



Program for International Student Assessment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Information for Students

What is PISA?

PISA is an international assessment of 15-year-old students that attempts to measure how well students apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics, problem solving and financial literacy. PISA presents problems that students would encounter in the real-world.

Think of PISA as an Olympics of the mind. The United States is one of 65 countries participating in PISA.

Why should I participate in PISA?

You represent other students like you all across the country. PISA informs national discussions about education as well as international competitiveness and your participation ensures fairness in the questions that will be used in the main study in 2012. Students' efforts in the field test ensure that the achievement of our nation's 15-year-olds is accurately and fairly reported.

Only 1,800 students will participate in the PISA field test in the United States.

Participating in PISA is an honor.

How often do you get to represent your county?

What subjects are assessed in PISA?

The PISA field test has many versions. Most students will take problems in mathematics. Some students will take something new called financial literacy. Financial literacy includes questions about personal finance and making decisions about using money. Some students will also be selected to take an assessment on a computer and will take reading, mathematics, problem-solving, or a combination of these subjects.

How long does PISA take?

Some students will take a paper and pencil assessment lasting about 3 hours. Some students will also take a computer-based assessment that will include mathematics, reading, or problem-solving questions, or a combination. Other students will only take the computer-based assessment.

PISA 2012



PISA
USA

PISA 2012

How does PISA select a representative sample of students?

In each PISA school, each 15-year-old student has an equal chance of being selected. From a list of all 15-year-old students in the school, 42 students are randomly selected to participate. If a school has fewer than 42 students age 15 then all 15-year-old students participate in PISA.

How did my school get selected?

The schools that participate in PISA in the United States are randomly selected from a list of all schools in the country that have 15-year-old students. This is to ensure that the U.S. participants accurately represent the whole United States and not just particular parts of the country or particular types of schools or students. Participants in other countries are selected just the same way to make sure each country is fairly represented and no country has an advantage because of types of schools or students selected.



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