



Program for International Student Assessment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Information for Students

What is PISA?

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment of 15-year-old students, conducted every three years, that measures how well students apply their knowledge and skills in solving problems in science, reading, mathematics, financial literacy, and collaborative problem solving. PISA presents problems that students are likely to encounter in the real world. In 2015, students like yourself from more than 70 countries and education systems, including the United States, will participate in PISA.

Why should I participate in PISA?

You are one of about 42 students in your school who have been selected to participate in PISA. Because you are one of a select few in your school your participation is very important. If you participate in PISA you will...

- Receive a certificate for 4-hours of volunteer service from the U.S. Department of Education.
- Represent students like you across the country.

Only 5,000 students will have the unique opportunity to participate in PISA 2015 in the United States. How often do you get to represent your country?

Participating in PISA is a national service. You can have an impact on the bigger picture of education in the United States and around the world.

What subjects are assessed in PISA?

Each student participating in PISA will be assessed in two or three of the following subjects: science, mathematics, reading, financial literacy, or collaborative problem solving. No student takes every PISA test question, and most students will be assessed in only two of the subjects. PISA is administered on a computer.

How long does PISA take?

The PISA assessment takes approximately 3 hours to complete. This includes time for instructions, the assessment, and a brief survey of questions about yourself. Some students will also be selected to participate in an additional 1-hour assessment in financial literacy that is held after the main PISA assessment.

How did my school get selected to take PISA?

The schools that participate in PISA in the United States are randomly selected from a list of all schools in the country that enroll 15-year-old students. This is done to ensure that U.S. participants accurately represent the entire population of 15-year-old students in the United States and not just particular types of schools or groups of students.

PISA 2015



PISA 2015

How did I get selected to take PISA?

From a list of all 15-year-old students provided by your school, 42 students are randomly selected to participate. Every 15-year-old student enrolled in a PISA-selected school has an equal chance of being selected. Students in other countries are selected in the same way to make sure each country is fairly represented and no country is advantaged or disadvantaged because of the types of schools or groups of students selected.

What types of questions will I see on PISA?

Based on situations you might encounter in real life, PISA questions assess the knowledge and skills students have learned, both in and out of school. Some PISA questions require that you select from a set of provided answers; other PISA questions require that you write out your response.

PISA is administered on computer. Many of the items are interactive, where you manipulate different pieces of information. To try PISA items on your own, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/items_cba.asp

What is done with the information you collect from me?

PISA is not designed to produce individual test scores and your individual performance is not shared with your school in any way. Student responses are combined with other student responses and are only used for statistical purposes. By law, data provided by schools, staff, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9573].

Where can I find more information?

Visit the PISA website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.

For additional questions about PISA, contact the PISA U.S. home office at 1-888-638-2597 or email PISAHelp@westat.com.

