



Take the Test: Frequently Asked Questions

Below are Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Assessments and Practice Tests. If you don't see the answer to your question below, please feel free to [email us](#) ^[1].

What is PARCC??

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a group of states that worked together to develop high quality K-12 tests in reading, writing and math that assess whether students are meeting new higher state standards designed to ensure college and career readiness. The assessment system is a set of modern learning tools developed by educators to allow students to show what they know and what they can do. PARCC helps students improve their skills and gain the knowledge to succeed in school and life by assessing their mastery of the standards.

What grades will be tested?

Grades 3-8 in all PARCC states and high school in most of the PARCC states. Each state has determined for itself which grades to include. There are no tests in grades K-2.

When will the tests be given?

States and districts set their own schedules, but generally the performance-based assessments will be given about three-quarters through the school year and end-of-year assessments at the end of the year. Spring 2015 is the first year the PARCC tests will be given to most students, although the questions were field tested in some schools in spring 2014.

How can my child get ready for PARCC??

PARCC tests will mirror the kind of high-quality work students are doing every day in effective classrooms, so there isn't anything special that students need to do. However, PARCC has released practice tests and sample questions so that students and families can become familiar with the format and types of questions of the new tests.??

How will PARCC assessments be used??

PARCC assessment results will allow parents, teachers, and students in grades 3-11 to know whether students are on track students each year as they prepare for the next academic material and build toward the knowledge and skills needed for college and the work place. The goal is to ensure that parents and teachers know when students need enrichment or more support. Parents will also be able to compare their own student's performances with students across schools, districts, and states.

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How much time will the PARCC assessments take?

Most students will spend about four hours each on the mathematics and English language arts portions of the test, working on writing exercises, reading real texts and solving real-world math problems ? not just filling in bubbles. And those will be broken down into smaller units of

about 40 to 60 minutes for most students. Schools must schedule a bit more time than that for the tests because it is important to make sure that all students have the time they need to show what they know and can do ? that?s only fair.

The testing ?window? may be several weeks long, but individual students will only participate in testing for an hour or two at most in a day, and only for some days during the window.

What types of accommodations will be allowed for students with disabilities??

The goal is for the PARCC assessments to be given to all students, except those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who will be given a modified or alternate assessment by the state. Some PARCC states are working with other consortia to develop tests for those students, and other states are working to develop their own assessments. ??PARCC is using universal design principles to make the new tests as accessible as possible to all students, including English learners and students with disabilities. Universal design is rooted in a set of principles that give all students equal opportunity to show what they know and can do on PARCC assessments. To learn more, visit the [accessibility accommodations and fairness](#) [2] page.

What is PARCC doing to protect children?s privacy and secure test results?

Data privacy and security are extremely important to the PARCC states, which have adopted a [PARCC Data Privacy and Security Policy](#) [3] and implemented a rigorous set of policies and guidelines to protect student privacy and the security of data. All contractors must comply with this policy. States remain in complete control of student information ? neither the PARCC consortium nor the federal government will have access to individual student information.

Why are there two parts to the PARCC test?

The PARCC states broke the test into two sections ? an early spring performance-based component and an end-of-year component. Each section includes mathematics and English language arts.

- **Performance-based component.** This is given at approximately the 75 percent mark of the school year. The reason: these take longer to score and teachers, students and parents should have information before the end of the school year. In English language arts/literacy, students write at every grade level and students are asked to analyze text, using evidence from multiple sources. In mathematics, students solve multi-step problems, using reasoning, precision, perseverance, and strategic use of tools.
- **End-of-year component*.** This is given near the very end of the school year ? they?re all computer scored, so results come back quickly. In English language arts, students read for comprehension and understanding vocabulary. In mathematics, they demonstrate understanding of concepts while solving mathematics problems.

**The high school English language arts/literacy exams will be given at the end of the grade (for grades 9, 10, and 11). The high school mathematics exams will be given at the end of a course. PARCC is creating two sequences of exams, aligned to two different math course sequences. The first is a traditional sequence of courses, including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. The second is an integrated pathway of courses, typically titled Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III. Each state can decide whether to require one set of exams for all districts, whether to allow districts to choose either the*

integrated or traditional sequence, or some hybrid approach.

Learn more about [what makes the PARCC assessments different](#) [4].

?How quickly will assessment results be returned to teachers? ?

PARCC's goal is to have data from the performance-based assessment and end-of-year assessment returned before the end of the school year, except in the first year. (As with all tests of its kind, standard-setting for a new test cannot occur until after the first set of students complete them.)?

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[1] <mailto:questions@parcconline.org?subject=%5BTakeTheTest%20FAQ%5D>

[2] <http://parcconline.org/accessibility-accommodations-and-fairness>

[3] <http://parcconline.org/data-privacy-security>

[4] <http://www.parcconline.org/take-the-test/a-different-kind-of-test>