

PARCC Assistive Technology Guidelines

2018 Administration

These guidelines provide guidance for schools to determine if certain assistive technology (AT) already in use by students with disabilities may be used on PARCC assessments, and how to test the functionality of certain assistive technology for possible use on the PARCC assessments.

For students using assistive technology, including screen readers and other AT applications, this must be indicated on the student's Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) prior to testing within PearsonAccess^{next}, located in the Pearson training center.

Assistive technology may not have embedded grammar check, connect to the internet, or save information. If these features cannot be disabled or monitored closely by an administrator, the device should not be used on a PARCC assessment.

The online assessment platform used to deliver PARCC assessments (TestNav) is being designed to comply with the [World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0, Level AA](#). In order to be compatible with the PARCC online assessment platform, browsers and assistive technologies should comply with the W3C's [User Agent Accessibility Guidelines \(UAAG\)](#) and support WCAG 2.0, Level AA and the [Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) - Accessible Rich Internet Applications \(ARIA\)](#) recommendation from the W3C. All assistive technology that is required to interact with the online assessment platform, but does not conform to W3C standards and guidelines, may present challenges for students during testing.

There are **two** categories of assistive technology for use in PARCC assessments.

Category One: Compatible Assistive Technology

The **first** category includes assistive technology that is used by the student to interact directly with the computer-based testing platform. These assistive technologies include third-party software applications such as screen readers, as well as standard input devices, such as adaptive keyboards, adaptive mice, and switch interfaces. Schools must confirm the functionality of the devices and software within their technology environment prior to PARCC testing by conducting a simulation of the day-of-testing environment. This can be completed in two phases.

Phase I

The PARCC Practice Tests are available at: <http://parcc.pearson.com/practice-tests/>. These practice tests are non-secure and provide students with exposure to the PARCC content and interactions. There are multiple versions of practice tests available on this site. To test the functionality of assistive technology, select the appropriate practice test within each grade/subject tab. Choose the Accommodated Screen Reader version if testing with a screen reader or the Accommodated Non-Screen Reader version if testing with other assistive technology that is not a screen reader.

Grade 3

This set contains the Narrative Writing Task and the Literary Analysis Task. The Research Task is currently not available due to pending permissions. The task will be added as permissions are granted.

Computer-Based Practice Test Unit 1	Computer-Based Practice Test Unit 2	Computer-Based Practice Test Unit 3	Paper-Based Practice Tests (all units)
Computer-Based Unit 1 »	Computer-Based Unit 2 »	Computer-Based Unit 3 »	ⓧ Paper-Based Practice Test (all units)
TTS Version Unit 1 »	TTS Version Unit 2 »	TTS Version Unit 3 »	ⓧ Large Print Paper-Based Practice Test (all units)
Accommodated Screen Reader Unit 1 »	Accommodated Screen Reader Unit 2 »	Accommodated Screen Reader Unit 3 »	ⓧ EBAE Braille Ready File (.brf, all units)
Accommodated Non-Screen Reader Unit 1 »	Accommodated Non-Screen Reader Unit 2 »	Accommodated Non-Screen Reader Unit 3 »	ⓧ EBAE Braille Special Instructions
American Sign Language Unit 1 »	American Sign Language Unit 2 »	American Sign Language Unit 3 »	ⓧ UEB Braille Ready File (.brf, all units)
Closed Captioning Unit 1 »	Closed Captioning Unit 2 »	Closed Captioning Unit 3 »	ⓧ UEB Braille Special Instructions

Phase II

February 2018 –

The PARCC PearsonAccess^{next} Training Center will include the capability to verify assistive technologies within the secure versions of the practice tests. The instructions and date of availability will be updated in the [Infrastructure Trial Guide](#). Verification will require completing the same registration and PNP process used for operational assessment in the PARCC PearsonAccess^{next} Training Center.

These activities will assist districts, schools, and students to determine whether their assistive technology will interact appropriately with the TestNav assessment platform and whether it can be used successfully during computer-based PARCC testing. An infrastructure trial will also allow students to interact and gain familiarity with the actual computer-based interface.

A list of assistive technologies that will *not* be prevented from running with TestNav is available at <https://parcc.pearson.com/AT-Guidelines/index.html>

NEW FOR 2018 - Assistive Technology ***IS*** supported for use with *TestNav Desktop* and is the recommended technology solution for students testing with screen readers.

Based on our limited research, variability has been found in the compatibility of different assistive technologies other than screen readers with the TestNav app and TestNav in Firefox ESR. Because of this, it is required that each user undergo infrastructure trials where the students' AT can be tested in a secure TestNav environment.

Students using assistive technology and not testing on an iPad can use the *TestNav Desktop App* or browser-based TestNav depending on the results of the secure infrastructure trial results using the process detailed above.

PARCC Technology guidelines provide detailed information on minimum specifications and supported browsers. The guidelines are available at <http://avocet.pearson.com/PARCC/Home#10429>.

Additionally, in order to investigate whether specific assistive technologies work well with TestNav content, Pearson has created **TestNav Direct Access**, a web portal that provides assistive technology manufacturers access to sample test form content and allows them to interact with that content and report issues encountered to Pearson.

In order to interact with content within TestNav Direct Access, the assistive technology manufacturer must [create an account](#). Once the account has been created and approved, the manufacturer can record individual assistive technology applications within TestNav Direct access and begin interacting with the sample form content.

If the manufacturer of a specific assistive technology identifies a compatibility issue, they will record testing feedback and Pearson will work with the manufacturer to research the issue.

If you encounter an issue with an Assistive Technology during a secure infrastructure trial, provide the above guidance to your Assistive Technology provider to work directly with Pearson to resolve the issue.

IMPORTANT NOTES about Operating Systems and Assistive Technology use:

- **Chromebooks:**

- The only Assistive Technology that can be used on Chromebooks interacting directly with TestNav is ChromeVox - the screen reader embedded within the Chromebook Operating System. Accessibility testing has shown that no barriers exist.
- Chromebooks cannot be used with any other Assistive Technology interacting directly with TestNav. Chromebook extensions are blocked when in Kiosk mode (Required for secure assessment).
- Chromebooks can be used as a stand-alone Assistive Technology for response accommodations as defined in the PARCC Accommodations Manual. If you plan to use a Chromebook or iPad as a third-party external assistive technology device, contact your state for additional guidance. Reference the PARCC Accommodations Manual page 37 available here: <https://parcc.pearson.com/manuals/>
- Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for Chrome OS include ChromeVox and Sticky Keys.

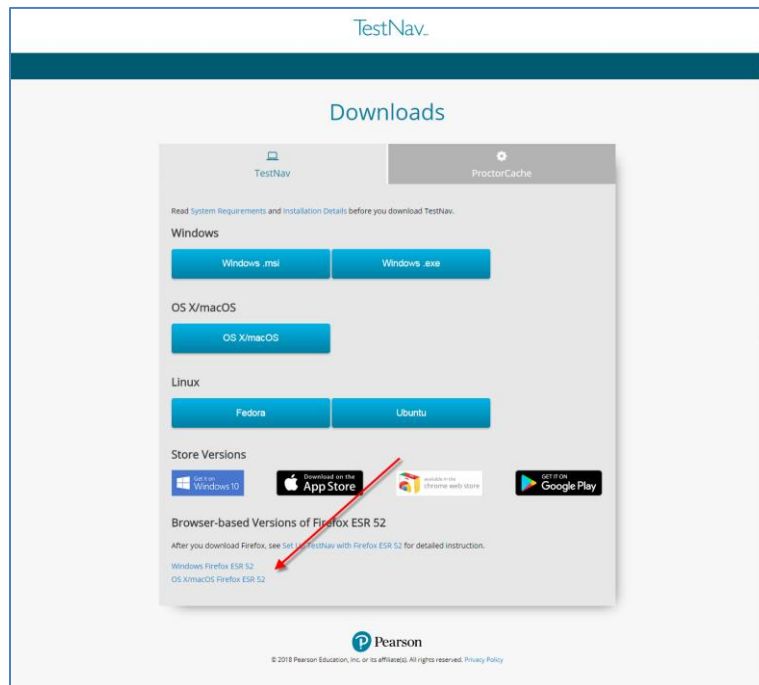
- **macOS and iOS - iPads**

- Must be full size iPads only (no iPad Mini).
- iPads must have iOS 10.2 or a newer version of iOS 10. iPad 2 and iPad 3 do not meet the iOS requirements and will not be supported for testing.
- **VoiceOver for iOS is not allowed for use on the PARCC assessment.** There is currently no configuration that will provide a barrier-free testing experience for VoiceOver users on iOS systems. The Pearson TestNav and Accessibility teams are currently working with Apple to include improvements in future releases.

- TestNav Desktop App use is recommended for macOS.
- Browser based TestNav can still be used for assessment as needed for macOS. The only browser supported by TestNav for secure browser based testing is the Firefox 52 Extended Support Release (ESR) 32-bit browser. This browser is only available on Windows and Mac operating systems and can be found and downloaded directly from here: <http://download.testnav.com/>
- Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for macOS and iOS include Voiceover, Sticky Keys, Speak Selection, and Speak Screen.

- **Windows**

- Browser based TestNav can still be used for assessment as needed. The only browser supported by TestNav for secure browser based testing is the Firefox 52 Extended Support Release (ESR) 32-bit browser. This browser is only available on Windows and Mac operating systems and can be found and downloaded directly from here: <http://download.testnav.com/>
- Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for Windows OS include Windows Narrator, Windows Speech Recognition, and Sticky Keys.



- Additional guidance for Firefox Instructions to disable pop-up blockers and enable the Java plug-in: <https://support.assessment.pearson.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=23071251>

Category Two: External Assistive Technology

The **second** category includes “stand-alone” assistive technology that does *not* interact directly with TestNav and is not accessed on the same device used by the student to complete the computer-based PARCC assessment. Instead, this will be used by the student at a separate station during the assessment. Assistive technologies in this category include speech-to-text, augmentative communication, word prediction, self-contained word processors, and other technologies not directly connected to the computer on which the student is being tested. These “stand-alone” assistive technologies do not need to be tested via an Infrastructure Trial and may be used during the PARCC assessments, according to the provisions of the [PARCC accommodations policies](#). However, they may require an adult test administrator to assist the student with transition between the computer used for assessment and the external assistive technology.

All responses generated on a “stand-alone” assistive technology device must be transcribed verbatim by a test administrator to the student’s computer-based test or into the accommodated answer document. Please refer to page 5 of [Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation and for Transcribing Student Responses](#) for steps that must be followed when transcribing a student’s response.

NOTE: If stand-alone assistive technologies are used for the PARCC assessments, all grammar check, internet access, and stored file functionalities must be disabled.

If you plan to use a Chromebook or iPad as a third-party external assistive technology device, contact your state for additional guidance. Reference the PARCC Accommodations Manual page 37 available here: <https://parcc.pearson.com/manuals/>