

Assessment Development Committee

November 13, 2020

WebEx, Eastern Time



AGENDA

4:45 – 6:15 pm	NAEP Reading Framework Update: Status and Next Steps <i>Dana Boyd, Chair</i> <i>Mark Miller, Vice Chair</i> <i>P. David Pearson, Framework Development Panel Chair</i> <i>Cynthia Greenleaf, WestEd Reading Content Lead</i>	<i>Attachment A</i>
6:15 – 6:45 pm	Upcoming Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considering Plans in the Strategic Vision• Preparing for the NAEP Science Framework Review• Updating the Item Development and Review Policy <i>Dana Boyd and Mark Miller</i> <i>Michelle Blair, Assistant Director for Assessment Development</i>	<i>Attachment B</i>

NAEP READING FRAMEWORK UPDATE: STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

The Assessment Development Committee (ADC) is charged with overseeing, on behalf of the Governing Board, updates to assessment frameworks. Over the last several months, the Committee has received regular progress reports from the Reading Framework Development Panel, and, in turn, the Committee provided an update to the Board at the last quarterly meeting.

Given that the NAEP Reading Framework was last updated in 2004, the Framework Development Panel has focused on drafting recommendations in response to several needs – namely, the need to:

- Reflect new theoretical and research-based understandings;
- Update texts and tasks to reflect contemporary aspirations;
- Maintain separate NAEP Reading and NAEP Writing assessments per NAEP legislation, while addressing the increasingly integrated instruction and assessment of reading and writing;
- Account for the interplay between background knowledge and reading comprehension;
- Optimize the use of digitally-based assessment; and
- Represent students' reading achievement more equitably.

A draft of Development Panel recommendations was shared for public comment in Summer 2020. In response to the feedback collected in public comment, the Panel has developed a revision plan – see Attachment A3. In September 2020, the ADC met with the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology. Several questions came up in that discussion. Attachment A1 provides answers to these questions. The public comment period and the Board's related deliberations have also surfaced several central issues for Committee discussion.

The purpose of this document is to present the Committee's positions to date and to identify areas for further deliberation. The ADC has reached consensus on four central issues raised in the public comment period and Board discussion:

1. Need for an Update
2. Student Achievement Trends
3. Acknowledging Students' Context in the Assessment
4. Acknowledging Disciplinary Contexts in Informational Texts

Draft position statements for each of these four issues are listed below. On November 13, 2020, the Committee will refine these draft position statements before the full Board discussion on November 20.

NEED FOR AN UPDATE

In agreement with the Board’s unanimously adopted March 2019 decision to launch this NAEP Reading Framework Update, the ADC affirms that the NAEP Reading Framework needs to be updated.

Rationales for this draft position statement include:

- How students read has dramatically changed, due to advances in research, instruction, and technology since 2004 – when the Board last updated this framework.
- The NAEP Reading Assessment is now administered digitally (though the existing framework is for a paper-based assessment). So, NAEP must be transparent to the public on what is being assessed.
- The current NAEP Reading Framework:
 - Was written for paper-based assessment
 - Is not informed by updated state standards
 - Does not fully address the different background knowledge students bring to the assessment (students’ varying knowledge about different topics that may or may not relate to the passages presented on the reading assessment)

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TRENDS

The Board should support maintaining NAEP’s reputation as the gold-standard in measurement, while also maintaining stable reporting of student achievement trends.

Rationales for this draft position statement include:

- The Board should support NAEP’s continuous improvement to protect the quality of student achievement results.
- Research, state standards, and how students are learning and reading today is different, compared with 2004.
- Best practice in educational measurement calls for certain updates to address the affordances of digital platforms and to support a strong digitally based assessment.
- The insights that can be reported from each NAEP administration should be maximized to support robust and actionable reporting of student achievement trends over time.
- With digitally based assessment and new consensus in research, there are new opportunities for NAEP to address a perennial challenge to valid assessment of reading comprehension: background knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGING STUDENTS' CONTEXT IN THE ASSESSMENT

With the convergence of research and the advent of digitally based assessment, the NAEP Reading Assessment should expand to acknowledge the context in which readers engage with passages and tasks.

Rationales for this draft position statement include:

- Research has converged to show students' home, community, and school experiences shape their engagement, understanding, and response to text.
- The purely cognitive model in the current reading framework would continue forward, while acknowledging students' contexts.
- Acknowledging sociocultural context supports more authentic and engaging assessment.
- Acknowledging context increases guidance for digital assessment design.
- Leading international assessments have embraced this approach.

ACKNOWLEDGING DISCIPLINARY CONTEXTS IN INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

NAEP Reading must seek ways to deepen the insights available from assessment results, especially where research and curricular standards provide strong foundations for these insights. NAEP should expand reporting of student achievement in reading relative to informational text, showcasing how they read in science and how they read in social studies, broadly defined.

Rationales for this draft position statement include:

- The latest research shows differences in the knowledge and skills required for reading texts in different disciplines.
- The latest state standards tend to acknowledge these differences as well.
- New subscales deepen insights from NAEP reporting.
- While a new scaling approach for the assessment could be needed to report new subscales within informational texts, NCES has not indicated this is infeasible.

AREAS FOR CONTINUED COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

ADC discussion is ongoing for other central issues raised in public comment and Board deliberations. These issues, which will be the focus on the Committee's November 13 meeting, are:

1. Embedding Questionnaire Items into NAEP Assessments
2. Scaffolds, Also Known as Universal Design Elements
3. Additional and Related Issues
 - Universal Design Elements Addressing Background Knowledge
 - Expanded Definition of Text
 - Inclusion of Commissioned Text
 - Other issues

EMBEDDING QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS INTO NAEP ASSESSMENTS

The Committee has discussed the merits and possible pitfalls of embedding questionnaire items into the assessment. Some Committee members have noted that questionnaire items that support the validity of scenario-based tasks could possibly be considered, but other Committee members noted that several states have student privacy laws that could discourage them from participating in the assessment simply because these extra questions are included. While these questions would not contribute to NAEP scores, these questions might support deeper insights about process data and contextual questionnaire data. The questions might also inform improvements in the assessment as well as future framework updates.

The Framework Development Panel Recommendation for embedding questionnaire items is proposed for special study, i.e., it was proposed for explorational research as time, resources, and feasibility permits. To support clarity about what is a formal part of the framework, this recommendation and all other special study recommendations will be removed from the framework document. Special studies will be moved to appear in the more detailed Assessment and Item Specifications document for NCES, as is the case with all NAEP frameworks. If the Board does not approve this as an area for future research, it can also be removed from the Specifications document.

Board action on the Framework is now scheduled for May 2021. Board action on the Specifications is now scheduled for August 2021.

SCAFFOLDS, ALSO KNOWN AS UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

The Committee has requested more information on Universal Design elements, previously called scaffolds. See Attachment A2 for an overview of the Development Panel's ideas for these elements. Attachment A3 describes how the public comment draft will be updated to address Universal Design elements as well as other issues.

The ADC has reviewed the following information about how Universal Design elements contribute to measurement precision:

- Early NCES research shows these elements support all students equally.
- All Universal Design elements would be available to all students.
- Universal Design elements are widely accepted as best practice.
- Universal Design elements are already in the NAEP Reading Assessment.
- NCES indicated a need to improve measurement on the low-end of the NAEP scale, e.g., we only know what some students cannot do.
- Incorporating additional Universal Design features into NAEP Reading would support more complex tasks on the assessment, and therefore, provide space for higher rigor.

At the same time, some NAEP stakeholders perceive that these elements:

- May make the assessment more skills-based, reducing the cognitive aspect of the assessment.

- Provide assistance to only low-achievers, and therefore, hide achievement gaps.
- Lower the rigor of the assessment.

At the November 13, 2020 Board meeting, the Committee will continue to determine where it stands on this central issue, including what related guidance the Board should provide to the Framework Development Panel.

ADDITIONAL AND RELATED ISSUES

Beyond the broad issues above, there are a few more specific issues where ADC deliberation will be helpful for the Panel.

- *Universal Design Elements Addressing Background Knowledge.* The Development Panel’s revision plans to clarify that the NAEP Reading Assessment is a test of reading comprehension, not topical knowledge relating to other subject-areas. (This sort subject-area knowledge is directly addressed in other NAEP assessments, e.g., NAEP Science, NAEP Civics, NAEP U.S. History, etc.) At the same time, there is some knowledge to be assessed on the NAEP Reading Assessment. At the November 13, 2020 Committee session, Panel Chair David Pearson and WestEd Reading Content Lead Cynthia Greenleaf will summarize the knowledge that would be assessed on the NAEP Reading Assessment based on update recommendations.
- *The Expanded Definition of Text.* As noted above, one of the overarching needs that the Development Panel addressed in update recommendations was to expand NAEP’s definition of text. At the same time, some concerns have been raised about whether listening and viewing will be addressed in the NAEP Reading Assessment. Pearson and Greenleaf will also summarize the definition of text based on update recommendations, including how print-text would be centered.
- *The Inclusion of Commissioned Text.* Commissioned text refers to text and infographics authored for the purpose of the assessment. It is sometimes difficult to identify high quality materials to include in assessment, especially at earlier grades. Given this, the Panel is recommending the inclusion of commissioned texts on an as needed basis. While this would ensure that the assessment construct can be assessed in as precise a manner as possible, this would be a policy shift since currently the NAEP Reading Assessment is committed to authentic texts, i.e., texts that are found to be written by authors in the public sphere. Also, the ADC has previously noted that asking students to judge the relevance and trustworthiness of sources authored solely for the assessment could be problematic. It is important for the ADC to confirm its current consensus on this issue, before the Development Panel begins final revisions.
- *Other issues.* The Panel has deliberated extensively to determine what revisions to pursue based on public comment and Board feedback. These are listed in Attachment A3. Besides the issues listed above, are there any planned revisions that the Committee is concerned about?

***NAEP READING FRAMEWORK UPDATE:
ANSWERING QUESTIONS***

The following questions have been raised in various Board deliberations, starting in July 2020.

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1. Why did the Board decide to pursue a framework update for the NAEP Reading Assessment?

Board policy calls for frameworks to be reviewed at least once every 10 years, and the NAEP Assessment Schedule indicates a new or updated framework will be in place for the 2025 administration of NAEP, if needed. Accordingly, the Board conducted a framework review in 2018 supported by papers from and discussions with leading voices in reading, including the perspectives of educators, states, and researchers, as well as leaders who drafted the current framework. Based on this review, the consensus was that there was a need for a substantial revision of the current framework because of the significant advances in education, research, and technology since 2004.

- Technological innovations have dramatically changed how students access and interact with text. The Board’s 2018 framework review showed that the framework needed to be updated to acknowledge and reflect this reality.
- The current NAEP Reading Framework was written for paper-based assessment. To be transparent to the public about what is being assessed, each framework must explain how research and best practice is reflected in digitally based NAEP assessments. As of 2017, the assessment is digitally-based.
- The current framework does not fully address the fact that students bring different topical knowledge to each assessment. Research has long established that this knowledge has a substantial impact on reading comprehension. Accounting for this difference in knowledge is a perennial issue in all reading assessments. Further, NAEP has a unique challenge because it must be neutral with respect to curricular and instructional approaches.
- The current framework does not reflect updated state standards which call for readers to engage with complex text and write from sources.

2. To what extent do panel recommendations reflect an update as requested by the Governing Board?

The first digital administration of the NAEP Reading Assessment was conducted in 2017. Since that time, the Assessment has been revised to feature new forms of digital texts and purpose-driven tasks, Universal Design elements, and new response formats that the 2025 Framework now recommends. The 2025 Framework expands and clarifies guidance for NCES in these areas, supporting reliability and validity for the assessment.

There are two completely new updates recommended for the 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment: (a) the addition of a fourth cognitive target – asking students to use and apply what they have read; and (b) disaggregating informational texts by discipline to allow reporting of student’s reading achievement relative to texts in science and social studies. Preliminary analysis by NCES indicates that at least 90 percent of the current item pool can be considered as consistent with recommendations for the draft 2025 Framework – with some modifications. For example, carrying the full 90 percent

forward would require a more gradual implementation of recommendations to specify a purpose before a student reads a text and to structure assessment activities in a certain manner.

The remaining updates are for future years beyond 2025, depending on the time and resources available to conduct the needed research; these updates would not be implemented in the assessment if they are not supported by research.

3. What can be done to confirm that trend can be maintained before the Board adopts the framework?

Trend maintenance is largely an empirical determination. First, a content alignment study would be conducted for any framework updates, beyond minor clarifications. Then, NCES is planning to conduct a bridge study. In order for the Board to have a full guarantee that trend will be maintained: (a) the Board would need to provisionally adopt a framework update; and (b) NCES would develop items relative to that update and study their impact. Currently, any framework update process takes a minimum of 6 years, from the start of a framework update process to the implementation in the assessment (e.g., the reading framework update process started in 2019 to support an updated assessment being implemented in 2025). Putting efforts into examining if trend can be maintained ahead of final adoption of the framework would extend this timeline.

4. To what extent does past research suggest that trend can be maintained if the Board adopted the framework panel's recommendations?

The public comment draft of the framework emphasized the recommended updates without providing clear indications of how these updates represent an evolution from the current NAEP Reading Framework. The draft also did not clarify which updates were only to be implemented as research and development supported them, e.g., block-embedded questionnaire items and student choice. With these clarifications in mind, NCES estimates that at least 90 percent of the current item pool can be considered as applicable to the draft framework, with some modifications (see question #2). To support trend maintenance, NCES recommends that at least 70 percent of the 2025 item pool be items that are carried forward from the current framework. There is, however, one caveat: the newly introduced items for the 2025 item pool cannot be substantially different from those carried forward from the current framework; otherwise the risk of breaking trend is higher.

Still, the last NAEP Reading Framework update adopted by the Board in 2004 resulted in a completely new item pool for 2009 (i.e., no item carryover) because it was based on a completely new framework. At that time, the Board's expectation was that these updates would break trend. However, NCES conducted a content alignment study and a bridge study. (A report from the content alignment study is available upon request. Additional information on the Reading Trend Study is available [here](#).) The empirical analysis supported maintaining trend. In the September 23, 2020 ADC-COSDAM planning meeting, Board members reached two conclusions: (a) scaffolded tasks are already in NAEP and thus are unlikely to threaten trend; and (b) NCES maintained trend for the

2004 NAEP Reading Framework replacement, and so NCES might be able to maintain trend again for this framework update.

5. Which update(s) are likely to present the greatest challenges to stable reporting of student achievement trends in reading? Are there any studies that can mitigate these challenges?

The two largest challenges are (1) expanding the one informational text subscale into two subscales for reading in science and reading in social studies; and (2) embedding questions, somewhat similar to questionnaire items, into the assessment itself.

For the expansion of subscales, NAEP might need to explore an alternative scaling approach that has been implemented by some international assessment programs. However, the likelihood of success is not guaranteed; it is an empirical question that requires careful study. Given that the current pool of informational text assessment blocks tend to come from either science or social studies, NCES can conduct some simulations to evaluate what might happen if there were separate subscales for science and social studies.

For embedding questions into the assessment itself that are not strictly test questions, this would be new to the NAEP program, i.e., no NAEP assessment currently does this, though it has been attempted in similar assessments, such as PISA. However, embedding these questions into the assessment is proposed as a tentative update, i.e., it would only be implemented if it is supported by research. It is important to note that there are several categories of questions proposed, including topic/task familiarity and engagement/motivation. While these questions would not contribute to NAEP scores, these questions might support deeper insights about process data and contextual questionnaire data. The questions might also inform improvements in the assessment as well as future framework updates. Still, some questions, particularly those addressing engagement/motivation, could raise participation issues across states, due to privacy concerns. Finally, NCES has noted that the use of these embedded survey items does not meet the expectations for comparability, across forms, that NAEP relies on for the scaling and reporting of Reading results.

6. What did public comment say about the extent to which the draft framework reflects how students are reading today?

In the public comment draft of the NAEP Reading Framework, the definition of reading comprehension is expanded to acknowledge the physical, social, and cultural contexts of students. Comments on this sociocultural perspective on reading comprehension were submitted by 7 state administrators, 38 professors and researchers, 15 district and school personnel, 6 policy experts, 1 assessment expert, and 2 anonymous reviewers. A variety of stakeholders requested more information on the implications of acknowledging sociocultural context. Some experts feared that cognitive models of reading comprehension need to be more central or more thoroughly accounted for. Others worried like one reviewer that “Framework authors are doing everything possible to

design a test that all students will be able to pass.” The large majority of the comments praised the framework’s refined definition of reading comprehension and how it reflects current research as well as state standards.

In the public comment period, all respondents had the opportunity to respond directly to a set of feedback questions. However, 8 of the 165 respondents directly responded to a question about whether the framework reflected the latest research and understanding of how students will need to engage in their communities, as well as in national and global marketplaces. They were asked: How well does the Framework reflect appropriate expectations for our nation’s students at grade 4? Grade 8? Grade 12? Five of the eight respondents replied that the Framework reflects appropriate expectations for students, with one writing that “The framework aligns well with current theory and what we know empirically about our kids’ interactions with society in general at these ages and stages.” One respondent replied that the Framework did not reflect appropriate expectations – calling for civic literacy to be more heavily emphasized. The remaining two respondents responded in neutral terms.

Relatedly, 19 of the respondents (3 professors; 6 state administrators; 8 district/school personnel—reading experts, teachers, school administrators; 1 policy person; and 1 person from the public) responded to whether these updates to the NAEP Reading Assessment would help make NAEP results more relevant to them. No one answered the question negatively. Respondents either indicated yes (89%) to the question or asked for clarification. One teacher wrote: “Yes, I was very excited to see the Framework of reading expanded to include sociocultural elements and the expanded definition of ‘text!’ I think this is crucial to gaining a more relevant understanding of students’ reading abilities.”

7. What supports the proposal to replace the NAEP Reading informational subscale with two subscales respectively addressing reading in science and reading in social studies? What did public comment say about this proposed update?

Updating the Framework to situate NAEP assessment activities within the disciplines of literature, science, and social studies is congruent with most states’ adopted standards and recent research in disciplinary literacy.

The large majority of the respondents approved of changing the assessment from indicating how well students comprehend informational texts and literary texts to indicating how well students comprehend and engage in reading in literature, reading in science, and reading in social studies. The three disciplinary contexts were applauded by 13 professors or researchers, 2 policy experts (from the National Education Association and Step by Step Learning), 5 state administrators, 10 district/school personnel, and 2 anonymous reviewers. The 10 respondents who did not support the three disciplinary contexts did not like the text definitions within the contexts and considered the three contexts to be limited in scope. They also questioned the appropriateness of the disciplinary contexts for fourth grade or preferred the present Framework’s comparison between informational versus literary texts.

8. What is the research indicating how the “science of reading” and how “sociocultural context” should inform assessment design, in comparison with curricular or instructional design? How are 2025 framework recommendations reflecting this?

In alignment with NAEP legislation, the NAEP Reading Assessment is focused exclusively on reading comprehension. For example, foundational subskills are not assessed in the main NAEP Reading Assessment. Along with legislative parameters, this focus has been warranted on at least two levels: (1) the assessment starts at grade 4; and (2) within the 60 minutes allocated for students to complete the assessment, it is not feasible to assess both reading comprehension and foundational subskills.

The draft 2025 NAEP Reading Framework acknowledges the importance of foundational skills and makes recommendations for continued special studies of decoding and fluency to inform national education policy. The science of reading posits that phonics instruction is necessary to the acquisition of foundational reading skills. As such, it has policy implications for curriculum, but there is no research consensus on the implications for the assessment of reading comprehension. NAEP legislation and Board policy requires NAEP frameworks and assessments be curricular neutral and pedagogically neutral. Accordingly, NAEP does not test the extent to which students have been exposed to particular curricula.

The draft 2025 NAEP Reading Framework reflects current research on sociocultural context, which allows the assessment to attain greater ecological validity and to draw on a greater range of texts and tasks representative of students’ diverse experiences. This will result in more precise inferences about student reading achievement. This development in the construct is made possible because of advances in measurement and in digitally administered assessment that make valid and reliable measurement of additional contributors to reading performance feasible, drawing large scale assessment closer to best practice in standards of Universal Design for Assessment.

9. What assurances can be provided to the Board that the proposed updates represent improvements in how NAEP measures student achievement in reading?

As noted, the draft 2025 NAEP Reading Framework brings the NAEP Reading Assessment closer to best practice in standards of Universal Design for Assessment. Overall, the framework’s goal is to improve measurement so that NAEP can retain its capacity to detect changes in student achievement.

NCES will not implement any updates unless they support valid and reliable measurement. NCES has carefully reviewed the draft 2025 NAEP Reading Framework. While NCES has requested clarification on several elements of the framework and many of these clarifications will be provided in the Assessment and Item Specifications (a separate companion document), none of the assessment updates intended for 2025 were deemed infeasible from an item development perspective. The assessment updates proposed for special study, however, are not necessarily feasible; research will determine

feasibility of those proposed innovations after the implementation of the 2025 assessment.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS AND THE NAEP READING FRAMEWORK UPDATE

This overview summarizes how universal design elements, sometimes called “scaffolds”, are positioned in NAEP Reading Framework Update recommendations. Relatedly, all digital NAEP assessments include an interface tutorial to support students as they interact with the assessment. For a tour of this tutorial, use a Google Chrome browser and click [here](#).

CLASSIFYING ASSESSMENT UPDATES

As summarized by the Framework Development Panel, updates recommended for the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework and Assessment are either: (1) features carried over from the digital implementation of NAEP; or (2) features to be examined as a part of the NAEP research and development process.

I. Features carried over from the digital implementation of NAEP

Some of the new features identified as updates from the current framework to the recommended 2025 framework are not really new. Instead they are features that the Governing Board, NCES, and the NAEP community of contractors decided to implement as NAEP moved all of its assessments from a paper and pencil to a digital format over the past decade.

Universal Design features (previously called “scaffolds”) currently a part of operational NAEP assessments include:

- Purposes for reading;
- Explicit directions that guide students through the assessment;
- Background video (piloted in 2019);
- Look-back buttons (referring readers directly to point in passage at which item-relevant information is found, saving time from unnecessary scrolling);
- Resetting (providing accurate feedback about the answer to a particular item so that misinformation is not carried over to the next item);
- Avatars simulating peer collaborators; and
- Clickable definitions.

II. Features to be examined as a part of the NAEP Research and Development process

Besides the features that are already operational in NAEP, a number of recommended updates can be evaluated before 2025 as a part of the normal research and development cycle that NAEP uses in developing new assessment blocks. NAEP never introduces a new block into a live NAEP assessment until and unless it has undergone systematic scrutiny, which includes cognitive interviews with individual students, small scale tryouts under “live” testing conditions,

and field testing, whereby proposed new blocks are folded into operational blocks of a live assessment.

Updates that would be evaluated as a part of the normal NAEP assessment development process before 2025 include additional Universal Design features, such as providing background information on topic (including videos), embedded vocabulary supports, or planning tools.

PURPOSE OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

In the public comment period for the NAEP Framework Update, one question arose regarding equity and Universal Design Elements:

How can NAEP be sure that employing Universal Design Elements in the assessment does not result in an overestimate of student performance?

Universal Design Elements, a type of support available for **all** students, are “built-in features of computer-based assessments” (NCES, 2017). There are two kinds of Universal Design Elements:

- Dynamic texts and digital tools across all NAEP subject areas (e.g., highlighters, charts, videos, interactive graphs, and virtual simulations) enable test-takers to fully engage with ideas and cognitive processes being measured.
- Other features (e.g., resetting, look back buttons, clickable definitions) and item response types (drag and drop, select in text) are designed to reflect some of the ways readers use technology in the real world.

The 2025 NAEP Reading Framework seeks to extend the current range of Universal Design elements that are available to all test-takers – not to be confused with the supports NAEP provides as accommodations for some students. As such, these elements are designed to give *all* readers opportunities to access, organize, analyze, and express ideas as they engage with complex comprehension tasks.

The Framework Development Panel has summarized that in traditional standardized testing situations, the reading that students do typically involves:

- Out-of-the-blue topics and content unrelated to reading, learning, or experiences in which students are likely to have been engaged, or where students’ prior knowledge for text topics and contents is assumed to be minimal and generally distributed;
- A purpose restricted to test performance to show how well students can answer questions about random passages with little if any support, rather than one that is related to academically, personally, or socially important goals;
- Lack of access to the kinds of informational resources and social supports typically available in school, home, community, and work reading not tied to reading comprehension assessment.

As useful as such assessments have been as indices of what students can do, they do not reflect the kinds of reading that students are expected to be able do or the conditions under which they

typically read in school, home, community, and work settings. A goal of the NAEP Framework Update is to better understand what U.S. students can do in situations that more closely approximate typical real world reading. In everyday settings, readers can leverage background knowledge and experience, invoke important purposes for reading, and consult print, online, and human resources to clarify and augment the text and complete the task(s) required.

Most important for this framework update is the work that has been conducted by NCES about Universal Design Elements. Specifically, concerns that these elements provide particular benefits for less skilled comprehenders, thus obscuring their true reading performance, have not been borne out. The findings from an analysis of scenario-based tasks from the 2017 NAEP Reading assessments (ETS, 2019) show that:

- Blocks containing these elements do scale with more conventional blocks, and they are generally in the middle of the difficulty range for all blocks.
- These elements appear to provide an advantage for students across the achievement spectrum, not just for low achievers.
- There is some evidence for a particularly positive impact of these elements for more complex items—cross text synthesis for instance.

These findings were summarized for the ADC and the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) in a planning meeting on September 23, 2020.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS IN LARGE-SCALE ASSESSMENT

The Framework Development Panel has noted a large research base supporting the idea that scaffolds, in the form of Universal Design Elements, enable the NAEP Reading Assessment to situate and measure, in the most valid and equitable way possible, the kinds of comprehension processes students are expected to use in authentic home, school, and work situations.

Several existing large-scale assessments use scaffolds to:

- contextualize tasks and clarify requirements;
- help test-takers use resources to represent and organize complex ideas, and
- automate low-level tasks in time-sensitive activities to ensure test-takers focus their efforts on more cognitively demanding processes (see [ATS \(2020\)](#); [PISA \(2018\)](#); [SBAC, 2020](#)).

Digital assessment features, heavily informed by Universal Design principles, serve to make existing NAEP assessments more accessible and inclusive for all students. As outlined in NAEP’s [Going Digital: Assessments for the Future](#) (NCES, 2017), Digitally-Based Assessments (DBA) already employ many features and supports to ensure students are assessed in ways that reflect real-world experiences and how they use technology.

Some supports are available as **accommodations**, which are legally mandated for *some* but not all students (see [NAEP Accommodations](#), last updated Oct. 2019). Examples include extended time or options for responding in Braille or Sign Language.

FUNCTIONS OF PROPOSED UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

In the public comment draft of the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework, scaffolds, in the form of Universal Design Elements, are designed to accomplish one or more specific, and sometimes overlapping, functions:

Knowledge scaffolds are designed to provide context and purpose (Alexander & Jetton, 2000; CAST, 2020; Dalton & Proctor, 2008; Sparks & Deane, 2015). These might include:

- purpose setting statement,
- an introductory video with background information, or
- a word level pop-up definition of an important term not being assessed directly, in conjunction with an overall verbal/visual description of the activity and tasks.

Metacognitive and strategy scaffolds are designed to clarify requirements and help learners remember, examine, and use available resources (CAST, 2020; Dejong, 2006; Zhang & Quintana, 2012). These might include:

- a sequential set of directions,
- a graphic organizer for readers to hold and retrieve their ideas across multiple texts or tasks, or
- a testing interface that controls task completion to help readers navigate what to read and what to respond to in complex multiple source reading tasks.

Motivational scaffolds are designed to facilitate interest in and persistence with challenging tasks (Buehl, 2017; CAST, 2020; Guthrie & Klauda, 2015). These might include:

- a pre-reading vignette to stimulate engagement,
- an avatar guide to simulate authentic interactions while talking about a text, or
- a resetting feature designed to provide accurate feedback about a particular item so that misinformation is not carried over to the next item.

As noted above, examples of each type of scaffolding function already exist in the digitally-based operational NAEP Reading Assessment. In addition, examples of digital features with similar functions to support learners are proposed in the recently Board-approved 2025 NAEP Mathematics Framework.

RATIONALES FOR USE OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. Scaffolds Enable NAEP Reading 2025 to Simulate, As Much As Possible, a Real World Context

Individuals do not read in a vacuum without social, intellectual, or motivational stimuli to give purpose and context. In the real world, readers select and use tools and resources around them to access information and acquire and demonstrate their knowledge (Gutiérrez, et al., 2009; Rogoff & Lave, 1984).

Scaffolds allow assessments to situate cognitive acts of reading, to the extent possible, in real-world reading purposes and contexts (National Research Council, 2001). Offering test-takers opportunities to select resources that activate connections to their own life experiences increase opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do (Seigel, Wissehr, & Halverson, 2008).

Scaffolds embedded into dynamic and innovative assessment tasks and items help capture their ability to receive, gather, and report information just as they do in their everyday lives. As Robert Mislevy (2016) argues:

“The more complex tasks become, the more considerations arise with such matters as students’ physical capabilities, language proficiency, requisite knowledge, cultural background, and familiarity with interfaces, genres, and evaluation standards (p. 267).”

2. Scaffolds Promote Fairness and Inclusivity

Fairness, in an assessment context, refers to a judgment about the appropriateness of decisions based on test scores (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014). Research has shown that a student’s background, language, and experience is important in how they interpret assessments (Solano-Flores & Nelson-Barber, 2001). These sociocultural influences that shape student thinking must be taken into account when trying to reduce bias in assessment items (Lee, 2020; Siegel, Markey, and Swann, 2005).

Universally designed assessments (Thompson et al., 2002; 2004), which are designed for fairness and inclusivity, allow for the participation of the greatest number of students and in a way that results in more valid inferences about students’ performance.

3. Scaffolds Increase The Validity of How NAEP Measures The Construct of Comprehension Processes

In construct-centered assessment design, assessment designers strive to develop assessments that validly measure the construct in question; in this case, *comprehension processes*.

Construct validity determines whether an assessment measures what it was intended to measure, and not something else. In this case, scaffolds enable us to more accurately measure high level comprehension processes as situated in authentic, purposeful, and culturally relevant contexts. For example, by using scaffolds that provide all readers with access to similar levels of background knowledge before asking readers to respond to items focused on inferencing or critical evaluation, stakeholders can be sure that assessment scores indeed reflect differences in comprehension ability rather than differences in knowledge and experience. Thus, scaffolds allow NAEP to make more accurate interpretations of the test results, thereby increasing potential validity of test results.

Ecological validity is the extent to which assessment performance predicts performance in real-world settings. Scaffolds allow assessments to situate cognitive acts of reading, to the

extent possible, in authentic home, school, and work reading contexts and to do so in ways that are equitable and ecologically valid (Mislevy, 2016).

2025 NAEP Reading Framework Reconciliation and Revision Plan

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In June and July 2020, a draft of the 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment Framework was available to members of professional organizations and the general public for public review and commentary. A total of 2,626 comments were submitted by 158 individuals and 7 organizations. One of the responsibilities of the Development Panel is to reconcile and respond to the comments submitted during the public comment period. This document provides members of the Assessment Development Committee of the National Assessment Governing Board with a plan for how the Development Panel will revise the Draft Framework in response to the commentary submitted during the public comment period.

The plan is organized around eight themes in the public commentary: 1) The Sociocultural Model; 2) Disciplinary Contexts and Purposes; 3) Cognition, Cognitive Processes, Comprehension Targets; 4) Scaffolding and Background Knowledge; 5) Text/Literacy; 6) Vocabulary and Language; 7) Reporting; and 8) Equity. A ninth category, “Additional Issues,” is provided to describe matters that do not fit neatly into one of the eight themes. For each theme/category, the Panel provides a brief summary of the issues raised in the public commentary followed by a plan to address those issues as they revise the framework.

Sociocultural Model of Reading

There were 313 comments on the sociocultural model of reading submitted by 7 state administrators, 38 professors and researchers, 15 district and school personnel, 6 policy experts, 1 assessment expert, and 2 anonymous reviewers.

Despite many positive comments about using the sociocultural model as the underlying basis of the NAEP framework (it reflects current research, state content standards, and the importance viewing students’ background experiences as assets), the model raised many questions and prompted requests for clarification and elaboration among readers, who were puzzled by some aspects of it. Among the issues that prompted concern were an apparent lack of regard for the history of NAEP Reading Frameworks and their conceptualizations of reading comprehension, text complexity for passages in the assessment, relationships between foundational skills and reading comprehension, uses of technology, how to address student diversity in NAEP, underrepresentation of cognitive factors, an expected loss of ability to report NAEP performance trends, and a perception that the sociocultural perspective might yield a test that all students would be able to pass.

ISSUE 1. There is a need to clarify the sociocultural model of reading in comparison to other models of reading.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The revised framework will delete the claim that there is a sociocultural model underlying the NAEP assessment and instead clarify that the 2025 Framework is based upon a set of consensus findings from developments in theory, research, policy, and practices about reading comprehension and its assessment. These evidence-based insights were foreshadowed</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In spite of strong endorsements by several key partners (namely, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Council of Great City Schools and the Student Achievement Partners (CGCS/SAP)) for embracing this model, the draft framework permitted readers to infer that the sociocultural perspective replaces

<p>in earlier versions to NAEP Reading; they include but are not limited to sociocultural perspectives.</p> <p>2. To reflect this replacement, the revisions will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eliminate the separate chapter (currently Chapter 2) on a reading model and describe the consensus findings in a more compact description at the outset of the chapter on the NAEP Assessment Construct (currently Chapter 3). ● Consider giving these consensus findings a name, such as the NAEP Reading Comprehension Model. ● Emphasize the proposition that cognitive processes, while still central to comprehension in the NAEP Framework, vary according to the context in which they are enacted and the cultural resources that students bring to the assessment. 	<p>or overturns other perspectives, including cognitive perspectives, that have guided prior NAEP frameworks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The framework should reflect well-established models of reading. ● The framework should ensure that a broad, balanced, and inclusive set of factors are represented in the assessment, in accordance with Governing Board policy. ● The framework should reflect advances in research and practice, i.e., the framework should provide evidence to support the proposition that cognitive reading processes are shaped not only by neural processing inside the brain, but also by the physical, social, and cultural contexts in which those processes are enacted. ● A name, such as the NAEP Reading Comprehension Model, will help the framework be more accessible to general public audiences, in accordance with Governing Board policy.
<p>ISSUE 2. Reviewers noted specific issues in the sociocultural model that require clarification and elaboration.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. Reviewers raised questions about several features of the model (e.g., the relationship between foundational skills and comprehension, evaluating text complexity, the use of video and audio presentations of information, and the expectation that the rigor of the assessment would be lowered). These issues will be clarified in the revised framework, both in the description of consensus findings informing reading comprehension in NAEP (issue #1 above) and in sections that describe relevant features of the assessment construct and design. Within the sections of this plan for Reconciliation and Review that follow, many of these questions are addressed.</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The plans for addressing particular queries are best included in other sections of this plan for reconciliation and revision. (See sections on text/literacy, scaffolds and background knowledge, disciplinary contexts and purposes, equity, and reporting.)

Disciplinary Contexts and Purposes

There were 242 comments about this theme. Forty-two respondents discussed the disciplinary contexts, while 17 respondents discussed the two reading activity purposes. The majority of the feedback regarding the shift to disciplinary contexts was favorable: 76% approved of the shift to disciplinary contexts. 100% of webinar participants polled about the usefulness of the disciplinary contexts said that reporting subscales by the disciplinary contexts would be either “very useful” or “somewhat useful.” Experts from varied stakeholder groups, including state administrators and researchers, greatly appreciated the expansion of text types and textual environments, including the increase in multimedia and multimodal texts.

Some respondents expressed concerns about the appropriateness of disciplinary contexts for grade 4. Some raised questions about the scope of the disciplinary contexts, asking whether additional areas (e.g., mathematics, engineering, and sub-disciplines in science) should be included, and/or urging a stronger orientation toward the specific reading and inquiry practices of the disciplines invoked in the contexts. Some respondents expressed concerns on the lack of clarity of the definition of everyday texts in comparison to texts defined within other disciplinary contexts. Concerns were also raised about how the update might impact the ability of NAEP to maintain trend.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents approved of offering test takers purposes for reading. Questions addressed how the two purposes were related to disciplinary contexts, whether the two purposes were distinguishable from each other, and whether test takers would actually pursue the indicated purposes when participating in NAEP.

ISSUE 1. More clarity is needed about the intent and scope of disciplinary distinctions and the goal of reporting subscales for disciplinary contexts.

Proposed Revision Plan

1. The framework will clarify that the goal of reporting by disciplinary contexts is to broadly reflect the kinds of reading that students need to do to be successful across content-areas in school and to comprehend texts of an array of genres outside of school as they understand and solve problems that have disciplinary connections. The framework revision will clarify that the intent of introducing disciplinary contexts is to embody contemporary understandings regarding the influence of genre and content on reading comprehension and thus to more clearly represent the reading abilities of U.S. students. The intent is not to capture the specialized

Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan

- More examples and details are needed to clarify the scope of disciplinary contexts, including specific contents such as engineering and the grade appropriateness of disciplinary contexts for grade 4.
- The framework revision will retain the core ideas presented regarding disciplinary contexts because:
- As the majority of respondents demonstrated, for NAEP scores to be relevant and useful, it is critical for NAEP to go beyond reporting of scores using the generic category of informational reading to report reading comprehension performance in the contexts of science and social studies.

<p>reading and reasoning practices of disciplines and subdisciplines.</p> <p>2. The framework will address concerns regarding disciplinary contexts for grade 4 students by making clear that the distribution of texts and text types will mirror those that are part of common practice in grade 4 classrooms. The framework will also offer more example items, so readers are better able to evaluate the appropriateness of the items for grade 4, 8, and 12 students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The introduction of disciplinary contexts reflects current understandings about the significant influences of content and genre on students’ reading comprehension. These understandings are reflected in a growing body of educational theory, empirical reading research, and in many highly regarded and widely used curriculum programs. ● Most state standards (including not only English language arts standards, but also science and social studies standards) indicate a clear connection between disciplinary knowledge and vocabulary and reading within those disciplinary contexts.
<p>ISSUE 2. The framework needs to better define what is meant by “everyday” texts and the purpose of including such texts in the assessment.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The revised framework will make clear that all academic and everyday texts will be selected using the specified text complexity evaluation criteria.</p> <p>2. The framework will clarify that everyday texts will be included as part of a set of texts on the same topic within an assessment block. To clarify how everyday texts and academic texts work together in an assessment block, additional examples will be added, highlighting how disciplines use texts in different ways for different audiences.</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with the standard of ecological validity, the role of including everyday texts is not to reduce the rigor of the assessment, but to measure the extent to which students can comprehend a wide range of texts. ● This will provide a more accurate account of students’ reading performance with important types of text, in school and out. ● More examples and details are needed to clarify definition of and function of everyday texts.
<p>ISSUE 3. Additional clarity is needed regarding the intent of including the proposed purposes and the distinctions between them.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The framework describes two purposes, reading for understanding and reading for problem solving. Chapter 3 indicated that there is overlap between the two purposes (i.e.,</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The two purposes provide guidance to test designers in conceptualizing new task ideas. The reading for understanding purpose is also particularly applicable to

<p>reading for understanding is necessary when reading for problem solving). The revision will provide additional details to clarify that the two purposes overlap.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The revision will clarify that all disciplinary contexts will include both purposes. Contexts and purposes vary independently of each other. The revision will further clarify that the benefit of providing clarity of purpose for test takers does not require test takers to adopt this purpose for successful demonstration of performance on the test. 	<p>discrete passages and tasks, so including it offers NAEP test designers leeway in utilizing existing assessment blocks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research supports the addition of purpose to all blocks: When readers are provided with an initial purpose for reading, they engage more deeply and are therefore more reliably able to demonstrate their ability to comprehend passages. Research indicates that when readers are provided with an initial purpose for reading, there is an increase in ecological validity for the assessment’s tasks. In real life, it is rare to be asked to do something with no stated purpose; by including a purpose for NAEP reading tasks, test-takers have an initial context for their test-taking. Consequently, tasks will appear to have greater face validity.
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Cognition, Cognitive Processes, and Comprehension Targets

Forty-four individuals made 111 comments about this theme, with slightly more requests for clarification than indications of approval of the treatment of cognition and comprehension theme, including key NAEP partners such as the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS). Several reviewers requested further elaboration of the role of cognitive processes within the overall sociocultural model, mirroring many of the comments for the theme of the sociocultural model of reading; these requests included more information about foundational skills, metacognition, self-efficacy, engagement, and/or affective issues in the discussion of the sociocultural model. Regarding comprehension targets, reviewers, including partner CGCS, appreciated the new name (comprehension targets, rather than cognitive targets). The new target ‘use and apply’ attracted both approval (noting, for example, its similarity to many state ELA assessments) and concern (wondering whether it might be too challenging for fourth graders).

<p>ISSUE 1. Cognitive perspectives are viewed by some readers as either underrepresented or ambiguously represented in the sociocultural model.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> See issue #1 in the theme of the sociocultural model of reading; the plan is to provide a more balanced treatment of all theoretical perspectives on reading. In addition, the plan is to provide better highlighting of the cognitive carry-over 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading comprehension is shaped by a broad, balanced, and inclusive set of factors emanating from the most recent reading comprehension theory, research, policy, and practice.

<p>from the current NAEP Framework to the proposed NAEP Framework.</p>	
<p>ISSUE 2. Writing from sources is not a prominent feature of the NAEP Reading Assessment. Because no current NAEP assessments measure writing from sources, some reviewers recommended that NAEP Reading include such tasks to be parallel with many state ELA assessments.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will address this issue in sections that describe the assessment construct and assessment design. 2. The Assessment and Items Specification document will suggest that the Governing Board consider this issue across the entire portfolio of NAEP assessments. For example, it is advisable that NAEP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine during their normal research and development efforts whether it is feasible to double score extended constructed response items for both reading comprehension and for writing. • Consider extending block times beyond 30 minutes to allow more time for writing from sources. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As NAEP partner CCSSO suggests, other prominent assessments and state standards, especially state ELA assessments, require reading and writing from sources. Without a writing from sources assessment, NAEP may be out of step with this important practice. • The issue of how writing can be measured goes beyond the boundaries of the NAEP Reading Assessment; however, there are opportunities in the 2025 Reading Assessment where NAEP might gain some insights on reading and writing from sources. • In the current schedule of NAEP assessments, there is no plan for direct writing assessment until 2029. Given the importance of writing as a tool for learning and thinking, a master plan for assessing writing, hopefully within and across disciplinary contexts, is crucial.
<p>ISSUE 3. Fine tuning is needed for some of the comprehension targets. Sometimes the distinctions between the comprehension targets are not precise. For example, it is not clear how items developed to emphasize “analyze” will differ from those emphasizing “interpret.”</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel will revisit the section on comprehension targets with an eye toward increasing the clarity of the type of inferences involved across comprehension targets. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension targets have exhibited a high degree of overlap in previous studies, which is one reason why reporting by comprehension targets has not been implemented. This is similar to other NAEP assessments

<p>2. The framework will encourage the NAEP community to evaluate the validity and reliability of the cognitive target descriptions as a part of the item development process.</p>	<p>such as math, where high levels of correlation between different targets have been documented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These sorts of evaluations have proven useful to the NAEP community to update definitions of targets and sharpen distinctions among the descriptions for each of the four comprehension targets.
<p>ISSUE 4. It is not clear whether, and if so, how NAEP might measure important critical reading practices such as searching, sourcing, and adjudicating the trustworthiness of information across multiple sources.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The framework will make clear that these possibilities are licensed by the descriptions of the analyze and evaluate comprehension targets and the assessment design. The Framework will describe these possibilities more fully and provide clear examples to illustrate them.</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is essential, especially in this age of ever-expanding information, to ensure that we measure these important critical reading skills. • With the increasing capacity of the NAEP digital format to navigate within and across texts, measuring students' capacity to perform these tasks is more feasible than ever.
<p>ISSUE 5. The relationship between comprehension and foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, decoding, and fluency is not adequately addressed in the Framework.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The revised framework will make the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAEP Reading assessment, which begins in fourth grade, is charged with assessing reading comprehension, the desired outcome of any and all school literacy curricula. • This practice provides states, districts, and schools with the maximum possible prerogative in curricular decisions. • From time to time (1992, 2004, and 2020), NAEP has authorized special studies in which researchers have piggybacked on the Fourth Grade NAEP Reading Assessment with follow up assessments of fluency (1992, 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because NAEP is required to avoid specific curriculum recommendations, it needs to exercise caution in expanding the reporting of outcomes on a large number of processes that might be considered curricular components. • Most standards expect students to have mastered foundational skills by 4th grade, and the NAEP Reading Assessment in grade 4 reflects grade-appropriate texts and expectations. Those expectations focus on reading comprehension. • Recurring studies of the foundation skills-comprehension relationship provide important supplementary perspectives

<p>2004, 2020) and word recognition and decoding (2020) to study the relationship between foundational skills and reading comprehension more thoroughly.</p> <p>2. NAEP should consider shorter intervals (e.g., every 6 years) between these special studies.</p>	<p>on students’ performance.</p>
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Scaffolding and Background Knowledge

Scaffolding and background knowledge received 215 comments. NAEP partners such as CGCS favored many of proposed ideas for scaffolds to build needed topic knowledge “on the spot” to enable students to access the assessment. Reviewers appreciated the inclusion of Universal Design Elements to inform the Framework and stakeholders from across groups appreciated “the inclusion of the scaffolds descriptions and examples” and the comparison of current and future uses of scaffolds. Clarification was requested regarding how “scaffolds” and related terms are defined, who will have access to them, and whether or not they could potentially contaminate the construct by providing answers to comprehension questions. Additional explanation was requested regarding how and why scaffolds are currently used in large-scale assessments. Some reviewers were concerned that scaffolds would take extra time in blocks and questioned whether scaffolds should be included in all blocks.

<p>ISSUE 1. More clarity is needed about what is meant by scaffolds, who will have access to the scaffolds, and whether or not they will contaminate the construct by providing answers to the comprehension questions.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The description of scaffolds will be revised to more clearly communicate their purpose as design elements that help to increase the validity of test score interpretations without diminishing the rigor or complexity of the 2025 assessment tasks. In keeping with NAEP’s existing use of Universal Design Elements, or “built-in features of computer-based assessments that are available to all students,” the term scaffolds will be replaced by Universal Design Elements (UDEs) throughout the NAEP 2025 Reading Framework. A UDE will be defined as <i>a design element that helps learners access, organize and express ideas in order to accomplish complex tasks</i>. In the 2025 NAEP Reading 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAEP 2025 includes comprehension tasks that are complex and challenging. Students bring diverse knowledge and motivations to such reading comprehension tasks. Background knowledge is essential to comprehension, but previous standardized tests have not dealt adequately with this issue. The provision of topic previews (e.g., 30 second videos) prior to students’ reading about a topic can help to ameliorate the varied exposure students have had to a topic but will not give students answers to test items. Motivation influences comprehension performance. Thus, supporting student motivation will increase precision of measurement.

<p>Assessment, all students will have access to these UDEs.</p> <p>4. This definition will be situated in a Universal Design for Assessment (UDA) framework to help readers understand that the purpose of Universal Design Elements is to more accurately capture the construct NAEP intends to measure when diverse students take an assessment. UDEs enable stakeholders to be sure that assessment scores reflect differences in comprehension ability rather than differences in topical knowledge and motivation, thereby increasing the potential validity of interpretations from test results.</p> <p>5. The revision will clarify how the framework will build on NAEP’s existing use of Universal Design Elements that includes digital tools (e.g., highlighters) and other task guidance elements (e.g. graphic organizers, look back buttons, eliminating answer choice tools) that help all students access, analyze, and organize content while also minimizing construct irrelevance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadening the range of Universal Design Elements accessible to all readers across all subject areas ensures scores on NAEP Reading reflect both construct validity and ecological validity. ● “Universally designed assessments” are designed and developed from the beginning to allow participation of the widest possible range of students, and to result in valid inferences about performance for all students who participate in the assessment. Universally designed assessments add dimensions of fairness and equity to the testing process, requiring that all examinees be given a comparable opportunity to demonstrate their standing on the construct(s) the test is intended to measure. ● While it is not possible to fully control for construct-irrelevant variance associated with diverse students’ differing motivation and background knowledge, it is incumbent on NAEP to minimize such variance as much as possible now that there are reliable and feasible ways to do so, facilitated by digitally based assessment.
<p>ISSUE 2. More explanation is needed about how and why scaffolds (now called Universal Design Elements) are used in large-scale assessments.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. Examples will be woven into relevant sections of the framework to explain how the proposed resources are similar to design elements in several existing large-scale national and international assessments, including the 2017 NAEP Reading Assessment and the 2025 NAEP Mathematics Assessment. Many of these elements are designed to contextualize tasks and help test-takers represent and organize complex ideas under time constraints. They ensure</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● These kinds of design elements are already used in existing national and international assessment frameworks such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ATS (2020) ○ PISA Reading Framework (2018) ○ Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (2020) ● Studies have shown that the UDEs in the current NAEP Reading Assessment do not interfere with students’ responses to comprehension items, and in fact, early research indicates UDEs are equally helpful to all students.

<p>that test-takers focus their efforts on more cognitively demanding comprehension processes.</p>	
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Text/Literacy

There were 193 comments submitted on Text/Literacy. While experts from varied stakeholder groups, including state administrators and researchers, greatly appreciated the expansion of text types and textual environments, including the increase in multimedia and multimodal texts, some experts asked for additional clarification regarding how the definition of text is being expanded and how related terms would be defined. A few, including the CGCS, asked whether NAEP would continue to test students on their comprehension of unfamiliar texts or topics. Some researchers suggested that the framework needed to clarify the treatment of text complexity in different sections of the framework. Clarification was requested regarding whether the test is measuring computer skills or literacy skills and some concern was expressed regarding the possibility of including commissioned texts versus exclusively using authentic texts.

<p>ISSUE 1. More detail is needed regarding how the definition of text is being expanded and to clarify terms in the explanation.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revised framework will more fully describe the relationships among different forms of representation (static printed texts, video, audio, and graphic formats) and specify which forms are a part of the text portfolio for the NAEP Reading Assessment. 2. The revised framework will clarify terms such as multimedia, multimodal, reader attributes, everyday texts, and navigational complexity. 3. When relevant, it will also provide explicit examples at different grade levels. 4. The revised framework will also clarify that 4th graders are already asked in the current NAEP to locate information in multimodal texts but usually, that information will be used in conjunction with other texts and text features such as maps and timelines, and diagrams with captions. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NAEP cannot claim to measure the full range of students’ comprehension performance without sampling from the text formats and modalities that characterize both school curricula and the modern array of texts encountered in everyday life. ● Many 4th grade standards reflect the kinds of texts that children use in the real world. For example, the Common Core State Standards in ELA Reading Literature call for 4th graders to: “Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.” ● Many current assessments, including state assessments, PISA, GISA, and SAIL have demonstrated that comprehension of this wide array of text formats and modalities can be measured with high degrees of reliability

	and validity.
ISSUE 2. Clarification is needed regarding whether the test is measuring computer skills or literacy skills.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revised framework will clarify how a broader range of diverse texts (print, digital, and multimodal) situated in a digital environment, necessitates additional ways of comprehending, and will clarify how these ways are part of the intended assessment construct. 2. The revision will also clarify that the assessment will measure the comprehension targets as situated in a digital environment not computer skills (such as using a scroll bar). 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitally based assessments measure comprehension within the context of a digital environment. However, the assessment is not measuring computer skills. In fact, students receive training at the beginning of the assessment to help orient them to their digital environment and to provide practice with computer skills. Thus, such skills are used during the assessment but not actually measured by the comprehension items.
ISSUE 3. More clarification is needed regarding what is meant by authenticity of texts and how and why NAEP might consider including commissioned texts.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will clarify that the vast majority of texts would be authentic (texts that represent the sorts of texts students regularly encounter when reading in school, community, home, and work settings) but will elaborate the reasons why it is important to leave open the possibility of commissioned texts. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the majority of texts will be authentic, it is important to leave open the possibility of commissioned texts to meet testing requirements. This supports the test developers to ensure that they can measure the comprehension targets within the constraints of the assessment conditions and time.
ISSUE 4. More clarification is needed regarding whether and how text complexity will be operationalized and how reader attributes will be factored into notions of text complexity.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarification will be provided throughout the framework that NAEP intends to use the highest quality methods of evaluating text complexity available. These include quantitative, qualitative, and reader/task analytical methods. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New psychometric methods for determining quantitative text complexity have been developed since the last framework was published. Ongoing psychometric research supports stronger quantitative measures of text complexity.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The revision will clarify that texts selected for the 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment will reflect a broad range of settings and experiences and offer varied levels of text complexity. 3. Additional explanations will be provided clarifying that the text complexity standard of reader-text connections has nothing to do with the plans for providing indicators of reader attributes or reader engagement in what have been labeled explanatory variables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In the text evaluation and selection process, reader attributes and engagement data are collected as part of understanding the reader/task dimensions of text complexity during field testing.
<p>ISSUE 5. More clarification is needed regarding what counts as text and why.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revised framework will provide additional clarification regarding how the expanded definition of text is aligned with the construct of reading comprehension on which the 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment will focus. 2. The revision will clarify that the centrality of print texts cannot and should not be abandoned. However, the expanded definition of text, coupled with the ever-increasing presence of multiple ways of representing information in today’s digital world, requires NAEP to acknowledge and include non-print texts. 3. The framework will provide more clarity about whether and to what degree texts will reflect the diverse backgrounds of U.S. students. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The current NAEP Reading Assessment makes use of charts, graphs, maps, and other infographics, as well as short videos. These text types are included as informational texts and as part of text sets designed for Scenario-Based Tasks. The 2025 NAEP Reading Framework continues and adds to the text types in the currently administered NAEP Reading assessment and makes this wider array of text types and their role in assessment explicit. ● This expanded definition of text is aligned to the current contexts of literacy development, state standards, and instructional practice; the internet and digital devices have made multimodal and dynamic forms of representation ubiquitous in society and classrooms alike. The 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment must reflect this changing landscape in order to maintain relevance and ecological validity. ● Students in U.S. schools live and learn in a wide range of contexts—urban, rural, or suburban—and bring a wide spectrum of experiences and knowledge to reading comprehension practices. Moreover, students represent a wide range of communities of different ethnic, cultural, and linguistic strengths and in-and out-of-school experiences.

	Therefore, as commended by CGCS, “the texts in the 2025 NAEP will reflect this wide range of communities.”
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Vocabulary and Language Structures

Thirty-two respondents made 106 comments about vocabulary and language structures. Almost half of them voiced approval of how vocabulary and language structures were conceptualized and included in the 2025 Framework. In particular, the CGCS appreciated the inclusion of discourse structures and morphology in the expanded view of vocabulary. A few respondents wanted more information on how students’ vocabulary performance would be scored as part of NAEP, what was meant by language structures, and why disciplinary words and certain language structures were not assessed in the 2025 Framework. One-fourth of the respondents, including the CGCS, asked for more emphasis on foundational skills. Respondents interested in the assessment of English learners approved of letting them respond in their home languages to open-ended questions, but a few wanted to know how the home-language responses would be measured.

ISSUE 1. Clarification is needed on how students’ vocabulary performance will be scored on NAEP, what is meant by “language structures,” and why discipline-specific words and certain language structures are not assessed on the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework.

Proposed Revision Plan

1. The revision will clarify that students’ performance on items that measure vocabulary and language structures will not be reported independently. Instead, scores on items that measure key vocabulary and language structures will be assigned to one of the four comprehension targets proposed in the 2025 NAEP Framework.
2. The revision will provide and fine-tune examples in the Framework to clarify what is meant by “language structures” in terms of discourse structures (relations across words and phrases) and word structures (word parts).
3. Discipline-specific words will not be tested.
4. The “if..., then” language structure will be removed as an example. The revision will state that only grade-appropriate language structures will be included in the test items.

Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan

- Psychometrically, to report independent scores for vocabulary and language structures requires many items, which could dramatically increase the size of the NAEP item pool. In previous studies, vocabulary did not emerge as a factor independent of comprehension. By coding the items in terms of language demands, analyses that examine the role of language knowledge on reading comprehension can be conducted. This will result in an assessment that views language and comprehension as inherently interrelated.
- The definition of language structures is linguistically sound, but readers may need more examples to understand it.
- It is important to clarify that NAEP Reading will not test disciplinary knowledge, which is tested on other NAEP disciplinary assessments, but will test students’ understanding of texts within disciplinary contexts. NAEP

	will only include vocabulary and language structures that states consider grade appropriate.
ISSUE 2. Clarity is needed regarding how English Learners’ home-language responses to open-ended comprehension questions will be measured.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. Although this issue received positive responses, it will necessitate further study, so will not be in the revised Framework. In the Assessment and Item Specifications document to the 2025 Framework, a special study related to this issue will be described.</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English learners’ home-language responses can be digitally translated into English and scored for how well the content and ideas demonstrate text comprehension. This could result in a more valid measure of English learners’ comprehension of English text because research shows that English learners often comprehend more than they can communicate in English.

Reporting

There were 337 comments on the reporting proposals in the draft framework. The great majority of reviewers appreciated proposals to make the assessment more useful and informative to the public through the inclusion of explanatory reader and contextual variables, especially valuing the focus on factors malleable to change through educational policies and instructional improvement. The majority also applauded recommendations that NAEP report on additional categories of English learners and disaggregate SES within broader demographic group categories.

Questions arose regarding the intent and possible misuse of explanatory variables as well as how these would factor into scoring. Some reviewers expressed concerns that explanatory variables might be used in negative ways against certain populations - to blame teachers or particular groups of students for NAEP outcomes. Some reviewers expressed concern that reader variables would alter the assessment experience, potentially influencing student responses or reducing expectations by determining students’ pathways through the assessment. Finally, a few reviewers suggested that the term “explanatory” could raise invalid inferences about causality and questioned whether block-embedded questions could change student responses on the assessment.

ISSUE 1. The purpose of the explanatory variables was not clear to some reviewers. Some public feedback indicated that the description of explanatory variables was vague.	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will clarify that explanatory variables and contextual variables (administered in NAEP survey questionnaires) are one and the same. 2. The revision will clarify that these variables are intended to provide policymakers with indices of potential factors related to comprehension that are malleable through instruction and school/classroom climate. 3. The framework will provide further explanation about how these variables (which include both reader attributes and environmental variables) can be used to inform policy decisions about curricular and pedagogical matters. 4. The revision will provide more precise identification of variables. Each variable will be named, defined, and illustrated. 5. The 2025 Reading Framework will not include block-embedded indicators of these variables, relying instead on post-assessment questionnaires and process data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The framework for the 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment extends previous reading frameworks by acknowledging the social and cultural context for cognitive processes in reading comprehension. In addition to formulating the assessment tasks with this perspective, it is important to be clear about the individual and contextual facilitators of reading development and performance in this framework. Existing research in human development stresses the importance of students’ experience and perceptions of experience. ● CGCS strongly supported measuring students’ assets—what they know and find interesting and opportunities to leverage funds of knowledge and resources, stating that “significant overhauls of what is reported and how are long overdue.” Accounting for more of the factors that contribute to student reading achievement is desirable. Precision of measurement should be maximized. Emphasizing malleable factors will increase the utility of NAEP. ● Validated measures exist and these will guide the development of questionnaire items and scales. Reference to publications containing measures will be provided.
<p>ISSUE 2. Questions arose regarding the intent and possible misuse of explanatory variables.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revised framework will clarify that the possible misuse of explanatory variables will be minimized because individual student achievement scores are not provided by NAEP, and the data on explanatory variables will be strictly confidential. It will further clarify that data on the linking of student characteristics to performance will be available only at the State and National levels of aggregation and will be offered to the public through the NAEP data explorer. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The presence of strong explanatory/contextual variables will decrease the likelihood of misinterpretation of higher and lower comprehension performance. ● Disaggregating reporting within race/ethnicity and SES will allow the field to view diversity within groups, helping to avoid stereotypes.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The revised framework will state that explanatory variables will depict the factors associated with success within and across diverse groups. 3. The revision will clarify that survey items and scales will be drawn from existing validated measures in which there have not been issues of invasiveness. 	
<p>ISSUE 3. Some reviewers requested details about how the assessment would be scored. Questions arose regarding how the explanatory variables would factor into scoring.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will clarify that explanatory variables will not be part of reading scores and will not be used to differentiate the challenge of assessment items given to students. 2. The technical specifications will describe the scoring process in detail. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important to keep comprehension performance distinct from explanatory data collection activities. ● Validated measures for each of the proposed explanatory variables exist and these will guide the development of questionnaire items.
<p>ISSUE 4. Concerns that the term “explanatory” might raise invalid inferences and whether block-embedded questions might change student responses.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will clarify that explanatory variables provide indices of factors related to comprehension and that these will not be presented as causal factors in reading achievement. 2. The panel will consider discarding the label <i>explanatory variables</i> in favor of the more commonly used term, <i>contextual variables</i>, as they are referred to in all NAEP assessments. 3. The revision will clarify that data relating to these variables will be collected through surveys will be administered after all comprehension tasks are completed and thus will not influence performance scores in any way. Thus, these 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The term explanatory (as opposed to the more common label of contextual) variables was initially chosen as a more precise label for the combination of indicators that are attributes of individual readers (referred to as reader variables) and those that are attributes of the settings in which reading and learning to read occur (referred to as environmental variables). It will be important to retain these distinctions among the contextual variables to better support public interpretation of NAEP scores. ● Forgoing the term “explanatory variables” will avoid the implication that these variables “cause” changes in reading comprehension rather than providing hypotheses to guide

<p>variables cannot influence the students’ responses during the assessment.</p>	<p>decisions about policy and practice. The term contextual variables does not imply causality, and mirrors other NAEP assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important emphasize the important role that process data (computer generated traces of how students traversed the texts and comprehension items) may be used to better understand NAEP results. ● Embedding questions beyond test questions into assessment blocks may be proposed for special studies in the Assessment and Item Specifications for the 2025 Framework. Given the needed research and development, these questions would not be expected as part of the NAEP Reading Assessment for 2025, though they could be feasible at a later time.
<p>ISSUE 5. While reviewers supported the inclusion of additional categories of English Learners, questions arose about the feasibility of including these categories.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. The revision will acknowledge that states use varied means for determining English proficiency. At the same time, given ESSA standards, states are required to provide information that might be collected to identify additional categories of English Learners.</p>	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing numbers of English learners are enrolled in the nation’s schools. While the 2004 NAEP Reading Framework recommended a special study to determine how English Learners performed on the assessment, this study was never completed. Without the means of differentiating English learners by varying levels of English proficiency, NAEP risks continued inability to determine the progress this growing population of students is making in reading comprehension performance.

Equity

Fifty respondents made 118 comments about equity. Thirty-six percent of the respondents viewed the Framework’s treatment of equity favorably, including the CGCS who stated, “It is critical to focus on equity.” CGCS also commented that the “new activity structures should do much to engage a greater variety of students and thereby yield a more accurate picture of students’ reading abilities.” Nine respondents liked the possibility of letting English learners use their home languages to answer questions about

English texts, and four liked disaggregating student scores by socioeconomic status and/or English learner status. In contrast, 14 respondents were concerned about the limited focus on students with special needs. Eleven respondents questioned whether the proposed technological advances in NAEP would require more time for some students to complete the assessment and/or pose access problems. Several respondents did not understand the priority placed on equity in the 2025 Reading Framework and questioned whether the equity approach would lower expectations for minority students or hide achievement gaps.

ISSUE 1. Clarification is needed regarding how students with special needs will be accommodated in the 2025 Reading Framework.

Proposed Revision Plan

1. There should not be a limited focus on students with special needs in the 2025 Framework. The Framework revision will state that approved accommodations for students with disabilities will continue to be used in accordance with the Governing Board’s policy on the testing and reporting of students with disabilities.

Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan

- The Governing Board’s policy regarding the assessment of students with disabilities will be stated and followed.
 - For reading assessments, this means that texts cannot be read aloud to students because reading aloud would violate the fundamental reading assessment construct itself.

ISSUE 2. Clarifications are needed to indicate that technological advances and the inclusion of texts that reflect students’ diverse backgrounds will not result in inequities for some students.

Proposed Revision Plan

1. The revision will state that the use of technological advances (e.g., avatars) will be piloted through NAEP research and development protocols, resulting in an assessment that can be completed within appropriate time constraints to avoid “test fatigue.”
2. The revision will clarify that orientation and practice tasks will be provided as much as possible to diminish access issues, e.g., this is currently presented in an interface “tutorial” format for all NAEP digital assessments.
3. The framework will explain that diversifying texts/authors does not mean personalizing the test content or making the test easier for some students. To achieve a variety of texts/authors/themes, each text selected will comply with the

Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan

- NAEP’s research and development protocols and piloting procedures will be followed to make sure that technological advances result in an assessment that can be completed within appropriate time limits.
- It is imperative that the amount of orientation and practice tasks result in equitable access for all students as much as possible.
- An important goal is for all students to be assessed on texts that reflect cultures/experiences other than their own. The aim is to provide a diverse enough selection of texts to assess students in comprehending texts that are both closer and farther away from their own cultures and experiences.

<p>requirements for text quality and complexity to measure grade-appropriate comprehension established by the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To keep NAEP relevant, a variety of texts, authors, themes, and perspectives that better reflect the U.S. student body and the curricula of U.S. schools is necessary. In no way, does this variety compromise the level of difficulty of texts/items or the reliability of the data, nor does it tailor testing to particular groups.
<p>ISSUE 3. Clarification is necessary to explain why an explicit priority on equity has been included in the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework, and why implementation of this priority will not result in lower expectations for minority students or artificially decrease the achievement gap.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revision will state that the focus of NAEP 2025 on equity is guided by two priorities supported by professional organizations and the latest APA/NCME/AERA standards for assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to measure disparities in students’ reading achievement in a way that minimizes test bias to the maximum extent possible; ● to measure disparities in students’ access to resources and opportunities to learn shown to be associated with unequal reading outcomes. 2. To minimize test bias, the revision will explain that the NAEP 2025 Framework will include representation from a range of diverse groups (culturally, ethnically, linguistically, and economically) to construct the test. Also, assessment, education and disciplinary experts from a variety of backgrounds will bring the highest level of expertise and a balanced variety of perspectives to make sure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● text distribution is not skewed too much in any direction and reflects authentic voices; and ● the highest quality standards are followed to measure students’ grade-level reading comprehension. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Although the 2017 NAEP Framework stated that NAEP legislation specifies that the purpose of NAEP is “to provide, in a timely manner, a fair and accurate measurement of student academic achievement...” (p. 2), the 2017 Framework did not mention or delineate an equity approach. For equity to be taken seriously, it is important to define it and to indicate how it will influence the 2025 NAEP Reading Framework. ● Reducing test bias does not lower expectations. The 2025 NAEP Reading Assessment will not be easier for some. Instead, a more complex assessment that reflects the demands of 21st century reading will measure all students in the same way, without adjusting the texts or items to particular students or groups of students. ● Documenting disparities in students’ access to resources and opportunities does not lower expectations. Reporting results by students’ characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity or SES), as if all students within a group were the same, and without offering any complementary information to contextualize and better understand the circumstances in which low-performing readers learn is in fact one way to contribute to lowering

<p>3. The revision will explain that by providing more nuanced reports that display variability within groups, and by measuring disparities in resources and opportunities to learn, the 2025 Framework seeks to make variability within groups and variables associated with reading performance more visible.</p>	<p>expectations. Instead of portraying student groups as unitary and homogeneous, proposed updates will yield a more nuanced and complete measure to better understand reading disparities as the result of many factors</p>
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Additional Issues

A few other important issues arose in public comments that are delineated here, along with plans for reconciliation and revision based on concerns raised.

<p>ISSUE 1. Some reviewers requested clarification regarding the role of knowledge in determining reading comprehension performance on the NAEP assessment.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Framework will clarify the role of knowledge in shaping the comprehension process and describe the ways in which knowledge is involved in the NAEP Reading Assessment construct. Specifically, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some (not all) blocks, students will be exposed to a brief text, video, or audio recording to facilitate their access to the topic addressed in the text(s) for which they will be asked to demonstrate their comprehension. In the Assessment and Item Specifications for the Framework, a special study will be proposed to examine the utility of including pre-reading knowledge probes (questions embedded in assessment blocks) that could be used to report comprehension in relation to students’ self-reported knowledge of the topics covered in the texts they read. While acknowledging the importance of topic knowledge and familiarity, the revision will clarify that the NAEP Reading Assessment is a test of reading comprehension, not topical 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While no reading assessment can fully remove the effect of background knowledge, there are measures that need to be taken so that the assessment is accurately and validly measuring reading comprehension, not purely background knowledge. Including pre-reading previews of the general topic of the texts facilitates access to the relevant knowledge domain. Including self reports of topical knowledge would allow NAEP to interpret comprehension scores as a function of self-reported familiarity with the topics students encounter in the texts. Anticipating which students—or groups of students—know which content is an impossible task. Documenting students’ self-reported background knowledge will enable NAEP to monitor how well related initiatives are implemented and to improve the assessment on the basis of these data.

<p>knowledge. (This sort of knowledge is directly addressed in other NAEP assessments, e.g., NAEP Science, NAEP Civics, NAEP U.S. History, etc.)</p>	
<p>ISSUE 2. Some reviewers expressed concerns that the proposed updates may threaten the ability of NAEP to maintain trend.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The framework will emphasize the evolutionary (not revolutionary) nature of the insights in the updated framework by illustrating continuity between the current framework and prior NAEP artifacts—the frameworks, underlying theoretical models, and the elements of the assessments themselves. 2. The revision will assert that carryover and maintenance of trend are highly likely, given the history of trend maintenance across frameworks from 1992 to 2009 and the plans for 2025. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key partners, including CCSSO and CGCS, recommended clarifying what in the current Framework is being maintained and charging psychometricians with figuring out how to longitudinally link the new test with prior tests. ● Note that compared to changes between the 1992 and 2009 frameworks the current framework calls for relatively modest changes that might affect trend. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 2009 framework reflected no carryover of blocks from 1992; the 2025 Framework will allow for possibly a 90% carryover of currently operational blocks. ○ Compared to the stances used to generate items in the 1992 Framework, the heuristic for item development in the 2009 Framework was based on a totally new approach (cognitive targets); the 2025 Framework reflects approximately a 75% conceptual carryover, with one minor revision (critique and evaluate is renamed analyze and evaluate) and one new target (use and apply). ○ Even with zero item carryover from the incumbent framework/assessment, trend was not broken between 1992 and 2009

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The psychometric tools at NAEP’s disposal for maintaining trend are robust, even when confronted with major conceptual and operational changes.
<p>ISSUE 3. Questions arose regarding the cost implications and feasibility of the proposed updates.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <p>1. While cost considerations are not in the purview of the framework, the framework revision will acknowledge that budget limitations will, of course, influence the implementation of proposed updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In particular, the revision will acknowledge that additional data collection activities, such as the collection of additional categories of English Learners or extending the time allocated to blocks, may have cost implications. • The Assessment and Item Specifications document for NCES will note that special studies also carry cost implications, both in carrying them out initially and in implementing features that have been shown to improve the quality and relevance of the assessment. 	<p><u>Rationale for Proposed Revision Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCES and its contractors regularly carry out research and development processes and invest, from time to time, in special studies for the continuous improvement of NAEP Assessments. • Proposed updates build substantially on the existing NAEP Reading Assessment. • The proposed updates will maximize the value of NAEP to the nation and extend the depth of measurement and reporting given the affordances of digital based assessment, in keeping with the Governing Board’s Charge to the framework panel.
<p>ISSUE 4. A number of requests for detail about text evaluation and selection, the validity of measurement techniques, scoring and Achievement Level Descriptors were made. These will be addressed in the Assessment and Specifications document for NCES.</p>	

Upcoming Activities

The ADC develops recommendations for what NAEP should assess and exercises final authority over all NAEP items. At the November 13, 2020 Committee meeting, ADC members will discuss updates on several ongoing activities. Feedback will be used to refine plans and next steps.

Considering Plans in the Strategic Vision

In September 2020, the Board adopted a new Strategic Vision (attached). The Board is just beginning to develop work plans for carrying the Strategic Vision forward. One strategic priority specifically addresses framework and assessment updates. On an ongoing basis, the ADC will consider how to:

“Optimize the utility, relevance, and timing of NAEP subject-area frameworks and assessment updates to measure expectations valued by the public.”

Preparing for the NAEP Science Framework Review

Periodically, the Governing Board reviews existing NAEP frameworks to determine if changes are warranted. The ADC takes the lead in executing these reviews. Each framework review is conducted to determine if an update is necessary, and if so, what type of update, i.e., minor changes, an update, major overhaul. While several frameworks require updates to address digital based assessment, there are also various subject-specific factors including:

- Evolution of the discipline
- Relevance to students’ postsecondary endeavors
- State standards and assessments
- International content and measurement trends

From the 2018 NAEP Mathematics Framework review and the 2018 NAEP Reading Framework review, the Committee determined that updates for those frameworks were needed. Each framework review involved research, white papers, and panel discussion session with an array of external experts in the field.

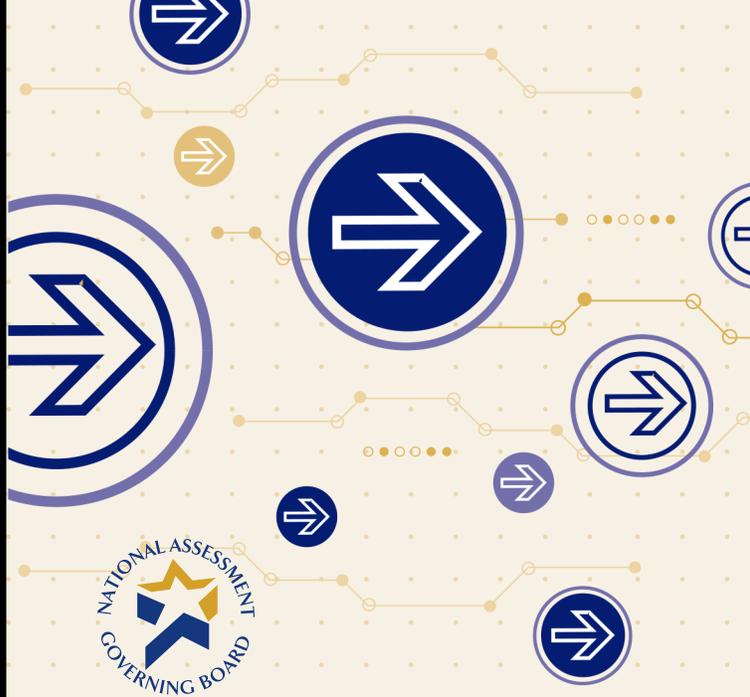
The current NAEP Science Framework was adopted by the Board in 2005. Research is now underway to examine the extent of overlap between the current framework and state standards in states that have either not adopted or partially adopted the Next Generation Science Standards. This will complement research that has already examined the relationship between the NAEP Science Framework and the Next Generation Science Standards, enabling the framework review to be informed by all state standards. Besides this research, the ADC will be able to discuss: *What are ways to improve framework reviews conducted by the Governing Board?* For example, it might be worthwhile to consider a public comment period, asking NAEP stakeholders for their perspectives on whether the framework needs to be updated. This could augment the positions provided through white papers and a panel discussion with external experts.

Updating the Item Development and Review Policy

The ADC began discussing goals for the policy revision in August 2018. In 2019, an expert panel was convened to gather insights regarding best practices in assessment development. An initial policy discussion took place in March 2020.

Based on this discussion, next steps were to gather information about what a post-pilot review would entail and how such a review would align with the Congressional mandates. The Committee also wanted to hear more about how the Board could focus its reviews on new item types and areas where groups of items are interconnected, i.e., scenario-based task concept sketches and reading passages.

Since March 2020, no progress has been made on these next steps, due in large part to competing priorities enlarged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Work on this policy revision will resume in 2021.



Strategic Vision 2025



The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as The Nation's Report Card, was developed in 1969 to answer the important question: "How are our nation's students doing?" In 1988, Congress created the independent, bipartisan National Assessment Governing Board to set policy for The Nation's Report Card, that is, deciding what subjects to assess, approving test and survey questions, determining achievement levels, and improving the reporting and use of results. Since that time, the Governing Board and its partner, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), have worked to safeguard NAEP as the "gold standard" assessment of educational achievement in the United States.

The Governing Board established its first Strategic Vision in 2016 with two major goals – to inform and to innovate – for the Board's work on behalf of policymakers, educators, researchers, business leaders, and the general public. The Governing Board's second Strategic Vision, which will guide the Board's efforts through 2024, adds a third goal, "to engage." This new goal in the Board's vision highlights the importance of not only reporting results accurately, but also in promoting their use:

- To serve as a catalyst for action to improve student achievement;
- To inspire improvement in the quality of assessments and standards; and
- To tell the stories of American achievement for all, over time and in context.



The Governing Board's new Strategic Vision comes at a time of worldwide disruption in education, with the COVID-19 pandemic forcing educators to rethink long-held practices in teaching, learning, and assessment. Educators and policymakers alike are focused on educational equity with renewed commitment. The Governing Board will continue to partner with NCES to ensure NAEP remains the gold standard in assessment, providing objective information about the status and progress of American education at a time of significant disruption to our nation's schools and students.

The pandemic has heightened the need for the Governing Board to adopt a Strategic Vision that fulfills its Congressional mandate and preserves NAEP as a trusted, valuable resource that endures over time. Over the next four years, the Strategic Vision will guide the Governing Board as it strives to inform efforts to improve our nation's schools, innovate in carrying out its mandate, and engage stakeholders in understanding and using the results of The Nation's Report Card.





INFORM

The National Assessment Governing Board will disseminate NAEP resources to inform the work of numerous education stakeholders and to promote high-quality uses of The Nation's Report Card that support improvements in policy and practice. NAEP resources include results; focused studies; assessment questions and tasks; assessment innovations; and contextual variables about the educational experiences of students, teachers, and schools. The Governing Board will:

- **Identify** the needs of stakeholders and refine resources to promote sustained use of NAEP data, enabling educators, researchers, advocates, and policymakers to understand and improve student achievement.
- **Elevate** high-quality uses of NAEP resources to demonstrate NAEP's utility and to highlight the unique value of the Nation's Report Card to inform education policy and practice.
- **Link** NAEP resources with external data sources and disseminate what is learned from these sources so that NAEP can inform policy and practice in understandable and actionable ways.



INNOVATE

The National Assessment Governing Board will ensure The Nation's Report Card remains at the forefront of assessment design and technology by refining design, content, and reporting, increasing relevancy for NAEP users and inspiring action to improve achievement for all. The Governing Board will:

- **Optimize** the utility, relevance, and timing of NAEP subject-area frameworks and assessment updates to measure expectations valued by the public.
- **Monitor** and make decisions about the NAEP assessment schedule based on the Board's policy priorities of utility, frequency, and efficiency to ensure NAEP results are policy-relevant.
- **Develop** a body of evidence to improve the interpretation and communication of NAEP achievement levels to ensure that they are reasonable, valid, and informative to the public.



ENGAGE

The National Assessment Governing Board will strengthen partnerships and communications with stakeholder organizations, building capacity to understand and harness the resources of The Nation's Report Card to advance policy and practice. The Governing Board will:

- **Develop**, sustain, and deepen strategic partnerships to ensure that NAEP remains a trusted, relevant, and useful resource.
- **Help** stakeholders understand how the Governing Board and NAEP can illuminate important skills for postsecondary education pathways.

National Assessment Governing Board

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