



[WWW.AIMVA.ORG](http://WWW.AIMVA.ORG)

## AIM-VA Overview

### What is AIM-VA?

VDOE, through George Mason University's (GMU) "Accessible Instructional Materials – VA" library, has developed an alternative system of providing accessible educational media under standards set by NIMAS to students who meet the federal requirements for print disabilities and who are eligible for accessing educational media under individual IEPs, as required under Part B of IDEA. AIM-VA, in conjunction with partnering agencies, will provide required accessible educational materials to students with an IEP at no cost to Local Education Agencies in a timely fashion.

### Who are the Digital Rights Managers?

Before a school can request and receive materials from AIM-VA, the division superintendent, special education director, or lead DRM must designate a staff person(s) to be a Digital Rights Manager (DRM). The DRM is a local school level staff person deemed to be responsible for monitoring and documenting copyright compliance within the school. Larger school divisions may elect to appoint multiple DRMs. The DRM must request, receive, and track the usage of copyrighted accessible instructional materials for students with print disabilities.

### What text formats are available for order by the DRM?

All of the formats listed below are available through the AIM-VA library system. In defining accessible instructional formats, it is important to note that AIM-VA partners with other agencies that also provide formats. The appearance may vary because of each partners' standards.

#### Audio Recording (Learning Ally)

Recorded Audio Books are audio-only human voice recordings that require specialized hardware—desktop or portable "players"—or Audio Plus-compatible computer software for playback. Audio Recordings are provided by Learning Ally, formerly RFB&D.

## Braille (DBVI)

Braille is a hard copy system of touch reading for persons who are blind that employs embossed dots evenly arranged in quadrangular letter spaces or cells. In each cell, it is possible to place six dots, three high and two wide. By selecting one or several dots in characteristic position or combination, 63 different characters can be formed. Braille materials are provided by the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

## Braille Ready File (.brf) (DBVI and Bookshare)

Braille Ready File (.brf) is a specialized digital text format used to create Braille or use with Braille devices. Braille Ready Files are provided by the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired and by Bookshare)

## Digital Talking Book (DTB) Daisy 3 (AIM-VA, Bookshare, NIMAS)

A Digital Accessible Information System (Daisy) Talking Book (DTB) is a digital or human voice recording of the full electronic text with the capability to navigate and bookmark sections of the book. DTBs provide alternate text descriptions of graphics within the document and are synchronized with the text. Materials in a DAISY 3 format are provided by AIM-VA, Bookshare, and NIMAS.

## Electronic Publication- ePub (AIM-VA, NIMAS)

ePub (short for electronic publication) is a [free](#) and [open e-book](#) standard by the [International Digital Publishing Forum](#) (IDPF). ePub is designed for [reflowable content](#), meaning that the text display can be optimized for the particular display device used by the reader of the EPUB-formatted book. AIM-VA delivers all e-pub formatted books via [Bookstream.com](#) unless otherwise noted during the ordering process.

## HTML- (NIMAS)

HTML, which stands for [HyperText](#) Markup Language, is the predominant [markup language](#) for [web pages](#). HTML is written in the form of [HTML elements](#) consisting of tags, enclosed in [angle brackets](#) (like <html>), within the web page content. HTML tags normally come in pairs like <h1> and </h1>. The first tag in a pair is the start tag, the second tag is the end tag (they are also called opening tags and closing tags). In between these tags web designers can add text, tables, images, etc..

## Large Print (AIM-VA)

Large print is defined as print for text passages that is larger than the commonly used print and font sizes from eight to twelve points in size. For most textbooks, large print font will be eighteen points. Large Print is created by AIM-VA and available on a first-come, first served basis.

### **Microsoft Word Document (AIM-VA)**

A Microsoft Word Document is optimized by using solid black, sans serif font to enhance legibility, and unless font color is needed for instruction and active hyperlinks. The file is left justified for readability.

### **NIMAS format (NIMAS)**

NIMAS is the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard. NIMAS means the standard established by the Secretary of Education to be used in the preparation of electronic files suitable and used solely for efficient conversion into specialized formats.

### **PDF – Accessible (AIM-VA)**

A PDF that provides the electronic translation of images of printed text into editable/readable text is considered an Accessible PDF. Stationary or portable computer assistive technology interprets the text and can be read using screen readers and text-to-speech technologies.

### **PDF – Fully Accessible (AIM-VA)**

A PDF that provides the electronic translation of images of printed text into editable/readable text and is optimized by adding "tags" to the file is considered an accessible PDF. Tags store information such as header locations, hyperlinks, and alternative text descriptions for graphics and substantially increase accessibility. Stationary or portable computer assistive technology interprets the text and can be read using screen readers and text-to-speech technologies.

### **Rich Text Format (RTF) (NIMAS)**

Rich Text Format (RTF) is a document file of text and graphics developed for easy transfer of documents between applications, platforms (i.e., MS-DOS®, Windows, OS/2, Macintosh), and different output devices. RTF files have a file type of "RTF." Software programs such as eReader (CAST) and READ:Outloud (Don Johnston, Inc.) read RTF files for text-to-speech access.

## **Who are the partnering agencies?**

### ***Learning Ally***

AIM-VA works with Learning Ally to maintain a statewide membership system for LEAs. Learning Ally, which has a long standing partnership with VDOE, will now become an Accessible Media Producer for all required digital audio books for AIM-VA. All LEAs will be given access to the RFB&D library of over 10,000 digital audio book titles through a new statewide membership system processed through the AIM-VA library. For more information on Learning Ally visit their website <http://www.learningally.org>.

### ***Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)***

DBVI is our lead state agency in the provision of services to students who are blind and visually impaired. They will serve as an accessible media producer for the development of Braille materials for students who qualify for their services. For more information on DBVI visit their website: [www.vdbvi.org/](http://www.vdbvi.org/)

### ***Bookshare.org***

AIM-VA began working with Bookshare.org in 2009 to create a collaborative partnership that creates immediate access to Bookshare through a statewide membership. The membership gives access to all .brf files available in the Bookshare library system. For more information regarding the formats provided by Bookshare.org, please visit their website, [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org).

### ***Don Johnston Incorporated***

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has renewed its statewide license on the assistive software Read:OutLoud 6, which reads digital books aloud for students with print disabilities. Developed by Don Johnston Inc. and licensed through George Mason University's Accessible Instructional Materials Center (AIM-VA), the software helps approximately 170,000 students in 1,900 Virginia public schools. Don Johnston created a Virtual Learning Plan just for Virginia schools. Included on this website is a Professional Development Tracking Form to assist in tracking Professional licensure credits as you complete training modules provided by Don Johnston Inc. Please visit <http://www.donjohnston.com/>.

## **Who qualifies to receive materials from AIM-VA?**

Students who have an IEP who fall within one of the criteria indicated in the 1931 copyright law further explained in the Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)).

## **What is the 1931 copyright law as amended (Chafee)?**

### **Chafee Amendment**

The Copyright Law of 1931 (1996) was enacted to allow alternate format creation by "a nonprofit organization or governmental agency that has a primary mission to provide specialized services relating to training, education, or adaptive reading or information access needs of blind or other persons with disabilities"

Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)) provides that "Blind persons or other persons with Print disabilities" include:

- (i) Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees
- (ii) Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material

(iii) Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations

(iv) Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner

## **What is NIMAS - What is the NIMAC and what will it do?**

NIMAS is a technical standard used by publishers to produce source files (in XML) that may be used to develop multiple specialized formats (such as Braille or audio books) for students with print disabilities.

The source files are prepared using Extensible Markup Language (XML) to mark up the structure of the original content and provide a means for presenting the content in a variety of ways and styles. For example, once a NIMAS fileset has been produced for printed materials, the XML and image source files may be used to create Braille, large print, HTML versions, DAISY talking books using human voice or text-to-speech, audio files derived from text-to-speech transformations, and more.

The separation of content from presentation is an important feature of the NIMAS approach. In most cases, a human will need to enhance the source files to provide additional features needed by diverse learners.

The various specialized formats created from NIMAS filesets may then be used to support a very diverse group of learners who qualify as students with print disabilities. To learn more about NIMAS please visit their website: <http://nimas.cast.org/index.html>

Copied from: <http://nimas.cast.org/about/faq/index.html#q>

The NIMAC is a central national repository established at the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) that will contain NIMAS file sets. It will feature an automated system for allowing publishers to deposit NIMAS-conformant files within the repository. The files will be checked to confirm that they are valid NIMAS-conformant files, and the files will be cataloged in a web-based database. Those who have been authorized for access will have user identifications and passwords. These authorized users will be able to search the NIMAC database and download directly the file(s) they need to convert to accessible instructional materials for those students who are in elementary and secondary schools and have qualifying disabilities. To learn more about NIMAS please visit their website: <http://nimas.cast.org/index.html>

## **How will VA students get access to accessible instructional materials?**

Before a school can request and receive materials from the AIM-VA, its superintendent, principal, special education director, or lead DRM must designate staff person(s) to be the Digital Rights Manager (DRM). The DRM is a local school level staff person deemed to be responsible for monitoring and documenting copyright compliance within the school. If you are a teacher or other user that does not serve as the DRM, you need to contact your DRM to

submit your order for digital material. A list of DRMs is available on the AIM-VA website, under "Find Your DRM"□

The DRM is strongly encouraged to order materials electronically through the AIM-VA Online Database housed at George Mason University's Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities. Please have the student's testing identification number, texts, and formats desired, ready prior to ordering materials through AIM-VA. Use of the student's name in the ordering process is prohibited.

The AIM-VA staff receives and processes the requests with the assistance of collaborating partners. The accessible formatted materials are either mailed or uploaded for access by the DRM who requested them. DRMs then track local use of copyrighted materials by authorized students with disabilities. The DRM educates the supervising teachers and related staff about copyright usage restrictions.

## **What happens when a student is finished using the accessible instructional materials?**

### **Retention and Return of Materials Policies**

Upon completion of use of the materials, the DRM must certify their compliance with AIM-VA policies and to each of the partner's policies. Additional information regarding retention and return will be posted in the near future.

Please contact the Help Desk at [AIMVA@gmu.edu](mailto:AIMVA@gmu.edu) or toll free 866-926-1879 if you have questions or need information.