

Myths & Facts about Assessments

Parents, educators and students deserve fair and accurate assessments that give high quality feedback about a student's progress toward college and career success. With a high level of interest around assessments, they also deserve accurate information about the testing process and the role of companies like Pearson that administer those tests.

MYTH Pearson supports the Common Core.

FACT We support education benchmarks but we also recognize states have the right to choose whether to use Common Core standards or not.

We provide products and services to both states that have implemented the Common Core and to those that haven't.



Pearson spies on students' social media activity.

MYTH

FACT We do not monitor the social media activity of individual students.

Like most testing vendors, we do monitor the broader Internet to ensure that test questions are not posted publicly before all students have taken the test. This is a common sense measure to ensure the fairness of tests.



MYTH Pearson collects huge amounts of data on students and sells it.

FACT We do not and never will sell any personally identifiable student data or use it to market our products or services.

The data entrusted to us is guarded by federal and state laws. Ultimately, states retain control of all student information, including assessment results.



MYTH Pearson encourages student over-testing to increase profits.

FACT

We embrace the move to fewer, better assessments. We've been researching and developing better, more effective alternatives to traditional tests for years. In fact, we spend nearly \$1 billion worldwide on developing new products and services. We welcome the debate about the appropriate amount of testing, and we think parents, educators and policy makers have valuable insight into this discussion.

Pearson imposes gag orders on teachers.

MYTH

FACT Unequivocally, there are no "gag orders" in any Pearson contracts.

This was an erroneous myth spread by teachers unions and other critics of standardized testing. There is, however, language in many contracts that prevents posting or discussing test information publicly while the test is ongoing - another common sense measure to ensure the fairness of the test.



MYTH Pearson's tests have technical difficulties and have been difficult for students to use.

FACT We administered approximately 50 million high-stakes tests last year in the U.S. and nearly half were online.

With that volume occasional mistakes will occur, but however rare, it is unacceptable to us. When mistakes do happen, we take immediate responsibility; work to fix the problem quickly and analyze what went wrong so it doesn't happen again.



Pearson tests scorers have been hired from places like Craigslist.

MYTH

FACT We find applicants through a variety of channels—including traditional job websites and social media sites.

Our professional test scorers meet rigorous qualifications, experience a thorough training process, and undergo continuous checks and balances to ensure they're scoring accurately and fairly.



MYTH Pearson relies on assessments for most of its profits

FACT U.S. student assessments comprise less than 10% of Pearson's global business.

While assessments are important for our company and the students who take them, the majority of Pearson's work in the U.S. supports courseware and other education services for K-12 schools, higher education institutions and adult learners.



MYTH

Online assessments aren't as effective as paper versions.

FACT

In this digital age, all students deserve access to technology and the advantages that brings with it.

Online assessments are effective and necessary because instruction increasingly incorporates the use of technology.

We must ensure all students have the experience of computer-based learning and assessment. It's a matter of fairness and being college and career ready.



Pearson