

Using text-to-speech (Polly) Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite digital assessments – overview

What's happening

Polly is a text-to-speech tool that comes with the digital assessment platform that students use to undertake their assessments.

Polly will be available for all students entered in the Writing (32405) and Numeracy (32406) assessments in 2025.

Text-to-speech supports students who have low vision, learning differences or reading difficulties by converting text into audio so they can listen to text in the assessment being read aloud. It may also support students who are aural learners.

The school can still provide students with a reader for support during the assessments as a backup in the event of any issues with the assistive technology, so the student feels confident completing the assessment.

Polly was available for previous English Literacy Writing (32405) and English Numeracy (32406) digital assessments.

If you would like your students to use Polly you just have to:

- Let them know it's available
- Give them instructions on how to use Polly
[Instructions for using Polly](#)
- Encourage them to practise using it before the assessments [Find past digital external assessments » NZQA](#) (access code 0000).
- For students that don't have a log in for past digital assessments you can access the credentials at the school's NZQA portal via the Access Copyright Past Exam content and Past Digital Exams link.
- Make sure they have headphones available for the assessment/s.

When

Polly will be available for secondary school students and tertiary students participating in the 2025 Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite digital assessment for Writing (32405) and Numeracy (32406) event one (19 - 30 May) and event two (1 - 12 September) in 2025.

Polly is not available for the Reading (32403) assessment while the Ministry of Education is investigating the suitability of using text-to-speech with the reading assessment. However, a reader can be provided if the school considers the student is eligible for support from a reader for the Reading assessment.

We are hoping to make Polly more widely available with more digital assessments in the future.

How Polly works

- Polly is available for any student to use.
- Polly will be off by default which means it won't display when any text in the assessment is highlighted.
- Students who want to use Polly can turn it on within the assessment.
- Polly can be accessed within the assessment by highlighting text and clicking on play to listen to the text being read aloud.

Headphones

Students who want to use Polly will need to use headphones if they are sitting in the main room where assessments are being held, rather than in separate accommodation.

Support for schools/kura

Further information including FAQs is available on the NZQA Website [Text-to-speech for co-requisite assessments - NZQA](#)

Things to do before the assessment

1. Make sure your students have headphones for the assessment. Students can use any headphones that are compatible with their device.
2. Encourage your students to practise using Polly using past Writing or Numeracy assessments.
3. Give your students the [Polly instructions](#)

On the day of the assessment

Make sure:

1. your students have headphones for the assessment.
2. know to put their hand up and ask the supervisor for help if they have any issues with Polly.
3. know how to turn Polly on and use it to listen to text being read aloud.
4. know that if they want to use the highlight and notes function during the assessment they will need to turn Polly off.
5. organise a reader or writer for the student if they need extra support.

Questions

If you have any questions about Polly, please [contact us.](#)