



Education

Maryland State Department of

English Language Arts/Literacy

Creating an ELA PARCC Task Sample: Team Planning Process

Preparation/Selection

- Select a grade level Task Generation Model you would like to use to develop sample test items: <http://parcconline.org/assessment-blueprints-test-specs>.
- Select grade level texts appropriate to the task.
- Be conscious of text complexity in terms of the range of students across the state. Not all texts have to be complex; some texts may be readily accessible, while others may be moderately complex or complex.
- Modify the texts if necessary so that they fall within word count limits designated by PARCC.
- Make sure that each text contains at least one grade-level vocabulary word and that there is sufficient context for students to determine its meaning.

Planning

- Perform a critical analysis of both texts to identify tone, vocabulary, theme, central idea, character development and text structure.
- Note that the text must be rich enough to allow for valid as well as several plausible answer choices.
- Compare notes on the readings.
 - Go through order of student actions in the Task Generation Model:
<http://parcconline.org/assessment-blueprints-test-specs>
- Draft sample questions using the PARCC Evidence Tables:
<http://parcconline.org/assessment-blueprints-test-specs>

Designing Assessment Items

Process for Vocabulary EBSRs

- Go back through the readings (and video, if applicable) and select vocabulary words that are grade-level appropriate.
- Based on the words chosen, use a vocabulary reference, (e.g., *EDL Core Vocabulary* book) to determine the grade levels of the specific words chosen.



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- Draft a sample question with responses.
- All response options must be plausible.
- Answer each another's questions to make sure they are viable.

Process for Literary EBSRs

- Discuss the texts in terms of summary, central idea/theme, and possible tone.
- Determine the standards that the items will address.
- Begin composing the sample questions and possible responses. Again, each response option must be plausible, but not keyable (possible, but not too close).
- There are different levels of questions. Some may be less rigorous than others.
- Go back to the Task Generation Model for the grade level and type of task you are addressing to make sure the components under "order of student actions" are addressed.
- Make sure to find textual evidence to support correct and incorrect answers. (The evidence needs to be valid enough to make each incorrect answer a viable distractor.)
- For high school assessments, consider the design differences in PARCC vs. the SAT (strategies in test taking and how to choose the correct response).
- Be prepared to discuss and take sufficient time to compose each sample question.

Norming

At the end of the process, have members of the team take the test to determine whether the test questions are appropriately rigorous or need revision. (Be sure to discuss how to improve the original questions.)

Instructional Implications and Take-aways

- Teachers can create viable tasks for students, but need time during professional development or PLC's for collaboration.
- Teachers should be strategic about when and how they implement sample tasks to build student capacity.