

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

Information for Students, Schools, and Parents/Guardians



What is PISA?

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an important international assessment that measures the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in science, mathematics, and reading, as well as a newly introduced innovative domain: learning in the digital world.

PISA has been conducted every three years since 2000. Approximately 90 countries participate in PISA, including Canada.

Who is conducting the assessment?

PISA is a collaborative effort among the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In Canada, PISA is carried out through a partnership between the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

Who will take part in PISA?

The PISA assessment will be conducted from April 21 to May 30, 2025. Approximately 25,000 students selected at random from over 1,100 schools across all 10 Canadian provinces will take part. The assessment will be administered to students in both anglophone and francophone school systems.

What will participating students have to do?

Students will complete a computer-based test that will assess their skills and knowledge in science, mathematics, reading, and learning in the digital world. The test takes two hours to complete. Students and school principals will also be asked to complete a contextual questionnaire. Answers collected from these questionnaires provide important information about the results of the assessment and also contribute to an overall understanding of the factors that may influence student achievement.

Do students need to prepare for PISA?

No. Students do not need to prepare for this assessment. Normal classroom activities provide ample preparation.

A Personal Note to Students

When you participate in this assessment, you are helping us improve education for all students in Canada.

Thank you in advance for participating in PISA!



Will the results affect students' marks?

No. The results of this assessment will not affect students' academic records in any way.

All the data collected through PISA will be kept strictly confidential. No results will be published at the student, school, or school board/district level. Results will be analyzed at the provincial and pan-Canadian levels only.

What are the benefits of participating?

PISA provides school administrators, teachers, and students with an opportunity to be involved with a high-quality assessment that will influence how science, mathematics, and reading are taught and learned in the future.

The data gathered from the assessment are used to support educational research. PISA provides us with valuable information about how well students are doing in selected core subjects and about what factors might be influencing their success. Such information can help us to make better decisions about the future of our education systems.

More information on PISA in Canada is available at https://www.cmec.ca/765/PISA_2025.html
You may also wish to visit the OECD website at <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/>.

PISA

Curious to see what the PISA assessment looks like?

Try some of the sample science questions below!

PISA 2025


Meteoroids and Craters

Refer to "Meteoroids and Craters" on the right.
Click on a choice to answer the question.

As a meteoroid approaches Earth and its atmosphere, it speeds up. Why does this happen?

- The meteoroid is pulled in by the rotation of Earth.
- The meteoroid is pushed by the light of the Sun.
- The meteoroid is attracted to the mass of Earth.
- The meteoroid is repelled by the vacuum of space.

Rocks in space that enter Earth's atmosphere are called meteoroids. Meteoroids heat up, and glow as they fall through Earth's atmosphere. Most meteoroids burn up before they hit Earth's surface. When a meteoroid hits Earth, it can make a hole called a crater.



PISA 2025

Environmental impact of eating meat

Traditionally, humans have been omnivorous, consuming both meat and food such as grains, legumes, fruits. Meat, as part of a diet, can deliver protein, fat, and trace elements, etc. On the other hand, an informed vegetarian diet can provide all these foods too.

As the world's population expands, the pressure on forest clearance to feed everyone has become intense. Hence the argument that we should eat less meat has been made strongly.

Q4. Which of the following claims concerning "should we eat meat?" can be justified using scientific evidence (S), and which is based on other types of knowledge or values (O)?

- S O Our teeth are designed to eat meat.
- S O Many of our ceremonies involve eating meat and need to be maintained.
- S O A vegetarian human diet can provide all the food we need.
- S O Meat tastes so good we should not give it up.
- S O There is simply not enough land to sustain current levels of meat production.
- S O Food production – especially meat production – is a major contributor to climate change, for instance through cows producing methane.
- S O Meat is much more expensive than vegetables.
- S O A meat meal is more satisfying and its effects longer lasting.
- S O Meat production requires the extensive use of fertilizers. The overuse of fertilizers pollutes the land.
- S O The meat production industry sometimes uses hormones and drugs to make animals grow quickly and to keep them healthy in closely confined spaces. This has led to meat that can negatively affect the health of people.