



PARCC Sample Test Questions Now Ready for Computer Practice

Washington, D.C. -- January 22, 2014 -- Teachers in 18 states and the District of Columbia have new resources to help them prepare their students for upcoming field tests. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers has posted sample test items for every grade on the testing platform students will use when taking the field test later this spring.

This means teachers, students, parents and others will be able to engage with the sample items using computer-based tools such as drag-and-drop, multiple select, text highlighting, and an equation builder. PARCC also released online tutorials that demonstrate how students will navigate the test; how to use the computer-based tools; and features that make the test more accessible for all students, including those with disabilities and English learners.

"This spring's field test will allow us to try out PARCC test questions, ensure the questions are aligned to the content area they cover, and build the best test we can," said Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Mitchell D. Chester, who serves as chair of the PARCC Governing Board. "Today's release of fully functional sample test questions will allow schools and students to experience and become comfortable with the new testing format in advance of the field test."

"The educational value and the quality of the test items really becomes evident when you see the items on the technology platform they were intended for," said Laura Slover, PARCC's chief executive officer. "These new assessments are tied to more rigorous expectations for students that will prepare them for success after high school in college or careers."

The sample items were available previously as downloadable printouts. The sample items have gone through a rigorous review process to ensure they are of high quality and are similar to the types of items students will see when the test is fully operational in spring 2015. The sample items are available at www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples^[1]. To get a true understanding of the range of rigor, item types and functionalities, users are encouraged to try out items across all grades and to provide feedback. The sample items will not be scored.

The PARCC assessments represent a range of more rigorous and engaging test items -- from a new take on traditional multiple choice style questions aided by technology to longer tasks that ask students to show their understanding. In reading and writing, students will have to show they can read and understand complex passages, write persuasively, and present findings based on research. In math, they will have to show their work and demonstrate they understand a concept, rather than simply memorize a formula; they will have to apply math knowledge to real-world problems.

The field tests, slated to begin in late March, are an opportunity for students and teachers in the PARCC states to play a significant role in the development of their states' future tests. Hundreds of educators from all of the participating states have been instrumental in developing and reviewing the test items. Students and schools will not be scored on the field tests, which are designed to make sure test items and the technology function correctly, and to work out any glitches that might occur. PARCC will update items and tutorials in February based on feedback from the field.

Approximately 1.2 million students in 14 of the PARCC states -- roughly 10 percent of students in grades 3 through 11 across the consortium -- will take the field test this spring. All students in the PARCC states will have access to practice tests this spring so that students not participating in the field test can become familiar with the types of test items and the functionality of the online testing.

For more on PARCC, please visit: <http://www.parcconline.org> [2]

Media Contact: David Connerty-Marin, Communications Director, 202-745-2304,
dconnerty-marin@parcconline.org [3]

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