

NAEP Writing Computer-Based Assessment



An Overview for Grades 8 and 12

What to Expect for the NAEP Writing Computer-Based Assessment

What should **schools** expect?



As with other NAEP assessments, NAEP staff will administer the assessment and work with school staff to organize the writing assessment activities. NAEP staff will bring necessary materials, including laptop computers and earbuds, to the school on assessment day. Schools will only need to provide one room, desks or tables, and electricity; schools do not have to provide Internet access.

About 28-30 students in each school will be selected to participate. The assessment will be administered in two sequential sessions of about 15 students. No other NAEP subject area assessments will be given in schools participating in the writing computer-based assessment.

What can **students** expect?



Before the assessment begins, students will be shown a tutorial which will help them become familiar with the way material is presented on the computer screen and how to use the program. Students will compose their responses in a word processing program similar to the programs they frequently use. They will be able to use common tools for editing, formatting, and text analysis; they will not have access to irrelevant or distracting tools such as clip art, font type and color, or the Internet. Students may ask questions anytime before and during the assessment.

It will take approximately 90 to 120 minutes for students to complete the assessment, 60 minutes of which is allotted to writing two responses. Students will respond to text, video or animated prompts on the computer and listen to audio prompts via earbuds, which will be provided. The assessment questions are designed to measure students' ability to persuade, to explain, or to convey experience.

Students will also respond to questions designed to gather information that provides context for understanding the assessment results, such as how many pages the student has to read each day for school and homework, and whether there is a computer in their home that they can use. New to the assessment are specific questions about computer use, such as writing for school assignments, writing e-mails, and using the Internet.

In today's society, writing with paper and pencil has largely been replaced by writing using a computer. Students are expected to compose on a computer as they move through school and into the workforce. Reflecting the changes in technology, eighth- and twelfth-grade students taking the **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) writing assessment** will use a computer to compose and edit their responses.

➔ How is the NAEP writing computer-based assessment different from past writing assessments?

The NAEP writing assessment has always been paper-and-pencil based for grades 4, 8, and 12. In 2011, for the first time, the NAEP writing assessment will measure students' ability to write using a computer at grades 8 and 12. The assessment is computer-based, and is designed to take advantage of many features of current digital technology, such as word processing software. The computer-based writing tasks are delivered in multimedia formats, such as short videos and audio.

➔ Why is the writing assessment computer-based for grades 8 and 12?

The 2011 NAEP Writing Framework mandated that the writing assessment be designed to reflect the way today's students compose and are expected to compose: using a computer. For example, in 2007, NAEP data showed that 75% of twelfth-graders who took the writing assessment reported that they almost always used a computer to make changes to a paper or report (for example, spell-check, cut and paste). The writing assessment was developed to take into account the new role that technology plays as students move through school and into the workforce.

➔ How was the new writing framework developed?

The 2011 NAEP Writing Framework was developed by the National Assessment Governing Board, with ideas from a wide range of individuals and organizations, including writing experts, school administrators, policymakers, teachers, parents, and others. To view the framework, visit <http://www.nagb.org/publications/frameworks.htm>.

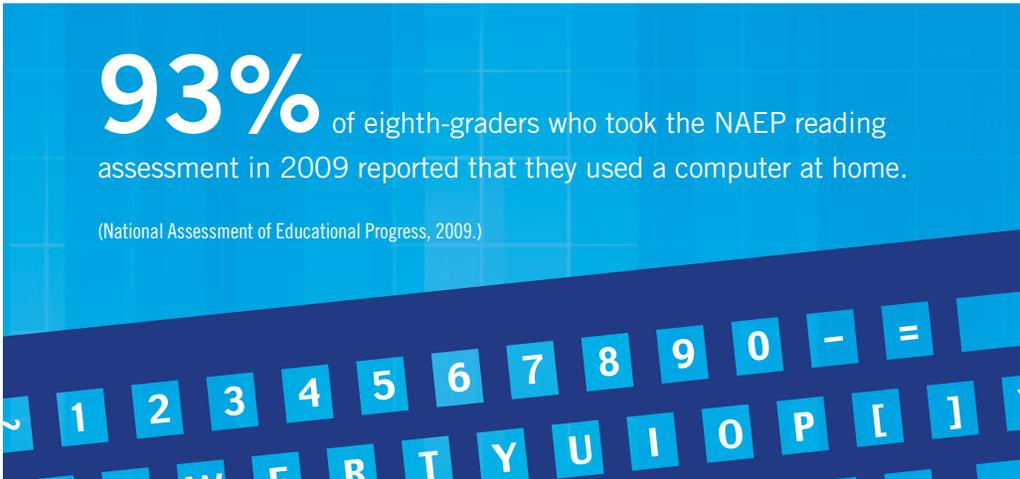
➔ Will accommodations be provided?

NAEP assessments strive to include as many students as possible. The writing computer-based assessment system is designed to comply with federal policy, which instructs that electronic information technology be accessible to all people, including those individuals with disabilities. The computer program for the writing assessment features optional settings that will reduce the need for accommodations, among them:

- A 'Speak' function on computers that can read aloud all or selected portions of directions, tasks, and stimulus materials. (Some stimulus materials will not respond to a 'Speak' function but will have separate play buttons.)
- Adjustable font size up to 48 point (letters about 2/3 inch tall).
- Choice of color schemes, including a high contrast option.

93% of eighth-graders who took the NAEP reading assessment in 2009 reported that they used a computer at home.

(National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2009.)



As with other NAEP assessments, accommodations such as alterations in the testing setting or timing will be provided. Any change that alters the skill NAEP is designed to measure will not be allowed. If needed, for the computer-based writing assessment, accommodations will be available, such as screen magnification greater than 48 point font, and the ability to enlarge graphics. Accommodations such as bilingual word-to-word dictionaries, or signed directions, can be provided by the school staff.

➔ How will the responses be scored?

Trained scorers will evaluate the responses. In NAEP, scorers are taught to use the scoring rubric through extensive training using many example responses. They will evaluate three broad features of writing, as follows:

- Development of Ideas
- Organization of Ideas
- Language Facility and Use of Conventions

Responses will be evaluated holistically; individual elements or parts of the response will not be scored separately.



The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

is a continuing and nationally representative assessment of what our nation's students know and can do in core subjects such as mathematics, reading, science, and writing.

NAEP was first administered in 1969 to measure student achievement nationally. Teachers, principals, parents, policymakers, and researchers all use NAEP results to assess progress and develop ways to improve education throughout the country. The results of NAEP are released as The Nation's Report Card, and are available for the nation, states, and in some cases, urban districts. For more information, please visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

You can also contact the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at:

National Center for Education Statistics
Assessment Division – 8th Floor
1990 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202-502-7420
[http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/
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