

Statement on Proctored Testing

As more and more spellers pursue higher education, we are learning how to appropriately accommodate students while maintaining academic integrity and rigor. Testing in this setting is notoriously tricky for students with complex communication and motor profiles, but not impossible when proper accommodations are provided. However, it requires more than just accommodations. The student should be partnered with a highly skilled and trained CRP that is not prone to test anxiety, and the student must be prepared to spell with the utmost degree of accuracy and cleanness. A proctored test means that there will be a person watching and scrutinizing everything that happens during the test. Proctored testing is inevitable in college, whether it be for admissions, placement, or throughout coursework. To help students with college aspirations have a clear vision for what it means to be ready to sit for a proctored test, I've created the following guidelines based on my experience. These also serve as my professional criteria for my willingness to support a student as a CRP for a proctored test. Anything less has high potential for unsuccessful outcomes and trauma. Not only do I care about student success, but there are also implications for the larger community.

PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIP

Proctored testing has the potential to be a highly stressful situation which can lead to dysregulation, so it is important that both student and CRP have ample practice together in advance and that they both feel confident they are ready. A student must have a minimum of 3 in-person sessions with me to determine readiness. Additional sessions may be required to establish a relationship and to build the skills outlined below.

COMMUNICATION AND REGULATION GUIDELINES

OPEN. Can communicate openly and fluently with no prompting except for minimal nonverbal continuation prompts, like a slight head nod. Every poke will be called out/recorded during testing so must be able to self-correct. For math testing, "math openness" requires fluency in math spelling protocols.

FORM. Maintain appropriate upright sitting posture during spelling. Absolutely no movement of the board by CRP during active spelling.

ACCURACY. Pokes are clear and accurate enough that an onlooker could follow along during silent spelling. No skipping/gliding.

EFFICIENCY. Can spell continuously averaging at least 5-6 wpm.

STAMINA. Can spell openly, accurately, and efficiently with good form for 2-3 hours at a time with only occasional, short (10 min or less) breaks and generally remain regulated throughout.

REGULATION. Must have effective regulation strategies that can be implemented with minimal disruption to the testing process. Frequent, extreme, or injurious dysregulation may result in ending the testing session.

While there are many other factors to consider when determining whether to pursue higher education (personal reasons, desired outcomes, logistics, expense, etc.), body and communication readiness are an absolute requirement. So, in the process of working toward academic readiness and sorting through all the other considerations, if a student can attain this level of spelling, it is a good indicator of body and communication readiness. These are high standards, but if college is something a student truly desires, they should keep working hard at home and with support from professionals and practitioners that follow best practices. Everyone's timeline is different, so focus on incremental improvements and enjoy the process of learning and growth no matter the outcome!