refer to table 1 for the information per domain.

What Are the Different TTS Settings?

Local educational agencies can assign the specific TTS setting in the Test Operations Management System for a student with a documented need in an individualized education program or Section 504 plan.

- TTS stimuli and items: All item, passage, and image alternative text[1] are read aloud to the student upon selection of the *Speak Passage* or *Speak Question* option from the context menu.

- TTS passages: Only stimuli and associated image alternative text are read aloud to the student upon selection of the *Speak Passage* option in the context menu.

- TTS items: Only item, response selection, and image alternative text are read aloud to the student upon selection of the *Speak Question* option in the context menu. If there are no on-screen text or images in an item, then the TTS options will not appear in the item context menu.

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[1] Alternative text is designed to provide a textual equivalent of the image. Some images have limited alternative text to preserve the construct of the corresponding item or stimulus. Test examiners should continue to use the appropriate *Directions for Administration* during administration.

How Is TTS Accessed?

TTS can be accessed through the context menu, which is located at the top right of the passage (figure 1).
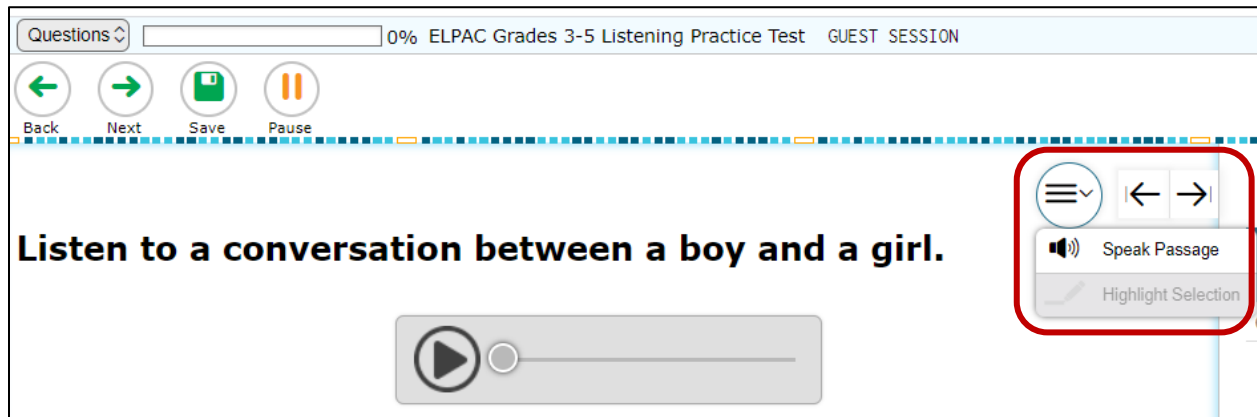

Figure 1. Context menu option for passage

It can also be accessed through the context menu at the top-right corner of the item (figure 2).

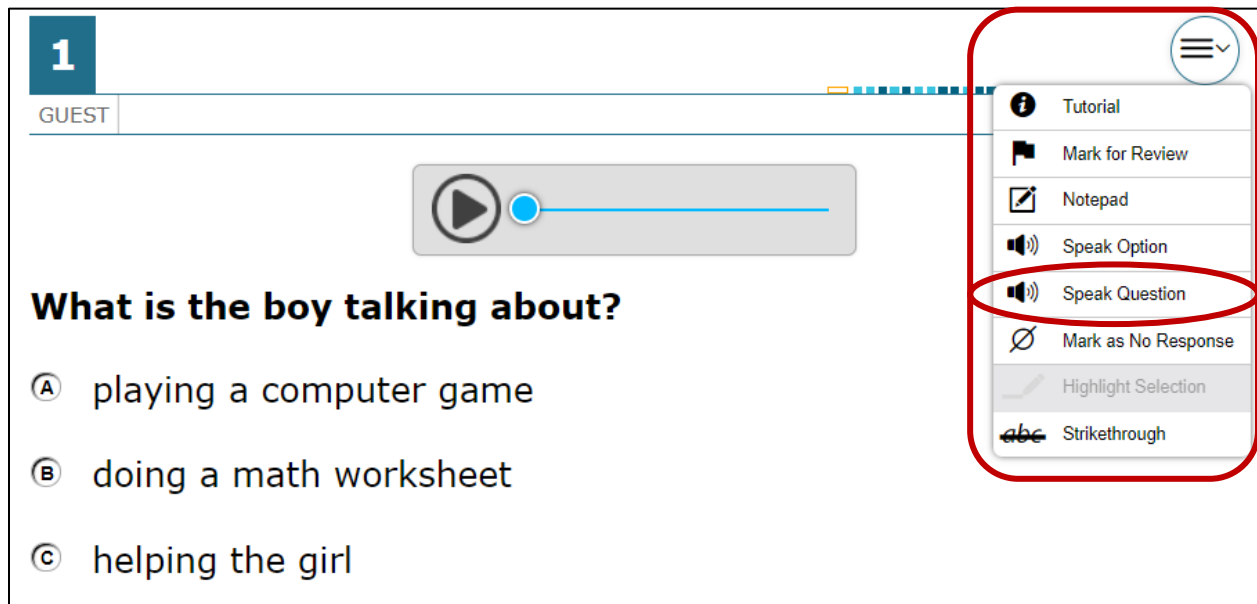

Figure 2. Context menu option for option or question

In the Writing domain, the student's written response can be read aloud using TTS, accessed by selecting the [**Speaker**] icon (figure 3).
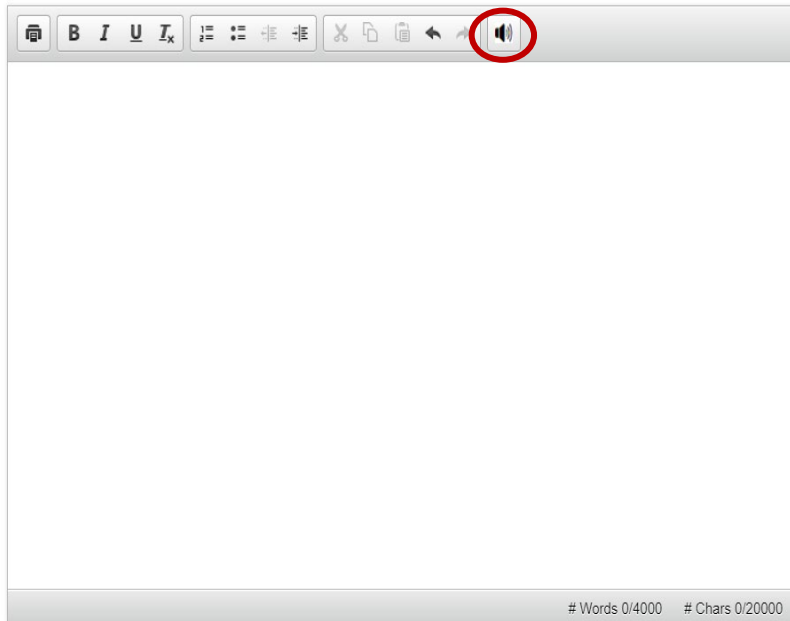

Figure 3. Option in the writing box for TTS

How Does TTS Work for Each Domain?

Table 1. TTS Description by Domain

Domain	Description
Listening	The Listening domain includes audio files of the stimuli or passage and items that will not be read aloud by TTS because audio files do not contain on-screen text. However, on-screen text and alternative text for images will be read by TTS through the context menu (figure 1 and figure 2). In kindergarten through grade two, some item answer options are presented as images and not text. The TTS will read the alternative text for these images through the context menu (figure 2). In these situations, the audio file of item prompts includes instructions such as, "Point to your answer or tell me your answer," that are not read by the TTS, as they are not included in the on-screen text.
Speaking	The Speaking—Summarize an Academic Presentation task for grades three through twelve includes audio files for the passage that will not be read by TTS because audio files do not contain on-screen text. However, the alternative text for the images and on-screen text are read by TTS. The Speaking—Present and Discuss Information for grades six through twelve task includes images with brief alternative text that is read by TTS along with the on-screen text displayed.

Table 1 *(continuation)*

Domain	Description
Writing	The Writing domain for grades three through twelve includes on-screen text, and in some cases images (including graphic organizers), that will be read by TTS. Some items include audio files that read the on-screen text, but not in the same digital voice used for TTS. A student can choose to listen to the audio file or listen via TTS through the context menu (refer to figure 1). A student's written response to a prompt can also be read via TTS (figure 3).
Reading	TTS is not permitted as an accessibility resource for the Reading domain.