

Key principles for helping children with SLCN access the phonics test

The issue	The solution
Background noise can make careful listening and speech perception incredibly difficult for children with SLCN	Minimise background noise and visual distractions
Tasks focusing on an area of a child's difficulty (i.e. phonics for a child with SLCN) can be extremely tiring and challenging	Deliver the test in short sections if necessary to avoid children getting tired and losing concentration
Some children will feel very anxious and lack confidence	Make the test situation as relaxed as possible to reduce anxiety and increase confidence, give reassurance and encouragement
The responses of some children with SLCN may be difficult to interpret	An adult familiar to the child should administer the test
Many children with SLCN will need more time to process information	Give extended time for children to process what they hear and to respond to it
Some children will struggle to understand instructions for the screen	Give instructions in short, simple sentences using words and ideas you know the child understands. Accompany instructions with gestures or any sign or symbol system the child uses
Some children will appear to 'fail' because they say the words incorrectly	Check whether the speech sounds the child 'fails' on during the test are sounds he or she has difficulty with in their spontaneous speech, for example, do they always say "tat" for "cat"

Detailed information on different types of SLCN/SEN has been produced to guide teachers through access and interpretation of the phonics test as well as giving more general information around literacy for children with SLCN/SEN.

For more information download [Communicating Phonics](#). This guide has been produced by The Communication Trust, a coalition of nearly 50 voluntary organisations with expertise in speech, language and communication. To download the guide please go to

www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/phonics