Accessibility Features and Accommodations for PARCC and DC Science Administration

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General Questions about Accessibility Features and Accommodations

1. ***Where can I find more information about PARCC's accessibility features and accommodations policies?***
   The PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual is now available. To view and download the entire manual, click the green *Download Full PDF* button in the top, center of the screen.

2. ***What is the difference between accessibility features and accommodations?***
   Accessibility features are tools or preferences that are either built into the assessment system or provided externally by Test Administrators and are available to all students. Accommodations are adjustments to the test format and presentation, timing, or the method in which students respond to test questions that provide equitable access for students with disabilities, students who are English learners, and students with disabilities who are also English learners. Accommodations must be listed in a student's IEP, 504 plan, or an EL plan (if required by your state). For more information on selecting, administering, and monitoring accessibility features and accommodations, refer to the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual. Accommodations and accessibility features for students taking paper-based tests are listed in Appendix A of the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual.

3. ***Do students with accommodations need to be tested in a separate group?***
   It is recommended to test students with the extended time accommodation (i.e., certain students with disabilities and English learners) in a separate setting to minimize distractions for all students and to schedule these students for testing in the morning so their testing time can be extended until the end of the school day, if needed. The human reader accommodation must always be administered in a separate setting (either one-on-one or in a small group).

4. ***What is the difference between Text-to-Speech, Read Aloud and Screen Reader?***

- *Text to Speech (TTS):* The computer reads the content within the assessment on the screen to the student via embedded Text-to-Speech functionality. TTS does not assist with screen navigation and is not intended to support blind or low-vision students.
- *Read Aloud:* The assessment is read aloud by a test administrator or proctor. The administrator uses either a Human Reader script for Mathematics or Science or applies the ELA/L audio guidelines directly from their own copy of the assessment using a login for computer based or paper based form that matches the same form as used by the student.
- *Screen Reader:* External assistive technology software that is used to assist a visually-impaired student who is experienced with screen-reader technology. Used by the student to navigate the test as well provide access to assessment content.
  Note: These accommodations/accessibility features should be used according to a student's IEP or 504 plan.

5. ***Are reference sheets/organizers allowed for students?***
Individualized graphic organizers, reference sheets, checklists, etc. are <u>not permitted</u> on any PARCC or DC Science tests. During administration, students will have access to scratch paper, which may be blank, lined, or graph paper. In addition, students in grades 5 and higher will be provided Mathematics Reference Sheets.

6. ***Why can't I register a student in the SR/PNP for both Closed Captioning and ASL or Human Reader?***
Those accommodations are supported by different forms. CC could be used for students that can read and do not require an ASL video to replace a Human Reader/Human Signer. If a student has a disability that causes issues with decoding of written text and requires ASL or Human signer, they can use the ASL video form or Human Reader/Human Signer. These forms do not include any embedded video with audio that would require Closed Captioning.

7. ***Do I need to provide highlighters to all students?***
Highlighting is an accessibility feature available to all students. For computer-based testing, highlighting in four colors is embedded as an accessibility feature available to all students in TestNav. For paper-based testing, schools should have a supply of highlighters available during testing in case a student would like to use one. Schools may also allow students to bring their own highlighters.

Questions about Human Reader/Human Scribe/Read Aloud Accessibility Features and Accommodations

8. ***Does the PARCC Human-Reader Protocol in Appendix B allow the test proctors to read the questions as well as instructions?***
If a student requires a human reader for the Mathematics or DC Science assessment (as an accessibility feature) or for the English Language Arts/Literacy assessment (as a rare accommodation for students with disabilities), then the human reader can read the full text of the assessment in accordance with the guidance in Appendix B and in Appendices I and J(Audio

Guidelines for Math and ELA/Literacy) of the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual.

9. ***Are the Human Reader or Human Signer for Mathematics or DC Science Accessibility Features available for computer-based tests as well as paper?***
Yes. A human reader or human signer for mathematics or DC Science may be available as an accessibility feature for students taking the computer-based test. While it is highly recommended that students use the embedded text-to-speech functionality in TestNav for computer-based testing or the embedded ASL video, for certain students, a human reader or human signer may be the preferred option. If a student is marked "Human Reader/Human Signer" and online as the test format on the Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile, the student must be manually placed in a human reader test session. Then, the Test Administrator will get a corresponding authorization ticket so the Test Administrator can conduct the read-aloud or sign via their own device. Human Reader for Mathematics or DC Science requires use of Human Reader script for the test administrator. Please refer to the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual for additional guidance.

10. ***Is an IEP/504 required for Text-to-Speech (TTS)/Human Reader for PARCC ELA and Math and DC Science?***
Text-to-Speech (TTS) for ELA is an accommodation and requires an IEP/504 designation. Text-to-Speech (TTS) for Math and DC Science is an accessibility feature available to all students and does not require an IEP/504 designation.

11. ***What is the purpose of the Human Reader script for Math or DC Science? Why isn't there a script available for ELA/L?***
The Human Reader script is provided to ensure Math or DC Science is being read aloud correctly to students applying the audio guidelines as intended and reading is consistent of difficult Mathematics or Science language. ELA audio guidelines are smaller, and because it is an accommodation, Read Aloud for ELA/L is applied on a smaller scale.

12. ***Is the Human Reader script required for Mathematics and DC Science? If a student did not receive Math or DC Science Human Reader Scripts because they registered after the materials deadline, can they provide the accessibility feature be provided without the script using the Proctor Authorization Ticket and the Math or DC Science Audio Guidelines?***
Yes, the script is required. This ensures the accessibility feature is delivered as intended. If students are not registered before the paper materials delivery deadline, an additional order must be submitted the human reader scripts for Mathematics or DC Science. Reminder: Allow for 3-5 days for delivery of additional orders after the order is approved.

13. ***Why is the Human Reader script secure and why must it be returned to Pearson?***
The Human Reader script contains a script of actual test content with Mathematics audio guidelines applied to ensure they are read aloud correctly. The scripts must be handled following all secure materials protocol. They include a security barcode and must be returned for reconciliation.

14. ***What is the difference between a Human Reader and Human Scribe?***
A Human Reader provide access to printed or written texts on the PARCC or DC Science assessments by reading content aloud to the student. A Human Scribe allows students to provide test responses to an adult Test Administrator who writes or types the responses directly onto the assessment for the student.

15. ***Can students request certain words to be read aloud on an as-needed basis on the PARCC Mathematics or DC Science Assessments?***
No. If a student requires text-to-speech or a human reader for mathematics, they will hear the full assessment read aloud. If the student has the accessibility feature pre-identified, in addition to the full read aloud, the student may raise their hand and ask that a section or word be repeated. Once testing has begun, they cannot ask for specific words to be read aloud in isolation. This also applies to students taking the ELA/Literacy Assessment with the text-to-speech/human reader accommodation.

16. ***What are the administration and technical protocols for a scribe accommodation?***
Students using a human scribe or external assistive devices (e.g., speech-to-text device) should be tested in a separate setting. Refer to Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation in the [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) for more details about administrative protocols.

Questions about Assistive Technology, Braille, and Large Print Accommodations

17. ***What is the difference between Assistive Technology Screen Reader and Assistive Technology Non-Screen Reader accommodations?***
Both accommodations rely on special tagging in content and security allowances for executable files so that assistive technology will work correctly in a secure test environment.

Assistive Technology Screen Reader is intended for students who are visually impaired and use a Screen Reader type assistive technology (e.g.: Jaws, NVDA, WindowEyes). The form has tools disabled (Highlighter, Notepad, Equation Editor, etc.) as they are not compatible with Screen Reader technology.
Assistive Technology Non-Screen Reader is intended for students with other disabilities who use any allowable assistive technology other than a screen reader (e.g.: CoWriter, Read&Write Gold, Dragon Naturally Speaking). This accommodation utilized the same form as the Screen Reader form but has the tools enabled as these tools can work with other some assistive technologies.

18. ***Do Refreshable Braille devices use UEB (Unified English Braille)?***
If a student uses refreshable braille, the student's screen reader that interacts with the refreshable Braille Device to determine the code. Students will have the option of selecting UEB. The student's screen reader has a setting that determines which braille code is used for refreshable braille displays. It is not controlled by PNP, Test Content or Test Platform.

19. What is the font and paper size for the large-print accommodated paper-based forms?
Large print booklets are 150% of 12 point (roughly 18-point font size). The form is provided on a custom test booklet using 14" X 18" paper.

Questions about Accessibility Features and Accommodations for English Language Learners

20. Which word-to-word English/native language dictionaries are allowed on the PARCC or DC Science assessments and for whom?
Word-to-word English/native language dictionaries are allowed as an accommodation for English learners only. All dictionaries must be published word-to-word dictionaries with no phrases, pictures, or definitions. Electronic translators are not permitted, unless a print copy is unavailable, in which case a unique accommodations request must be made.

21. On an English version of the math test, will students be allowed to respond in Spanish?
For Mathematics only, an English learner may respond in Spanish or in another native language only if this is identified as an accommodation prior to testing. For Spanish, this means the student must respond in a Spanish form (Computer Based or Paper Based). The decision to implement this policy will be made at the state level. Transcription will be necessary prior to returning the Test Booklet for scoring if the student responds to the assessment in any other language. Check with your state policy on transcribing and responding in other languages.

22. Does the Spanish version offer students the same rigor as the English version of the test?
The Spanish version is transadapted from the English base form. The same test blueprint is used for both English and Spanish. In addition, the Spanish versions of the test are scored on the same rubrics and scales as the English versions of the test.

23. What is the difference between "transadaptation" and "translation"? Why does PARCC use "transadaptation"?
In the past, many states provided tests in languages other than English where the standard grammar, conventions, and even idioms, etc., were not considered when rewriting test items. This is what we mean when we say "translation". This made test items clunky and unintelligible to native speakers. Transadaptation takes into account the grammar, conventions, idioms, etc. of the language the items are being rewritten into. Items are presented in a way that students who are native speakers of that language understand and can access easily; with no language barriers. The PARCC and DC Science Spanish editions and PARCC ASL video versions of the test are all transadapted. All of the proper grammatical structures with which Spanish and ASL are spoken are used. This utilizes best practices within the assessment industry for assessment translation work.

24. If the PARCC or DC Science exam is provided in Spanish, can students have it read aloud/spoken in English?
No, a human reader needs to provide the read aloud accommodation in Spanish; otherwise, the student should receive an English version of the test and have a human reader read aloud the test in English. Pearson does not provide both the English and Spanish scripts in the Spanish Human Reader kit.

PARCC
Partnership for Assessment of
Readiness for College and Careers

DC Science
The District of Columbia Assessment of
the Next Generation Science Standards

25. *In order to administer the Spanish version, should the administrator of the test be bilingual?*
Test Administrators providing this accommodation should ideally by literate and fluent in English and Spanish. Test administrators may be assisted by a translator, if available, since test administration directions will be read to the student in Spanish.

26. *Can an electronic Word-to-word dictionary be used on PARCC or DC Science Assessments?*
The use of word-to-word electronic dictionaries must mimic the use of the paper word-to-word dictionary on the PARCC or DC Science Assessments. Additional functions that electronic dictionaries have, such as the ability to pronounce words, often result in them not being allowable for use on the assessments. Pronunciations are prohibited if using an electronic word-to-word dictionary.