

Answers to Questions from the *How to Work with the WCAS Training Test* webinar presented January 10, 2018

Introduction

This document contains answers to questions submitted using the Q&A or Chat functions during the live Zoom webinar. The questions have been grouped by categories and numbered for ease of reference. If multiple participants asked the same question, we have only listed it once; if multiple participants asked similar questions, we have grouped them together and tried our best to give a comprehensive answer; and if a question might belong in more than one of the categories, we have listed it in both areas.

Note: We first posted this document on 1/19/18. This is an updated version, posted on 2/15/18. We fixed broken hyperlinks, updated how to access the recording of this training, and how to access the materials from our 1/24/18 webinar.

WEBINAR LOGISTICS

Q1: Can we get a copy of the PowerPoint after the presentation?

A1: Yes, it is posted on (<http://www.k12.wa.us/Science/Assessments.aspx>) the Science Assessment webpage just to the left of where you found this document. Please refer to the [Online Training Test Support](#) document for more about the information contained in slides 16–21, and when the presentation went into the live science Training Tests.

Q2: Will we be able to view a recording of this training later?

A2: Yes, you will be able to view this training later. The recording is posted in two places: 1) On the Science assessment webpage at the end of the sentence where this document is posted, and 2) within the WAMS application in EDS for District Test Coordinators (DC) to access. DCs should follow this file path: Assessment Operations—File Downloads—2018 Administration. Then scroll to the bottom where the category “Science Webinar Audio Files” is listed.

TOOLS, SUPPORTS, ACCOMMODATIONS

Q3 version 1: Does the GTSA include accommodations for ELL students?

Q3 version 2: Will ELL students have accommodations as well?

A3: Yes, there are specific test settings for EL students. Most of the settings appropriate for EL students will be listed in the Designated Supports sections of the [Guidelines on Tools, Supports & Accommodations](#) (G TSA).

Q4: Are the students able to practice/use Designated Supports and Accommodations on the Training Tests for other content areas as well? (ELA/Math/ELPA21 etc.)

A4: Yes, they are. When logging in to those Training Tests, you will find the same toggle buttons on the first screen (Choose Settings screen).

Q5: For trying out accommodations, in Presentation—does the stacked Spanish option work?

A5: No, Stacked Spanish is the only Designated Support that we are not able to make available on the Training Test. However, we will have it available for the summative WCAS.

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Q6 version 1: Reason for using Firefox with the Training Test for practicing Text-to-Speech? If a student needs Text to Speech on the actual test, should they be using Firefox as well?

Q6 version 2: You mention that if we wanted to use Text-To-Speech we should use Fire fox. When using the Secure Browser how do we dictate what browser it launches?

Q6 version 3: Is Chrome ok for TTS on the WCAS Training Test as well? Or is Firefox the only appropriate browser for TTS on the WCAS Training Test? Additionally, does this apply to all Training and Practice tests?

A6: The Text-to-Speech feature will work differently on different web browsers. The Text-to-Speech has been checked for accuracy by OSPI staff using Firefox. The Secure Browser, which is what is used for the summative WCAS, is based on the Firefox browser. Therefore, we suggest that when using Guest access for the Training Test that you use Firefox if wanting to also practice with Text-to-Speech. Yes, this does apply to using Text-to-Speech for all the WCAP Training and Practice tests.

When a student takes the summative WCAS, they will use the Secure Browser—they will not need to do anything different when launching it. The [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) contains details for District Technology Coordinators about configuring devices for testing with Text-to-Speech. We strongly encourage schools to test the Text-to-Speech settings on all devices before students take summative tests on the device.

Q7: Is the notepad available for use for more than one question? If they started using it on a question, can it be used during the next question?

A7: Each item has its own notepad. If a student used it on one question, they will get a fresh notepad when they open the tool on the next question.

Q8: On the notepad, will a student's notes be retained even after a pause and/or another day's test session?

A8: No, notes are not saved after pausing the test for more than 20 minutes.

Q9: Zooming in on the text in items makes some of the stimulus information disappear. Are their notifications or indicators to help students realize they are not seeing the whole screen?

A9: There is no notification like a pop-up box. The only indicator is that the grey bar on the scroll bars change height to show that more scrolling is needed. This is very important to help students notice while working with the Training Test.

Q10: Can a student add a review flag to locked items?

A10: Yes, students can add a flag to a locking item before they complete their answer. They can also add a flag to an item that has been locked. In both cases, after the item is locked, they cannot change their answer. We highly recommend using the Training Test to help students understand this before the start of the summative WCAS.

Q11: Does hot text movement require a mouse for use with a Chromebook?

A11: No, it does not. They should be able to use the trackpad on the Chromebook.

Q12: Can students use keyboard shortcuts like they do on SBAC?

A12: Yes, since we use the same testing platform (the AIR Secure Browser) as the Smarter Balanced tests, students can use the same keyboard shortcuts. The [Keyboarding Shortcuts document](#) that is

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available in the “Test Administrators—General Information folder—Classroom Resources section” of the WCAP Portal is also appropriate for use with students for the summative WCAS. Practice with some keyboard shortcuts was included in the [Online Training Test Support](#) document as well.

TESTING LOGISTICS FOR PLANNING

Q13: Can students take the test on iPads or chrome books?

A13: Yes to both.

Q14: Can students use an external keyboard with iPads for the WCAS?

A14: Yes, external keyboards can be used for the summative WCAS and the WCAS Training Tests. The item type that causes a conflict for Smarter Balanced math tests is not used in the summative WCAS.

Q15: Does the version of Chrome matter?

A15: As long as it is version 60 or higher, there should be no problem.

Q16: Will students be able to take their time taking this test like they can on the SBAC test? I’m meaning will they be given the ability to take the test in multiple days and break it apart? How many questions will be on the test?

A16: The summative WCAS is untimed. Yes, the summative WCAS can be administered over multiple sessions like the ELA and Math tests. We are recommending **no more than 3 sessions** total. All tests will expire at the end of the online testing window; the last day of the testing window is currently scheduled to be June 8. See **Answer 36** in the FAQ document from our January 24 webinar for more information.

Q17: So if they delete everything from the text box before they pause, would the end test button disappear? There must be a way for them to begin a question like a short answer and get back to it if they had to pause for something like lunch.

A17: No, once the end test button appears, it will stay available. No, there is not a way for students to start a short answer response and come back to it after a pause of more than 20 minutes. Students should be directed to leave a short answer question completely untouched if they will not be able to finish it before taking a pause for something like lunch. If their test is paused for more than 20 minutes, they will be not be able to go back and change their answers to any previous questions, even if the questions were marked for review. When they log back into their test, the system will present them with the next unanswered question in their test, and will not allow them to move backwards. If a student entered any text in the short answer response box, including random text (for example, “slkfaslkfj” or “xxxxxxxx”) the testing system will consider the question answered and will restart the student at a later question. This is also true for Smarter Balanced tests.

If the student starts to answer a locking item, and then selects **Pause**, the system will make them finish the item and confirm that they are done with it in the Attention box, thus locking the item, before the system goes through the confirmation process to pause the test.

Although the Training Tests are not saved, we do recommend practicing selecting the **Pause** button at various times during the Training Test to see which Attention boxes pop up and when.

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Q18: What is the best way to address appeals that may happen with locked items?

A18: We are still working on the specific guidance for addressing appeals with locking items. Please work with TAs and students to make sure everyone understands the information contained in **Answer 17** to help minimize the need for appeals.

COMPARED TO SMARTER BALANCED

Q19: Will there be a blueprint for WCAS all grade levels?

A19: The science [Test Design & Item Specifications documents](#) contain a Test Blueprint section on page 9. We hosted a webinar on January 24 titled, “Science Test and Item Specifications Release,” that would be useful for you to view. The presentation slides, a recording of the webinar, and an FAQ document are posted on the Science Assessment webpage (<http://www.k12.wa.us/Science/Assessments.aspx>).

Q20: Do you see Interim Science Tests in our future?

A20: There is currently no funding available at the state level for producing Interim science tests in Washington.

Q21: Is the summative test similar to the SBA Math where it is computer adaptive to students’ ability level?

A21: No, the summative WCAS is not an adaptive test. It is what is called a “fixed form” test where all students see the same questions for the operational part of the test (the part that contributes to a student’s score.) There will be a small set of field test items included on the WCAS. The field test questions may vary among students in your class. Field test items do not contribute to a student’s score.

Q22 (repeat of Q4): Are the students able to practice/use Designated Supports and Accommodations on the Training Tests for other content areas as well? (ELA/Math/ELPA21 etc.)

A22 (repeat of A4): Yes, they are. When logging in to those Training Tests, you will find the same toggle buttons on the first screen (Choose Settings screen).

SECURE BROWSER or GUEST ACCESS TO THE TRAINING TEST

Q23: Please explain the difference between the Training test and the Practice test. Are they the exact same tests with the same amount of questions?

A23: The difference between the Training Test and the Practice Test for the Smarter Balanced tests is related to their length. The Training Tests are short, and are all about learning the tools—**training on the tools**. The Practice tests are longer, almost the same length as the Smarter CAT portion, and are more about the content—**practicing with the content**. There is only a WCAS Training Test; we do not have enough depth in the item bank to release a full test’s worth of items for a Practice Test.

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Q24: What is the difference between the right side button on the WCAP website of “Practice and Training Test” and the practice/training test we do as TAs? Do students see something different depending on which one we use?

A24: The right side button on the WCAP Portal gets you to the Training Tests using *Guest access* (where you can use any web browser and have Guest on the login screen). The Training Tests you do as a TA is what we referred to as the *Secure Brower access* (where you put in your TA login, set up a session, and then the student login to the Secure Browser). Both ways get you to the same Training Tests. Think of it as two different doorways—the *Secure Brower access* needs a lock & key, the *Guest access* only has a swinging door—which lead into a single room. Once students are in the room, everything is the same—the setup, the stimuli, the questions, the number of questions, the way the tools work, and the correct answers to the questions. See pages 6–9 of the [Online Training Test Support](#) document for detailed steps for these two access options.

Q25: Where are the answer keys to the Training Tests?

A25: The answer key to all three the Training Tests are included in the [Online Training Test Support](#) document posted on the science assessment webpage. There is a table at the start of the section for each grade levels Training Test, and then more details in the text about each item. Look for the green text that starts with “Correct answer:” after all the suggestions for working with the item type.

TRAINING TEST vs SUMMATIVE WCAS

Q26: Is the practice test adaptive? Also the actual test in June?

A26: No, the Training Tests are not adaptive. No, the summative WCAS is not an adaptive test.

Q27: Will students have the ability to manipulate the choice page?

A27: The ability to use the toggle buttons to turn settings ON or OFF on the “Choose Settings” screen is unique to the Training Tests. When students log into the summative WCAS, the first screen they will see is the “Is This Your Test?” screen, which asks them to review the test settings and confirm if they are correct. Students will not be able to change or turn any of the settings on or off at that point. All student settings for summative testing must be recorded in TIDE by the school or district test coordinator (SC or DC) prior to the day the student starts their test. (TIDE is the Test Information Distribution Engine, and is where all student information for testing is housed.)

Q28: Why are there choices to alter the practice test (color contrast) if during the actual tests they are not able to use these features?

A28: We enabled the use of the toggle buttons to turn settings ON or OFF on the “Choose Settings” screen in the Training Tests so that students could easily practice with the different settings. It is easier—and less risky—for a student to use the toggle buttons in the Training Test to turn the tool on and off, and see how their testing experience would be different, than it is to keep changing the settings in TIDE and then having the student login with the Secure Browser. (The TA is not able to change the student test settings in TIDE. That requires SC or DC level access. The risk is that if the settings were adjusted in TIDE repeatedly, they may not be correct at the time of the student’s summative test, which could then require an appeal.)

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This type of practice should be used as part of the process to determine which settings the student should have during the summative assessment. Some Designated Supports (like color contrast or the mouse pointer) could be made available to a student who does not have an IEP or 504 plan. Please read the [Guidelines on Tools, Supports & Accommodations](#) (GTSA) for details and for what to consider when making final decisions.

Q29: Can we retake the training test more than once?

A29: Yes, the Training Test can be taken more than once.

SCIENCE SPECIFIC

Q30 (repeat of Q19): Will there be a blueprint for WCAS all grade levels?

A30 (repeat of A19): The science [Test Design & Item Specifications documents](#) contain a Test Blueprint section on page 9. We hosted a webinar on January 24 titled, "Science Test and Item Specifications Release," that would be useful for you to view. The presentation slides, a recording of the webinar, and an FAQ document are posted on the Science Assessment webpage (<http://www.k12.wa.us/Science/Assessments.aspx>).

Q31: What is a stimuli or stimulus? Should we be using this verbiage with our students?

A31: The stimulus is the text on the left side of the screen, with accompanying questions on the right side of the screen. Please see the [Test Design & Item Specifications](#) documents for an explanation of the use and purpose of stimuli.

Q32: What is a locking question?

A32: Please see page 4 of the [Online Training Test Support](#) document for a written explanation.

Q33: Are the animations video only? Will student need to have headphones?

A33: Yes, the animations are video only. No, students will not need headphones.

Q34: Has a reading level been determined for the test items?

A34: The goal is to have the readability of the text in the summative WCAS two grade levels below the tested grade level. This does not include science vocabulary necessary to assess student learning of the standards, which often pushes the grade level of the text higher. During the item development process, the science team used the [Atos analyzer](#) to determine the readability level of the stimuli. They then adjusted the text as much as possible, without losing scientific accuracy. The [Test Design & Item Specifications](#) documents have "Expected DCI Vocabulary" as part of each item specification, and a page of "Expected Vocabulary Specific to the Science & Engineering Practices and Crosscutting Concepts" at the end of the document.

Q35: For multiple-select items, if 3 choices are required to be made, can a student select 2 and move on, or will an "Attention" window pop-up?

A35: No, the student will not be able to move on. Yes, an "Attention" window will pop up. Please encourage students to try this in the Training Test to see for themselves.

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Q36: How are the multi-select items scored if students get some of the answer correct but not all of it?

A36: The response must have all the choices correct to earn 1 score point (“all or nothing”). Please see the correct answers for the multi-select items in the [Online Training Test Support](#) document for examples.

Q37: How does the box for the mass of oxygen handle significant figures? If a student types in 364.2 grams, but the answer is 364.3 grams will they be marked incorrect?

A37: Please see the correct answer(s) for this item in on page 29 of the [Online Training Test Support](#) document. In general, significant figures are acceptable, but not required.

OTHER

Q38: Ack! I think I signed up as an ELPA administrator in an attempt to get in as a TA to access the Practice & Training tests card.

A38: There is no need to worry. If you selected the ELPA administrator role, and then the Practice & Training Tests card within the ELPA21 cards, you are still opening the same TA site that can start a Practice and/or Training test for Smarter, ELPA21, or the WCAS. This is another case of two different doorways getting into the same room.

Q39: How will students’ scores on WCAS be used? Will student achievement on this test factor into schools’ letter grades on the accountability index?

A39: The summative WCAS will be included as one of the assessments used in the indicators starting in 2021, known as “Phase Two” of the accountability indicators. The combined, three-year summative WCAS results from spring 2018, 2019, and 2020 will be used to identify schools in 2021.

Q40: Purpose of teacher submitting predictions?

A40: The main purpose of teachers submitting predictions of student performance through the Contrasting Groups Study (CGS) is to incorporate the professional judgement of as many teachers as possible in the Achievement Level Setting process. We can only have 30 educators per grade level in the room for Achievement Level Setting, but all 3,000 (or so) science educators in a grade level can submit predictions. In this way, all science educators in Washington can have a voice in the Achievement Level Setting process. More information will provided during the training for the CGS.

Q41: Can administrators who have a science background be part of setting cut scores?

A41: Administrators who have a science background are welcome to apply to be part of the Achievement Level Setting panel. There needs to be a variety of voices and perspectives on that panel, including the administrator voice. Invitations to apply for the panel will be sent out through the Washington Assessment Weekly (WAW) and the Science Assessment GovDelivery list later this spring.