



# Illinois State Board of Education

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## ***Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)***

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*Division of Public Information, Illinois State Board of Education*

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a group of 16 states and the District of Columbia working together to develop a common set of computer-based K–12 assessments in English language arts/Literacy and math linked to the new, more rigorous Illinois Learning Standards.

### **PARCC aims to:**

- Create high-quality 21st century, technology-based assessments. They will go beyond the traditional paper-pencil, fill-in-the-bubble tests, using new innovative technology-enhanced items and more extensive constructed response items. The tasks on the assessments will better resemble students' classroom work.
- Support educators in the classroom by providing data during the academic year to inform instruction, interventions and professional development.
- Build a pathway to college and career readiness for all students and advance accountability at all levels. Students will know if they are on track to graduate ready for college and careers, and parents and guardians will be provided with clear and timely information about the progress of their children.

### **Testing Procedures**

The PARCC assessment system will test students through the use of summative and optional interim and diagnostic assessments.

- **Summative Assessments:** test students' acquisition of knowledge and development of skills. There will be two such summative components, a Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) and an End-of-Year test (EOY).
- **Interim Assessments:** will help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses and assist schools in shaping decisions about

curriculum and instruction. There will be interim assessments for grades K through 11, which are optional. Additionally, there will be a diagnostic assessment for students in grades 2 through 8, which is also optional.

- Additionally, Speaking and Listening assessments are required for English language arts but will not be used to determine a summative assessment score.

**PARCC Testing Time**

Grade 3	8 hours total over 2 settings
Grades 4-5	9.5 hours total over 2 settings
Middle School	9.5 hours total over 2 settings
High School	9.5 hours total over 2 settings

**Cost Comparison**

Minimum State Testing Requirements  
(Yearly in Grades 3 through 8, and once in high school)

<b>Grades 3-8</b>	<b>PARCC</b>
	\$29,571,300
<b>High School</b>	<b>PARCC</b>
	\$4,533,085
	<b>Other Contracts</b>
	\$8,068,564
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>\$42,172,949</b>

**Field Testing**

Illinois is among 14 states and the District of Columbia that is participating in limited field testing of the PARCC assessments to ensure a high-quality assessment system. In the first half of our field test, which took place in March, more than 1800 schools in about 650 districts took part. The PARCC field tests will not generate student scores. Based on student feedback from the English Language Arts assessment field test, 52 percent of students said they found the test to be about the same level of difficulty as their classroom work, and 15 percent said it was easier. In addition, 78

percent of students responding said they preferred taking the assessment on computer over pencil and paper.

### **Online Readiness**

The field testing allowed Illinois schools to test both the online and pen and paper version of the test. The PARCC broadband speed requirements released last fall allows for caching, or the ability for districts to download assessments onto local networks and upload once testing is complete, instead of simply real-time, online testing. This allows for significantly lower speeds than originally assumed. As of today, 79% of districts have completed PARCC's Online Technology Readiness Tool. The tool shows that if the test were given today 64% of our districts would be ready to administer the test online.

### **Sample Questions:**

PARCC has provided an array of sample questions to demonstrate the format and expectations of the assessment. Students are asked to apply a range of knowledge on subjects within each question to promote critical thinking. In the English Language Arts portion, students must do a research simulation, a literary analysis and a narrative task. In mathematics, students must respond with short and extended responses, demonstrating how they reached their answers

Please see the attached sample questions from the Grade 11 English Language Arts portion of the assessment and the Grade 6 Mathematics portion.

## PARCC Sample Question

### Grade 11- English Language Arts/Literacy Summative Assessment

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***Today you will read a biography of Abigail Adams, and then you will read two examples of correspondence between Abigail and her husband, John Adams, who served as President of the United States from 1797 to 1801. As you read these texts, you will gather information and answer questions that will help you understand John and Abigail Adams's relationship and opinions. When you are finished reading, you will write an analytical essay.***

Read the biography of Abigail Smith Adams. Then answer the questions.

#### **Abigail Smith Adams (1744-1818)**

1 Abigail Adams was more than just a First Lady. Adams was politically minded and often stood up for those who lacked power such as slaves, women, and the colonies.

2 Abigail Smith Adams was born in Massachusetts on November 11, 1744. She came from a prestigious family and was related to Thomas Sheppard and other Congregational ministers. Like other women of her era, she had no formal education, but was curious and worked hard to teach herself. She read any books that were available and became knowledgeable about a variety of subject matters most women never considered.

3 Abigail Smith married John Adams in 1764. He was a young Harvard graduate teaching school and trying to launch a career in law. She moved to her husband's farm in Braintree, south of Boston, and eventually had three sons and two daughters. John Adams spent a lot of time away from home, traveling for both his legal work and as a political revolutionary, and later, as a diplomat. Abigail Adams supported the revolution as fervently as John, and she arguably suffered more because of it. Several times, battles raged near her home, while he was safe in Philadelphia or in Europe. From the beginning, it was she who managed their farm and took care of business so that he could devote himself to politics.

4 Through his letters it is clear that he trusted his wife to take care of his business matters and admired her self-sufficiency. Although married women at this time had limited property rights, Abigail Adams began to refer to their property and other affairs as her own instead of "ours". She also made investment decisions that enhanced the family's prosperity – something that was not easily done during the turbulent 1780's and 1790's, when many wealthy men ended up in poverty.

5 John and Abigail Adams wrote letters to each other frequently. In these letters one can tell that they were close friends and often Adams advised her husband on matters of politics. In one of her most famous letters Abigail writes:

6 *"I long to hear that you have declared an independency—and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."*(1)

7 Her husband did not take this letter seriously, so Adams wrote a letter to her friend Mercy Otis Warren. She asked Warren to petition Congress with her and request that Congress establish some laws that favor women. After Warren never replied, Adams wrote one more letter to her husband, and essentially all of Congress, pointing out discrepancies. In this letter she said, "whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to men, emancipating all nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over wives."(2) Though John Adams did not take his wife's advice on this matter, there is evidence he considered the issue in relation to voter's rights as he forwarded her concerns on to Brigadier General Joseph Palmer.

8 Throughout his life John Adams continued to request his wife's advice and opinions on political matters. After he became president in 1797 John Adams was eager to have his wife at his side. He wrote, "I never wanted your Advice and assistance more in my life...The Times are critical and dangerous, and I must have you here to assist me."(3) As First Lady, Adams made a large impression on the public. She was an advocate for females and expressed original feminist theory, as well as insightful political thought.

9 After her husband lost his re-election in 1801, the couple retreated to their home in Quincy. While her main focus was on her family and home, Adams remained in correspondence with several political figures including President Thomas Jefferson – who had defeated her husband in a bitter election—and with Dolley Madison, who remained influential in Washington after the death of her husband, James Madison, the nation's fourth President. 10 Abigail Adams died October 28, 1818. Her son, John Quincy Adams, became president 6 years after she passed away. Her grandchild, Charles Francis Adams, published many of Adams' letters in 1848.

## Questions

1. In paragraph 8 of "Abigail Smith Adams," Abigail Adams is called an "advocate for females." What is the meaning of **advocate for females** as used in this paragraph?

- a) promoter of women's rights
- b) counselor for women who lack rights
- c) revolutionary demanding women's control of government
- d) campaigner for women running for political office

2. Which question below is left unanswered by the biography "Abigail Smith Adams" because insufficient evidence is provided?

- a) Why did John Adams suffer less from the war than Abigail Adams did?
- b) Why did Abigail Adams write a letter to Mercy Otis Warren?
- c) Why did Abigail Adams ask John Adams to "remember the ladies" when creating the new nation?
- d) Why did John Adams fail to respond to Abigail Adams' pleas for better treatment of women?

3. In paragraph 7 of the letter to her husband, Abigail Adams states that "all men would be tyrants" and in paragraph 8 she states that men are "naturally tyrannical." Which statement defines the word **tyrannical** correctly using the context of the letter?

- a) Tyrannical can be defined as formal and ceremonious, as indicated by the words "laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make." (paragraph 7)
- b) Tyrannical can be defined as considerate and nurturing, as indicated by the words "more generous and favorable." (paragraph 7)
- c) Tyrannical can be defined as overbearing and oppressive, as indicated by the words "cruelty and indignity with impunity." (paragraph 8)\*
- d) Tyrannical can be defined as vigilant and possessive, as indicated by the words "under your protection." (paragraph 8)

## PARCC Sample Question

### Grade 6- Mathematics Proportion of Instruments

Mr. Ruiz is starting a marching band at his school. He first does research and finds the following data about other local marching bands.

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
<b>Number of Brass Instrument Players</b>	123	42	150
<b>Number of Percussion Instrument Players</b>	41	14	50

Part A

Type your answer in the box. Backspace to erase.

Mr. Ruiz realizes that there are  brass instrument player(s) per percussion player.

Part B

Mr. Ruiz has 210 students who are interested in joining the marching band. He decides to have 80% of the band be made up of percussion and brass instruments. Use the unit rate you found in Part A to determine how many students should play brass instruments.

Show or explain all your steps.

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