

Amsterdam, 11 October 2022

Formal Invitation to participate in the IEA PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) 2026

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to extend a formal invitation to participate in PIRLS 2026; the sixth cycle of the international reading literacy assessment and one of the flagship studies of IEA. Administered every five years since 2001, PIRLS provides internationally comparative data on how well children read by assessing fourth grade students' reading achievement and offers policy relevant information for improving teaching and learning. As a worldwide standard for monitoring reading comprehension achievement, PIRLS is used by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics to measure Sustainable Development Goal 4.1 (SDG 4.1).

This cycle of PIRLS brings with it several advances in the measurement of learning progress. PIRLS 2026 will complete the study's transition to a fully digital assessment. PIRLS 2026 will present texts and items as an engaging and visually attractive experience that motivates students, will include the ePIRLS assessment (a simulated internet environment for assessing online reading), and increase operational efficiency. The rationale behind transitioning to a fully computer-based assessment is to keep pace with an increasing worldwide reliance on digital communication and assessment.

Further, PIRLS 2026 will offer a special opportunity of a PIRLS longitudinal option. The objective is to provide highly valuable information by following a longitudinal design to disentangle cohort and grade effects and to investigate learning gains over one year. For countries that choose to participate in this option, the PIRLS longitudinal study will be administered one year after the PIRLS 2026 administration and to the same students to measure learning progress and advancing educational effectiveness research.

Describing the learning gains and how they relate to contextual variables provides deeper insights into education systems by enriching what is possible to learn from cross-sectional studies. As a result, research can draw more robust inferences about successful practices observed in education systems. More detailed information about this option will follow in due course.

The first PIRLS 2026 National Research Coordinators meeting will take place in the Netherlands in February 2023 and will be hosted by IEA in close collaboration with the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center at Boston College. It is strongly encouraged for all interested countries to send a representative to this meeting, even if participation in PIRLS 2026 is not yet fully confirmed. More detailed information about the meeting will be provided in December 2022.

For additional information, please find attached to this letter the PIRLS 2026 information package containing the study brochure, an overview of estimated national costs, information sheets outlining National Study Center tasks and job descriptions, as well as a provisional timeline for PIRLS 2026. The costs of participating in PIRLS 2026 are 430,000 ICU (IEA's International Currency Unit) and an explanation of the participation fees is also contained in the information package. More information can also be found on our website: iea.nl/studies/iea/pirls/2026.

If you have any questions about participating in PIRLS 2026 or if you would like to receive the draft participation agreement, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Andrea Netten, Director of IEA Amsterdam (a.netten@iea.nl).

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Dirk Hastedt
IEA Executive Director



PIRLS

2026



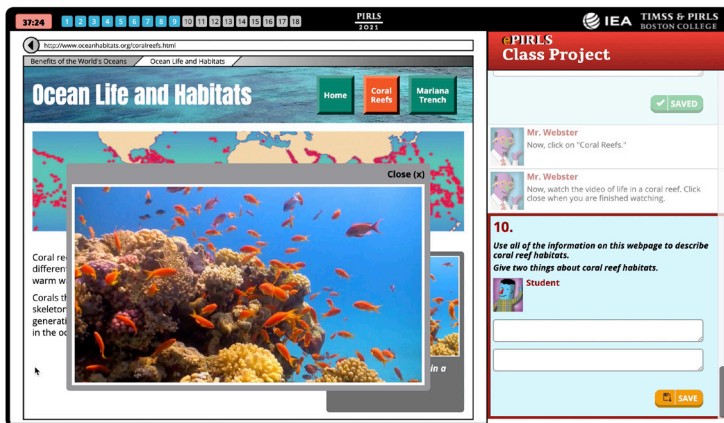
25
Years of
Trends

PIRLS 2026 – Engaging students with interactive Literary and Informational tasks

Since 2001, IEA's PIRLS has enabled countries worldwide to make evidence-based decisions to improve education in reading achievement. PIRLS is conducted every five years at the fourth grade, and PIRLS 2026 will mark 25 years of trend data.

In this ePIRLS task from PIRLS 2021 about the worlds' oceans and its habitats, students are shown a simulated internet website about coral reefs.

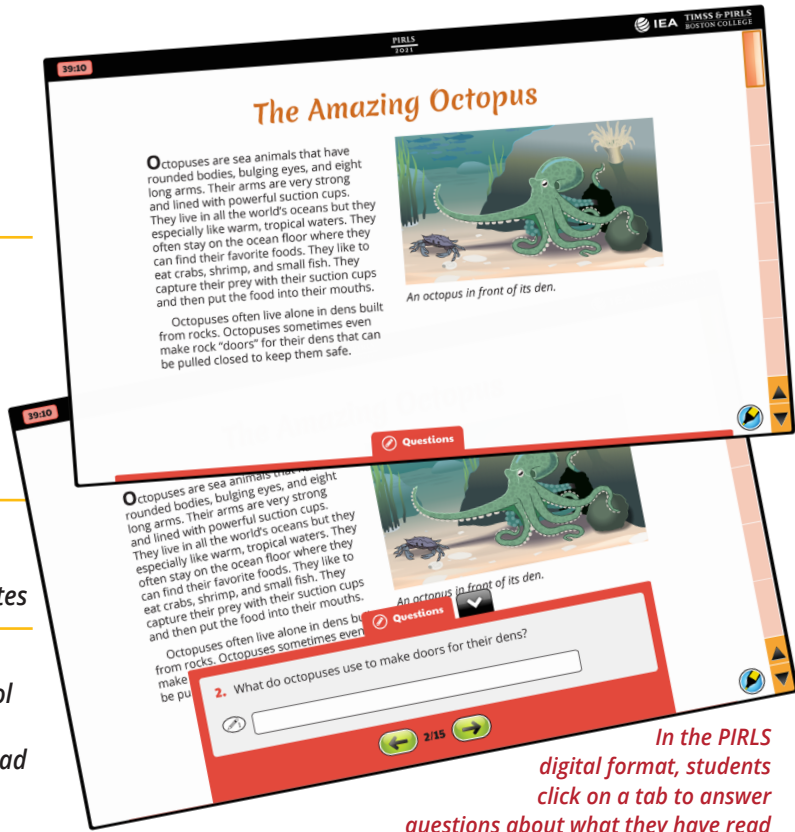
The animated map shows where coral reefs are found, the text describes the characteristics of coral reefs, and a video provides an underwater view of fish swimming by the coral reef.



PIRLS 2026 Key Features

- *Completes the transition to fully digital assessment*
- *Uses an innovative interface where students can scroll through colorful texts and click on and answer questions*
- *Integrates the ePIRLS tasks based on simulated websites*
- *Relates data about the home and school contexts in which students learn to read to their reading achievement*

- *The digital assessment facilitates deep insights from process data*
- *Extends research in automated scoring of images and short constructed responses*



In the PIRLS digital format, students click on a tab to answer questions about what they have read

Benefits of Fully Digital Assessment

To facilitate important advances in assessing reading comprehension at the fourth grade, all countries in PIRLS 2026 will participate digitally. Countries requiring a paper option can consider IEA's LaNA which uses less difficult paper-based versions of PIRLS and TIMSS to assess literacy and numeracy and provides a broad estimate of achievement on the PIRLS and TIMSS scales.

Improving Student Motivation

The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center at Boston College will work in close collaboration with IEA in developing the IEA StudyExpert. This digital assessment system will make it possible for students to participate in a unified reading assessment

based on a wide variety of visually attractive, colorful, and interactive reading materials that reflect younger students' many reading experiences in- and out-of-school. Greater student engagement should stimulate participation and motivate higher achievement.

More Efficient Data Collection

The digital assessment system will facilitate the translation process and bring greater uniformity and quality control to data collection methods and procedures. Innovative item types can enable more machine scoring as part of the data collection process.



Automated Scoring

Continuing research to score more image items and short constructed answers automatically.

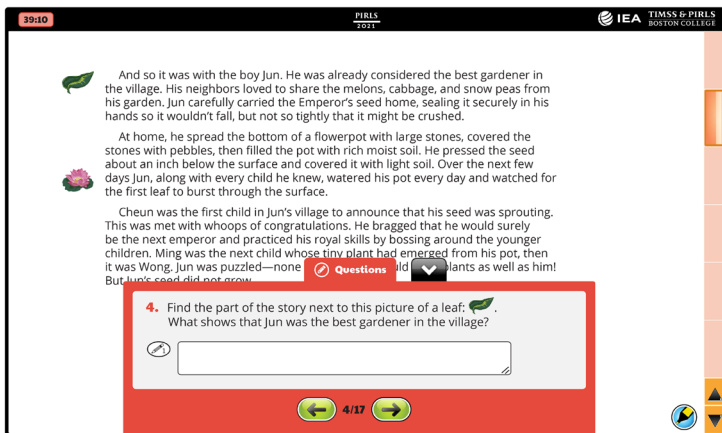
Collecting Valuable Process Data

The digital environment provides the opportunity to collect process data about how students proceed through the assessment. Through monitoring students' navigation between the texts, including videos, pop-ups, and graphical displays, and the questions being asked, as well as their use of the PIRLS highlighting tool, PIRLS 2026 will be able to examine the response strategies and processes used by successful readers.



Longitudinal Option

It is possible to re-assess the same students one year after the PIRLS 2026 assessment to investigate students' learning gains over one year of schooling. This enables examining the degree of increases across instructional goals and the differences in gains across subgroups of students.



PIRLS sometimes helps students scroll through the texts by using icons to identify the location of relevant information

Countries Receive High Quality Internationally Comparative Data About How Well Fourth Grade Students Can Read

The *PIRLS 2026 International Database* will document the full set of PIRLS 2026 data, providing numerous opportunities for research into teaching and learning reading.

Data highlights for each country include:

- ▶ Average reading achievement and scale score distributions
- ▶ Percentages of students reaching the PIRLS International Benchmarks with descriptions of students' reading skills at each level
- ▶ Reading achievement by Literary and Informational purposes as well as by comprehension processes
- ▶ Reading achievement results for subgroups of students (e.g., by gender)
- ▶ Trends in reading achievement compared to previous PIRLS assessments
- ▶ A rich array of home, school, classroom, and attitudinal contexts for learning to read in relation to reading achievement
- ▶ Insights into how successful readers navigate through the assessment instruments

PIRLS 2026 Benchmarking Option

PIRLS 2026 also has a benchmarking component whereby entities within a country, such as regions (e.g., states or provinces), additional grades (e.g. third or fifth grade), or additional language groups can participate in the same way as countries.

PIRLS 2026 Schedule Highlights

2023–2024—Integrated development of reading assessment instruments and software

2025—Field test

2026—Data collection

2027—Analysis and reporting

*For country enrollment, contact:
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PIRLS is a project of IEA. With offices in Amsterdam and Hamburg, IEA pioneered international comparative studies. IEA has been conducting international assessments of educational achievement since 1959.



BOSTON
COLLEGE

PIRLS is directed by the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center at Boston College. PIRLS, together with TIMSS, which assesses mathematics and science, comprise IEA's core cycle of studies designed to provide countries with regular information about achievement in three fundamental subjects—reading, mathematics, and science.

timssandpirls.bc.edu

PIRLS 2026 Draft Schedule Highlights

Please note: Dates listed below are tentative and subject to change

2023	
15–16 Feb	1 st NRC meeting – Review/update frameworks and context questionnaires, and discuss sampling plans (Amsterdam, the Netherlands)
13–16 Nov	2 nd NRC meeting – Select texts and write items for the field test, and discuss feedback on questionnaire framework (location TBD)
2024	
Jul	3 rd NRC meeting – Review and finalize all field test materials and presentation of survey operations (location TBD)
Sep	Release of PIRLS field test instruments in online translation system to countries
Oct	Field test translation, adaptation and layout verification begins
Oct/Nov	Data management seminar for the field test (Hamburg, Germany)
2025	
Feb–Mar	National field test players produced, tested, and released to countries
Mar–Apr	Conduct field test
Apr	4 th NRC meeting – Conduct scoring training for the field test (online)
Apr	Field test scoring system made available to countries
Apr–May	NRCs submit all field test data to IEA Hamburg
Jul	Release of trend materials in the online translation system to countries
Aug	5 th NRC meeting – Review and finalize instruments for the data collection and presentation of survey operations (location TBD)
Oct	Release of PIRLS data collection instruments in online translation system to countries
Oct	Data collection translation, adaptation and layout verification begins
Oct	Data management seminar for the data collection (Hamburg, Germany)
2026	
Jan–Apr	National data collection players produced, tested, and released to countries
Mar–Jun	Data collection (Northern Hemisphere)
Mar	6 th NRC meeting – Conduct scoring training for the data collection (online)
Mar	Data collection scoring system made available to countries
Jun–Sep	All data from Northern Hemisphere countries submitted to IEA Hamburg
Oct–Dec	Data collection (Southern Hemisphere)
Dec–Feb	All data from Southern Hemisphere countries submitted to IEA Hamburg

2027	
Mar-Apr	7 th NRC meeting – Review background data, discuss plans for scaling, and country consultations with IEA and RTI (location TBD)
Jul	8 th NRC meeting – Review draft PIRLS 2026 International Report (location TBD)
Dec	Release of the PIRLS 2026 International Report and Methods and Procedures
2028	
Feb	Distribute PIRLS 2026 International Database and User Guide
Feb	9 th NRC meeting – Conduct training on analyzing the PIRLS 2026 International Database (location TBD)

Participation Fees for PIRLS 2026

October 2022

PIRLS, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, is one of the core studies of IEA. Directed by the TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Center at Boston College and conducted every five years since 2001, PIRLS is recognized as the global standard for assessing trends in reading achievement at the fourth grade.

Basic Fee:

The fee per country participating in PIRLS 2026 is 430,000 ICUs (IEA's International Currency Unit) being US\$ 215,000 and €215,000.

Payment Distribution:

Due to the high inflation in 2022, which is expected to continue in 2023, IEA decreased the fee distribution in the first year of the cycle to accommodate participating countries.

Year	Amount
2023	15%
2024	25%
2025	20%
2026	20%
2027	20%

Countries paying the full five-year fee in the first year (2023) are granted a discount of 5%.

Benchmarking Fees:

A benchmark participant in terms of applicable fees is a sub-entity of a country that already participates in the study or the second sub-entity of a non-participating country. The sub-entity must be clearly defined and unambiguously described. In the case of a sub-entity of a country that is not participating and where no other sub-entity is participating, the full participation fees apply. For sub-entities of countries already participating, 20% of the basic fee (as per above) applies. All benchmark participants will be reported in a separate table of the international report.

Oversampling Fees:

For up to 150% of the minimum sample size, no additional fee is applied. For each 20% (schools or students, whichever is greater) above the 150% of the minimum sample size, an additional 10% fee is applied.

PIRLS Longitudinal:

Preparation of the longitudinal option will begin in parallel to the 2026 cycle of the study, PIRLS 2026. For countries interested in opting into the longitudinal option, the international fees for this option would be an additional 100,000 ICUs.

Framework for Estimating National Costs PIRLS 2026

October 2022

This framework for estimating national costs has been developed to describe the types of tasks, infrastructure and staff needed within countries in order to run the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2026. The total national costs for running PIRLS will depend on individual country circumstances and cost structures.

As the PIRLS 2026 assessment will be fully digital, countries will need to ensure that their devices for administering the assessment are compatible with the PIRLS 2026 Player (IEA *StudyExpert*).

PIRLS 2026 will have a field test in March–April 2025 with the main data collection planned for March–June 2026 (Northern Hemisphere) and September–December 2026 (Southern Hemisphere).

The major budget requirements needed to implement the PIRLS assessment in each country are described below. For additional information on the required roles and expertise, as well as the necessary tasks to take place in each participating country, please refer to the job description of the National Research Coordinator and tasks of the National Study Center for IEA PIRLS 2026.

National Study Center

A PIRLS National Study Center (NSC) is established in each participating education system. The PIRLS NSC is organized and led by the National Research Coordinator (NRC) and usually is staffed with one or two full time employees plus some part time staff to assist them at particular times during the project life-cycle (e.g., content and curriculum expert, sampling coordinator, data manager, and office staff).

Additional temporary employees will also be necessary. These short-term tasks and positions include:

- translating and reviewing the assessment instruments and manuals;
- ensuring that each participating student is provided with a PIRLS compatible device (school computers tested for PIRLS compatibility or external computers tested and prepared);
- preparing the assessment instruments (install/copy software, label materials, and—if any—print paper materials, etc.) and providing these to the participating schools;
- school coordinators/test administrators;
- national quality control monitor(s);
- scorers for the constructed-response items;
- data entry and/or scanning personnel for any paper-pencil administered context questionnaires, if applicable;
- encouraging school participation (to ensure participation rate requirements for reporting are met) and clerical assistance.

Please consider that staff who work directly with the International Study Center and IEA require a high level of proficiency in written and spoken English.

Equipment

PIRLS 2026 assessments instruments (achievement test and context questionnaires) will be developed, translated, and administered via the *IEA StudyExpert* software.

The *IEA StudyExpert* software for preparing national versions of the achievement test and context questionnaires works with Windows 10 or higher and requires an internet connection.

The assessments will be delivered to students via PIRLS Players. The planned delivery methods are online administration and individual PCs/USBs. Each device should have a power supply (to ensure sufficient charging), keyboard, and mouse. The minimum device requirements for the PIRLS 2026 Player will be confirmed at a later stage.

For online administration:

Each device needs to be connected to the internet. The PIRLS Player will be cross browser compatible for any OS that can run Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, or Google Chrome.

For individual PC/USB administration:

No network or internet connection is required for the assessment administration, as everything is contained on USB sticks. It is crucial to use quality USB sticks. Specifications regarding the minimum OS and storage capacity will be confirmed at a later stage.

Data upload will require internet connection and can be done from a single computer connected to the internet.

If you plan to administer any of the context questionnaires for schools, teachers, and parents on paper, they will be developed using the latest InDesign layout program available via Adobe Creative Cloud. To administer context questionnaires on paper, participants will need to have an Adobe Creative Cloud account to access the InDesign software.

Systems provided by IEA (*IEA StudyExpert*; within-school sampling software; system for online school, teacher, and home questionnaire administration; online scoring system; data management software) are designed to work on PCs.

The NSC should have Microsoft® Office® 2016 or above and Adobe Acrobat Reader available. Communication with the international centers will be via email and materials will be exchanged by uploading/downloading to/from the IEA's and the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center's secure servers, for this, an internet connection is required.

Traveling

Over the course of the assessment cycle, there will be nine national research coordinator (NRC) meetings to attend. Some of the NRC meetings are planned to be in-person and the others are planned to be virtual. Each in-person meeting will be held in a different participating country and will last for approximately one working week (5 days). Additionally, there will be two data management training seminars held by IEA, in Hamburg, Germany, lasting three to four days. IEA will provide training in the use of IEA software developed especially for the current PIRLS cycle. The data management training seminars should be attended by the data manager and/or the NRC.

Some domestic traveling within the country also needs to be budgeted for. This includes training school coordinators/test administrators, monitoring schools during the field test and the main data collection (National Quality Assurance Program), and coordinating the work with any outsourced agency or agencies, etc.

Sampling

Depending on the structure of educational/governmental systems within each country, costs may occur during the sampling frame preparation.

Assessment Instrument Preparation

For the field test and main data collection, the major undertaking is translating and/or adapting the assessment instruments and manuals into the language(s) of instruction in each country. First, the instruments and manuals will need to be translated/adapted for field testing the newly developed items and then updated for the main data collection.

For the main data collection, trend countries will also need to transfer/review the existing translations of the PIRLS 2021 trend texts and directions into the online translation system for PIRLS 2026. New countries will need to translate/adapt the trend texts.

The translated and/or adapted student assessment and questionnaire will then be transferred from the online translation system into the PIRLS 2026 Player, to be administered to students, first for the field test and then again for the main data collection. The NSC is responsible for testing the PIRLS Player. If the individual PCs/USBs method is planned, a USB stick with the PIRLS 2026 Player needs to be installed for each participating student.

Any context questionnaires administered via paper and paper manuals will need to be printed.

All materials will need to be labeled, packed, and distributed to the participating schools.

The following information are estimates on the scope of translating/adapting the assessment instruments and manuals. The numbers of any context questionnaires and manuals for printing will need to be adjusted based on the actual sample size in the country.

For the field test, NSCs will need to prepare national versions of:

- Eight texts with items (equivalent to approximately 15 pages each)
- Four context questionnaires (equivalent to 20 pages each)
- *School Coordinator Manual* (25 pages)
- *Test Administrator Manual* (25 pages)
- Preparing Computers/Tablets for PIRLS instructions (20 pages)
- *National Quality Control Monitor Manual* (15 pages)

If you will not be administering the context questionnaires online, based on a sample size of 25 schools and 800–1200 students, you will need to print at least:

- 25 copies of the teacher questionnaire
- 25 copies of the school questionnaire
- 800–1200 copies of the home questionnaire plus 3 extra copies per class
- 1 *School Coordinator Manual* and *Test Administrator Manual* per participating school

For the main data collection, NSCs will need to prepare national versions of:

- Eighteen texts with items (equivalent to approximately 15 pages each)
- Four context questionnaires
- *School Coordinator Manual*
- *Test Administrator Manual*
- Preparing Computers/Tablets for PIRLS instructions
- *National Quality Control Monitor Manual*

If you will not be administering the context questionnaires online, with the minimum sample size of 150 schools and 4,500 to 5,000 students, NSCs will need to print:

- At least 150 copies of the teacher questionnaire (unless administered online)
- At least 150 copies of the school questionnaire (unless administered online)
- Between 4,500–5,000 copies of the home questionnaire (unless administered online)
- At least one *School Coordinator Manual* and *Test Administrator Manual* for each participating school.

Shipping/Mailing Costs

The USB format assessment instruments need to be shipped to the participating schools and back to the NSC. A safe and efficient shipping method should be selected for the materials to remain secure at all times. Additional mailing might be necessary between the NSC and the schools, such as communication on the test administration dates or providing any missing or damaged assessment

instruments. **NOTE:** There are two rounds of shipping the assessment instruments to and from the participating schools—first for the field test and then for the main data collection.

Scoring

Student responses to the constructed-response items will need to be scored in each participating country. In addition to the actual scoring, NSCs will need to budget for training the scorers and supervising the scoring process.

The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center will provide international scoring training and scoring guides for the field test and again for the main data collection. Attending the international scoring training is mandatory. Scoring guides may either be used in English or translated.

The following are estimates on the scope of scoring.

For the field test, based on the minimum sample size of 800 students, each country needs to score about 18,000 student responses. It is estimated that this requires about 22 working days for one person.

For the data collection, based on the minimum sample size of 4,500 students, each country needs to score about 83,000 student responses. Trend reliability scoring and cross-country reliability scoring adds about 10,000 student responses to score. It is estimated that the whole scoring process requires about 112 working days for one person.

Data Entry

The PIRLS 2026 assessment and context questionnaires data will be directly uploaded, so no manual data entry will be required for this. However, data from any paper context questionnaires must be entered into data files using the IEA's proprietary software. In addition to the actual data entry (punching), the punchers need to be trained.

The following are estimates on the scope of data entry for the context questionnaires administered on paper.

For the field test, with the minimum sample size of 25 schools and 800 students, the data will need to be entered from a minimum of:

- 25 teacher questionnaires (approx. 35 questions each)
- 25 school questionnaires (approx. 25 questions each)
- 800 home questionnaires (approx. 25 questions each)

For the data collection, with the minimum sample size of 150 schools and 4,500 students the data will need to be entered from a minimum of:

- 150 teacher questionnaires (approx. 35 questions each)
- 150 school questionnaires (approx. 25 questions each)
- 4500 home questionnaires (approx. 25 questions each)

Scanning

If a country chooses to scan the paper instruments to capture data instead of the described manual data entry, the budget needs to be adjusted based on the scanning technology and staff available. All data, however, need to be submitted to IEA Hamburg in the required format.

Reporting

Each country needs to plan for producing a national report at the end of the assessment cycle. This includes the costs of preparation and publishing the report, a press conference for its release and/or any other form of the PIRLS results dissemination.

Job description of the National Research Coordinator and tasks of the National Study Center for IEA PIRLS 2026

The National Research Coordinator (NRC) plays a major role in IEA's PIRLS projects and is a country's main contact person for all aspects of the study. The NRC's main responsibility is the implementation of the study in the country, including the coordination of all tasks (see tasks listed below). The NRC is required to have an excellent command of English (IEA's working language).

More specifically, the NRC is responsible for:

- organizing the National Study Center (NSC) to perform the required PIRLS tasks;
- employing and/or supervising staff, including assigning/distributing required roles (listed below);
- ensuring availability of required hardware and software and other necessary equipment and materials;
- communicating with the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, IEA Amsterdam, IEA Hamburg, and RTI International;
- participating in the international NRC meetings (conducted in English);
- contributing to the PIRLS 2026 Encyclopedia by providing a country chapter;
- contributing to the PIRLS 2026 International Report by participating in the review process and making sure the country's data are accurate; and
- preparing and disseminating a national report for PIRLS in synchronization with the release of the PIRLS 2026 International Report.

In addition to the NRC, further staff is required in each country to successfully conduct the study.

Required Roles and Expertise

- **Content and Curriculum Experts**
The content and curriculum experts are responsible for reviewing the updated PIRLS 2026 reading assessment framework from the national perspective, as well as participating in assessment development, reviewing items/scoring guides, and training for reliable scoring of constructed response items. It is desirable that the *Context Questionnaire Framework* and the questionnaires be reviewed by individuals familiar with educational policies and practices in the country.
- **Sampling Coordinator**
The sampling coordinator works with the PIRLS sampling experts to adapt the international sampling design to national conditions. They are responsible for conveying specific national analysis priorities (e.g., analysis of particular population subgroups) that may affect the sampling design to the IEA/RTI sampling experts.
- **Data Manager**
The data manager manages all data related issues, organizing and implementing within-school sampling procedures, overseeing data entry/data submission, and verifying the quality of all data products. They also are responsible for or assist with preparing the software to be distributed for the electronically administered assessments.
- **Office Staff**

Further officer staff may be needed for general office administration, which may include tasks such as contacting schools, making travel arrangements, etc.

The above mentioned roles can be performed by one or several individuals depending on the resources available to the national center.

Additionally, each NSC will need to coordinate the following roles:

- **Translators/Translation Reviewers**
Translators and translation reviewers are responsible for adapting and/or translating the assessment instruments (achievement test and context questionnaires) into the national language(s) and for reviewing the translations internally. The NSC may also involve the translators and translation reviewers in the finalization of instruments following international translation verification. Translation, documentation, and both internal and external verifications are conducted using the IEA *StudyExpert*.
- **School Coordinators**
Each school participating in PIRLS nominates a school coordinator who provides information about classes, teachers, and students in the school and organizes and supervises the assessment administration. School coordinators organize checking and preparing devices to be used, launching the software on the compatible devices, and uploading the data to the study server, unless external computers/tablets are used or the process is otherwise organized by the NSC. The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center provides an international version of the *School Coordinator Manual*, which the NRC translates and/or adapts to create a national version for use in the participating schools. It is the NRC's responsibility to train school coordinators to effectively perform their tasks.
- **Test Administrators**
Participating schools are also required to have individuals that administer the assessment in the selected classes. In some situations, the school coordinator may also perform this task. The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center provides an international version of the *Test Administrator Manual*, which can be adapted and /or translated for use in the participating schools. Test administrator assistants can also be appointed to support during the test administration.
- **IT Support**
A help desk should be setup or IT support personnel made available to provided assistance to school coordinators and test administrators if experiencing any issues while preparing for and during the test administration.
- **National Quality Control Monitor**
The national quality control monitor observes and reports on actual testing sessions in 10% of selected schools. IEA Amsterdam provides international versions of the *National Quality Control Manual* and the *Classroom Observation Record*, which can be adapted and /or translated for implementing the national quality assurance program.
- **Scorers**
The scorers apply PIRLS scoring guides to determine whether student answers to the constructed-response items are correct. An online scoring system will be used for scoring PIRLS, as well as for the trend and cross-country reliability scoring.
- **Data Entry and/or Scanning Staff**
If any paper-based context questionnaires are used, it will be necessary to have individuals that enter the data into data files and/or scan the instruments and compile the data into data files.

National Study Tasks

There are **two** rounds of instrument development, achievement test and context questionnaire administration, and analysis activities for the PIRLS assessment. First, instruments are developed and field-tested using the planned procedures for the data collection. After the field test is conducted, responses are scored, and the results analyzed, the final instruments are selected for the data collection. After the data collection is conducted, the responses are again scored, the data is analyzed and reviewed, and the results are reported.

Stage 1: Preparing school sample (school sample usually is selected at the same time for the field test and for the data collection), contacting schools, and sampling classes for the field test and then for the data collection

- Specifying the school sampling design with the help of study sampling experts
- Providing the school sampling frame including all sampling-related information
- Contacting the sampled schools to obtain cooperation
- Identifying and training school coordinators for each sampled school
- Requesting information about classes and their teachers from the sampled schools
- Sampling one or more classes per school (using IEA's proprietary software)
- Listing the students and their teachers in the sampled classes
- Printing tracking forms and/or labels
- Assigning instruments to students, teachers, and school principals

Stage 2: Preparing the field test instruments and then the data collection instruments

- Contributing to assessment item writing (e.g., during NRC meetings) and to reviewing assessment items and context questionnaires
- Translating, reviewing, and producing national instruments, including applying national adaptations and documenting them
- Submitting the translated national instruments (achievement items and context questionnaires) to IEA Amsterdam for international translation verification
- Submitting the national instruments to the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center for adaptations verification and national instrument localization
- Testing and finalizing/approving the assessment player(s) and online system version of context questionnaires
- Printing any paper-based national context questionnaires

Stage 3: Administering the field test and then the data collection

At the National Study Center:

- Preparing and sending field test materials and later data collection materials to the participating schools
- Nominating an international quality control monitor for the data collection, if required by IEA
- Carrying out the *National Quality Assurance Program* for the field test and then again for the data collection
- Responding to the *Survey Activities Questionnaire* after the data collection
- Responding to the *Curriculum Questionnaire*

At the participating schools:

- Preparing devices for the field test and then again for the data collection. This includes testing the compatibility of the devices to be used and launching the assessment administration software on the compatible devices. This step is either done at the schools, at the NSC, or at an external outsourced company. The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center provides an international version of the “Preparing Computers” instructions, which are then translated and/or adapted in order to create a national version of the instructions
- Administering the field test and then the data collection
- Calculating student response rates and holding make-up sessions
- Uploading the assessment data and returning the field test/data collection materials to the NSC

Stage 4: Scoring student responses to the constructed-response items (for the field test and then again for the data collection)

- Managing the online scoring system
- Training scorers
- Scoring the constructed-response items, including documenting the cross-country scoring reliability and the trend scoring reliability (trend countries only)
- NOTE: The cross-country reliability scoring is conducted in English. All scorers who can score student responses written in English should participate. It is advised that at least one scorer in each country has sufficient English language proficiency for this task

Stage 5: Creating the data files and reviewing the data (for the field test and data collection)

- Entering test administration information (using IEA’s proprietary software)
- Entering the data from any paper context questionnaires (using IEA’s proprietary software), if needed
- Tracking data submission from respondents using digital system(s)
- Verifying the data
- Submitting the required field test materials and then the data collection materials to the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, IEA Hamburg, and RTI International
- Reviewing the country’s field test data provided in the item and questionnaire almanacs for accuracy, reviewing the data collection data provided in the item and questionnaire almanacs for accuracy
- Reviewing the PIRLS 2026 International Report

Stage 6: Preparing national reports

- Conducting national analysis of the data
- Writing the national report
- Disseminating the national report (in synchronization with the release of the PIRLS 2026 International Report)