



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The 2022 Naturalization Test Redesign Trial Tests

Volunteering for the Trial Tests



USCIS Office of Citizenship

March 3, 2023

The parts of the trial test



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USCIS will trial test the following parts of the naturalization test over a 5-month period in 2023:

- A speaking trial test
- A multiple-choice civics trial test

The trial test will have no impact on any N-400 filed by the trial participant.



The Speaking Trial Test

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 1



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USCIS will conduct a trial test of a standardized speaking test that uses images to prompt test takers to describe the picture using simple words and phrases.

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- The Form N-400 under this proposal would not be used to assess speaking and understanding.
- USCIS would be assessing the understanding of English through the questions or prompts given with the speaking test instead of using the interview questions and Form N-400.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 2



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The images for the speaking trial test will come from everyday topics.

Examples of some topics include:

- Daily Routines
- Weather
- Food
- Shopping
- School

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- The everyday topics align with the statutory requirements of “ordinary usage”
- These topics can be commonly found in adult ESL textbooks and in ESL assessments
- The TAG will review each of the content areas and make recommendations
- Volunteer students will know which content areas to study and teachers at volunteer Community Based Organizations will receive practice educational materials.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 3



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The speaking trial test will align to the National Reporting System (NRS) English as a Second Language (ESL) Level 3 – High Beginner (in accordance with statutory requirement for ordinary usage - INA 312, 8 CFR 312).

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The Form N-400 under this proposal would not be used to assess speaking and understanding.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 4



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National Reporting System (NRS) ESL Levels

- Level 1 Beginner ESL Literacy
- Level 2 Low Beginner ESL
- Level 3 High Beginner ESL
- Level 4 Low Intermediate ESL
- Level 5 High Intermediate ESL
- Level 6 Advanced ESL



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- The trial speaking test will align to NRS ESL Level 3 High Beginner

<https://nrsweb.org/resources/test-benchmarks-nrs-educational-functioning-levels-efl-updated-august-2019>

- The reading and writing test are already aligned to NRS Level 3.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 5



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NRS Level 3 High Beginner ESL

“Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities, and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.”

Source: Center for Applied Linguistics

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- <https://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/pdfs/NRSFunctioningLevelTable.pdf>
- The reading and writing test are already aligned to NRS Level 3.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 6



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Use of images in ESL testing

Images are used commonly in ESL assessments.
Some examples include:

- BEST Plus 2.0
- TOEIC Bridge

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- BEST Plus 2.0 <https://www.cal.org/aea/bp/>
- TOEIC Bridge
<https://www.ets.org/toeic/organizations/about/bridge.html>

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 7



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Sample draft trial speaking test item

- Teacher gives instructions to volunteer trial test taker.
- Sample prompt on screen: “Tell me about this picture”.



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- The teachers in the trial test will give instructions before displaying the prompt and picture.
- The teachers can rephrase and repeat.
- The teachers will also cover all content areas and practice with students before the trial tests.
- Image taken from Microsoft PPT stock images.

The Speaking Trial Test – slide 8



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Scoring the trial speaking test

The speaking trial test will be scored based on responses containing:

- Relevant content vocabulary
- Simple words and phrases

This is only a trial test. There is no passing or failing score for the speaking trial test.

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- The TAG will review the data and provide recommendations on the responses.
- Note: answers do not have to be in complete sentences.



The Civics Trial Test

Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 1



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- The civics trial test questions will use a multiple-choice format.
- USCIS is creating a bank of multiple-choice trial test questions.
- Trial test takers will answer ten (10) randomly selected from the test bank of multiple-choice civics test trial test questions.
- The multiple-choice civics trial test ends when the test taker answers all 10 randomly selected questions.
- This is only a trial test. There is no passing or failing score on the multiple-choice civics trial test and the trial test will have no impact on any N-400 filed by the trial participant.

Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 2



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- One trial test question will appear on the screen at a time.
- Trial test takers will select their answer choice on the screen and click a button that will move the screen to the next question.

Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 3



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- Each trial test question has:
 - One correct answer choice
 - Three incorrect answer choices
- The correct answer choice will be clearly identifiable from the incorrect answer choices.

Sample Draft Civics Test Item:

Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- a. George Washington
- b. Thomas Jefferson**
- c. Abraham Lincoln
- d. Martin Luther King Jr.

Sample Draft Civics Test Item Based on question #62 on the 2008 Civics Test.


Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 4




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- The correct and incorrect answer choices assigned to each trial test question will be the same for every trial test taker.
- The order of the answer choices will be randomly sequenced for each administration of the trial test.

Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- a) Martin Luther King, Jr.
- b) Abraham Lincoln
-  c) **Thomas Jefferson**
- d) George Washington

Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- a) George Washington
-  b) **Thomas Jefferson**
- c) Martin Luther King, Jr.
- d) Abraham Lincoln

Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 5



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- There will be **NO** incorrect answer choices that include options like “All of the above,” “None of the above,” “Answer A and C,” etc.
- There will be **NO** incorrect answer choices that will require trial test takers to choose between multiple answer choices that could be correct.

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- All incorrect answer choices will be selected from other content in the bank of questions on the multiple-choice civics trial test.

Multiple-Choice Civics Trial Test – slide 6



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- Community Based Organizations (CBOs) will be provided with the full bank of multiple-choice civics test trial questions and the correct answers.
- The incorrect answer choices assigned to each trial test question will not be released to the CBOs as part of the trial test.

Technical Advisory Group



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The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will consist of 10 external Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Five SMEs will be selected from the fields related to:

- Adult English as a Second Language (ESL), second language acquisition, and assessment design.
- U.S. government and civics, American history, and assessment design.

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- A contractor will be used to facilitate the TAG, and it will be the contractor who selects the individuals to serve as SMEs on the TAG.
- An individual who wishes to be part of the TAG would have to be selected by the organizations that wins the contract.

Technical Advisory Group, cont'd.



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The TAG will review and provide recommendations on the:

- Content, structure, and language level of the Speaking and Multiple-Choice Trial Tests.
- Scoring rubrics and materials for the CBOs and trial test administrators.
- Educational resources for both the speaking and multiple-choice civics trial test

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- The TAG will review the speaking and multiple-choice trial test before and after the trial test.

Trial Test Educational Resources – slide 1



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The Office of Citizenship will provide CBOs who volunteer to participate in the Trial Test with educational resources to use with their students in their classes.

Trial Test Educational Resources – slide 2



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Educational resources for the Speaking Trial Test include:

- Practice speaking test prompts.
- Practice speaking test images on each topic.

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- CBOs will receive trial test educational resources to use in their classes with volunteer trial test takers.

Trial Test Educational Resources – slide 3



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Educational resources for the multiple-choice civics trial test include:

- The full bank of multiple-choice civics trial test questions and correct answer choices.
- Civics and history handouts that outline all of the content on the multiple-choice civics trial test.

Volunteering for the trial test



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The Office of Citizenship is seeking nonprofit organizations that are offering adult ESL classes and/or adult citizenship classes to volunteer for the trial tests. Some eligibility requirements to volunteer are listed below. Volunteer organizations must:

- Be a nonprofit with 501(c)3 status;
- Be conducting adult education classes during the trial test period; and
- Incorporate trial test educational materials provided by the Office of Citizenship in their curriculum.

Email natzredesign22@uscis.dhs.gov if you are interested in volunteering.

Resources



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- [Naturalization Test Redesign Development 2022](#)
- [Federal Register Notice](#)

Concluding Remarks



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Thank you for joining today's session.

- To provide additional feedback on the **naturalization test redesign**, or **to volunteer for the trial tests**, please email: natzredesign22@uscis.dhs.gov
- For additional information on the naturalization test redesign, please visit our website at www.uscis.gov/citizenship
- To provide feedback on **today's engagement**, please email public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov

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- Thank you for joining us.
- **To provide additional comments on the naturalization test redesign trial testing period or for more information on volunteer opportunities, please email us at: natzredesign22@uscis.dhs.gov**
- To provide additional feedback the engagement itself, please email us: public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov
- As mentioned earlier, this session is part of a series of sessions on the naturalization trial testing process that we plan to hold in the coming months, so please stay tuned for upcoming invitations and register for the Public Engagement list serv to receive additional updates.
- Again, thank you for joining us, and we appreciate your interest in this important topic.

- Please enjoy the remainder of your day.

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