A New Vision of Assessment

Texts Worth Reading
Problems Worth Solving
Tests Worth Taking

September 2013
What Is PARCC?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers:

- Made up of 19 states
- Developing common, high-quality math and English language arts (ELA) tests for grades 3-11
  - Computer-based and linked to what students need to know for college and careers
  - For use starting in the 2014-15 school year
Why New Assessments Now?

We have to prepare all students for college or other postsecondary opportunities:

- A high school diploma isn’t enough in our 21st century economy
- Our K-12 system is not adequately preparing students for college

*1% of today’s jobs require college or career training
*81% of today’s jobs require college or career training
*1/3 of college freshmen need remedial courses
Personal Benefits: Higher Earnings and Higher Employment Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Mean Income</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Dropout</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s &amp; Above</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current state assessments were not designed to:

- Assess and signal whether students are on track for success in college or careers
- Produce timely, actionable data for students, teachers and parents
- Test key skills, such as critical thinking and ability to problem solve
The Common Core State Standards are here:

- States are implementing these standards for ELA/literacy and math
- Better standards require better tests
- High-quality tests improve and inform instruction — they don’t detract from it
Unlike many current tests, PARCC tests will be engaging and will test the critical-thinking and problem-solving skills students need to succeed in school and life.
PARCC Priorities

1. Determine whether students are college and career ready or on track
2. Connect to the Common Core State Standards
3. Measure the full range of student performance, including that of high- and low-achieving students
4. Provide educators data throughout the year to inform instruction
5. Create innovative 21st century, technology-based assessments
6. Be affordable and sustainable
How Will PARCC Be Different?

**Students:** Will know if they are on track to graduate ready for college/careers.

**Teachers:** Will have access to **timely data** to guide learning and instruction.

**Parents:** Will have **clear and timely information** about student progress.

**States:** Will have **valid results** that are comparable across borders.
How Will PARCC Be Different?

For students:

- Test quality will mirror high-quality coursework
- Is computer-based, interactive, engaging
- Measures the **skills and knowledge students need** to succeed in college and careers
- Produces **timely information**, allowing teachers to tailor instruction to students’ needs
- Includes **embedded supports** for English language learners, students with disabilities
Embedded Supports Being Discussed

Some examples include:

- Highlighting
- Customized colors
- Graphic organizers or representations
- Captions for audio

- Home language supports/tools
- Braille (tactile/refreshable)
- Signing supports (ASL)
- Assistive technology
How Will PARCC Be Different?

For teachers and schools:

- Computer-based testing will boost student engagement and access
- More **efficient** than pencil-and-paper tests
- Timely data during the year will aid instruction, professional development
- Tests will **assess** the full range of student performance, not just students in the middle
- Tests will **measure** student growth at all levels as well as focusing on proficiency
How Will PARCC Be Different?

Help advance our goals:

- Increased competitiveness in a global economy
- Higher achievement levels and more opportunities for all students
- Greater comparability between states
- Higher college completion, lower remedial rates
- Better educated citizens
Getting All Students College and Career Ready

**K-2**
- **Voluntary K-2 assessment** being developed, aligned to the Common Core State Standards

**Grades 3-8**
- **Timely data** showing whether ALL students are on track for college and career readiness

**High School**
- **College readiness score** to identify who is ready for college-level coursework
- **Targeted interventions and supports:**
  - State-developed 12th-grade bridge courses

**Success In first-year, credit-bearing, postsecondary coursework**

**Professional development for educators**
Assessments
ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades 3-11

- **Beginning of School Year**
  - Diagnostic Assessment
  - Mid-Year Assessment
  - Speaking and Listening Assessment

- **End of School Year**
  - Performance-Based Assessment
  - End-of-Year Assessment

**Key:**
- Optional
- Required

Flexible administration
Optional Assessments During the Year

- **Diagnostic Assessment**
- **Mid-Year Assessment**

- Flexible indicator of student knowledge and skills
- Allows instruction, supports and professional development to be tailored to improve student learning
- Performance-based items and tasks
- Emphasis on hard-to-measure standards
- Individual states may consider including as a summative component
Two Required Assessments Yield Overall Score

- **Performance-Based Assessment**
  - After 75 percent of the school year
  - Extended tasks, applications of concepts and skills
  - **ELA/literacy:** Writing effectively when analyzing text, research simulation
  - **Math:** Solving multistep problems requiring abstract reasoning, precision, perseverance and strategic use of tools

- **End-of-Year Assessment**
  - After 90 percent of the school year
  - Innovative, short-answer items
    - **ELA/literacy:** Reading comprehension
    - **Math:** Short items that address both concepts and skills
Higher Expectations

ELA/

- Read sufficiently complex texts independently
- Write effectively to sources
- Build and present knowledge through research

Math

- Solve problems: content and mathematical practice
- Reason mathematically
- Model real-world problems
- Have fluency with mathematics
• This a fairly traditional fraction task in a computer-based setting.
• Unlike traditional multiple choice, it is difficult to guess the correct answer or use a choice elimination strategy and there is more than one correct solution.
• Unlike paper and pencil tests, students can create a visual representation even though the task is scored automatically.
Second part of multi-step problem, and, unlike traditional multiple choice, it is difficult to guess the correct answer or use a choice elimination strategy.
Math: High School Sample Item

- Item has two possible solutions
- Students have to recognize the nature of the equation to know how to solve
- Technology prevents guessing and working backward

Solve the following equation:

$$(3x - 2)^2 = 6x - 4.$$ 

When you are finished, enter the solution(s) below.

Solution 1: 

Click + to enter another solution or click Done.
ELA/Literacy: Grade 7 Sample Item

- Students read the text that introduces the topic
- Items are designed to help students gather information from the texts to lead to the final writing prompt
- Items require different types of responses to allow students to demonstrate a command of evidence with complex texts

SAMPLE ITEM

Student Directions

Based on the information in the text “Biography of Amelia Earhart,” write an essay that summarizes and explains the challenges Earhart faced throughout her life.

Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.

Answer:
Below are three claims that one could make based on the article “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earhart and Noonan lived as castaways on Nikumaroro Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Earhart and Noonan’s plane crashed into the Pacific Ocean</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>People don’t really know where Earhart and Noonan died.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part A:** Highlight the claim that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient facts within “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found.”

**Part B:** Click on two facts within the article that best provide evidence to support the claim selected in Part A.
You have read three texts describing Amelia Earhart. All three include the claim that Earhart was a brave, courageous person. The three texts are:

- “Biography of Amelia Earhart”
- “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Believed Found”
- “Amelia Earhart’s Life and Disappearance”

Consider the argument each author uses to demonstrate Earhart’s bravery.

Write an essay that analyzes the strength of the arguments about Earhart’s bravery in at least two of the texts. Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.
Conclusion

- College or postsecondary career and technical training is essential to earning sustainable wages
- All high school graduates should be ready to enroll in college courses or similar technical coursework without remediation
- PARCC assessments will aid student learning, not detract from it
- We must measure what children learn in school, but we must measure with meaningful assessments
- In PARCC, students will engage with texts worth reading, problems worth solving, and tests worth taking
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www.PARCConline.org