



FAQs:Students

Why was I picked? Do you only pick a certain kind of student to test?

NAEP is designed to measure the academic performance of the nation's students at grades 4, 8, and 12. But NAEP can't really test every fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grader in the country, because it would take up far too much time in schools across the nation. So instead of testing everyone, NAEP selects a small sample that accurately represents the characteristics of the students in the nation, including ethnicity, school size, economic background, gender, and more.

If your school was selected for the NAEP assessment, it is because it is "statistically representative" of your state's schools. And if you were selected for NAEP, it's because you were chosen at random to represent the nation's students. Test-takers are selected randomly to try to ensure that the group taking the test is the most representative of the entire student body of the school.

Will my performance affect my grade in school?

No. Your teachers will never see your individual results; in fact, no one will. Your name is never associated with your specific results. All that will happen is that your anonymous score will be incorporated with the anonymous scores of the other students selected across the nation.

Neither you, nor your parents, nor your teachers will ever receive a score report for your NAEP assessment. So if a question seems really challenging, just give it your best shot; wrong answers won't count against you.

Will colleges or employers see my results?

No. NAEP results are never connected with a student name; this is guaranteed by the federal laws that created the assessment! Colleges and employers won't even know you were selected for NAEP assessment, unless you tell them.

But if you can turn the experience into a great personal statement for that college or job application, by all means, go for it! By taking the test, you are helping to improve American education and getting involved in your community.

Will I have to study for NAEP?

Not at all; NAEP is designed to look at the general state of education in the nation. There are no individual or school-

level results. So just relax and try your best; doing your best helps educators know what you have already learned and what more they can help you learn.

What's so special about NAEP? Why can't you just use our scores from all the other tests we take?

We know you all take a lot of tests; there are a lot of them out there! But that is part of the reason that NAEP is so important! There are a lot of different tests out there because there are a lot of differences between states in their education plans. Some states teach geometry before algebra; some states teach AP classes while others teach IB classes; some states require students to meet specific Standards of Learning before they move on to the next grade and others do not. Because there's no way to compare scores across all these tests, we can't make a statement about the nation's educational progress. NAEP is the only test that can give a true representation of education in our country, because it is the only test that is given in the same way, asks the same questions, and is graded on the same scale across the nation.

What kinds of questions will I be asked?

What you will be asked will depend on the subject you will be assigned. NAEP randomly assigns different subject tests to each student in the classroom, so while you're taking the mathematics assessment, the student beside you might be taking the reading or science assessment. To see what an assessment is like, visit our Experience An Assessment page for an up-close look.

How long will the test take? Will I have to miss class time?

From beginning to end, most NAEP assessments will take no more than 90 minutes from start to finish, including set up and travel time to and from class. Some special assessments that have hand-on tasks or computer-based portions may take up to 120 minutes. There is no penalty for not completing the test in the given time period.

The test will be administered during the school day, so you will have to miss some class time, but so will many of your other classmates, so if you are concerned about missing too much in class, talk to your teacher to see if you and other selected students can schedule a time to meet and catch up on what you missed.

I typically get accommodations on tests that I take in my school. Will I be able to get those on NAEP as well?

That depends on what accommodations you need. NAEP staff will work with your school to determine what accommodations they can provide to help you take the test. Check out the specific information on the accommodations offered to qualifying students during NAEP.

English isn't my first language. Will I still be able to take NAEP?

Probably. If your school personnel have asked you to participate in NAEP, it means they believe that you will be able to take the assessment. Generally, if you are able to take your state and local tests, you will be able to take part in NAEP.

If you do participate in NAEP, you may be eligible for [certain aids](#) to help you with the assessment.

All my friends are taking NAEP, but I wasn't selected. Can I take it anyway?

NAEP samples are selected according to a specific process which renders the smallest sample size that will still be an accurate representation of your school's student body in order to save time and money. To see how you might fare on NAEP questions, visit the Test Yourself tool, where you can try your hand at actual NAEP questions in a variety of subjects.

How can I ask other questions or make a suggestion about NAEP?

If you have any questions that we haven't answered here, please email us and let us know. We'll do our best to get you an answer quickly!

Also, if you have thoughts or suggestions about how you think NAEP should change, or what you think NAEP assessments should look like in 10 years, please email us. We'd love to hear your ideas.

