

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting Quick Reference Card

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting

This document provides some tips to help prevent issues and guidance on what to look for when you do get an error message previewing a test or trying to get the test to generate text to speech.

Working with Images



ALWAYS upload images into Schoolnet. Do not paste them into content fields. You can use Grab, Sniplt, Snagit or other similar tools to save an image as a file. Jpeg, gif, and png are acceptable file types. Import the image file using the **Insert Image** icon. Be sure to preview the test before scheduling.

Why?: When images are uploaded into Schoolnet, the system compresses them to make online delivery efficient. Directly copy and pasted images can be very large and cause performance and even time out issues when delivering an online assessment. Also, when an image is directly copy/pasted, the references that are created in the supporting HTML code for the content can sometimes become corrupted and cause future issues. Right now, based on system requirements, always upload images.

Image Size

You will receive a warning if an inserted image is larger than the recommended size. To upload the image successfully, delete, resize, and re-insert it. As a best practice, resize images before inserting them. Also, be sure to preview the test on a device with a resolution representative of what student will test with.

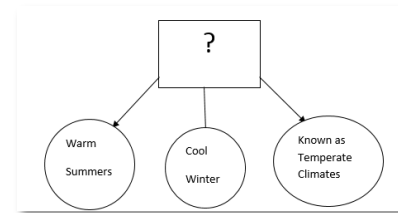
- The image file size may not exceed 2MB
- For peak performance, keep the image size below 250KB
- The dimensions should not exceed 640 x 640 pixels
- To prevent the test taker from scrolling, size images to 640 pixels or less in height
- With passages, size images to no more than 445 pixels wide

Deleting an Image

You may see a broken image graphic in a test preview. This can be caused when an image is deleted from the content of a passage or item but a reference remains in the HTML code. This can also cause issues with text to speech generation. Be sure to clear these out from the text. If you are having troubles, click on the < > Icon on the bottom of the editor tool bar to see the HTML code – if you see a long number sequence it is probably an image reference and needs to be removed.

A Note About Images with Text

Remember that images with text in them are still images and may be difficult to read when resized in different browsers. Also, as with all images, they should be inserted as files, not pasted in.



Copying and Pasting from External Documents

The text editor supports copy/paste from Microsoft Word and other document types, however, on occasion when you paste in content, extra HTML tags can be picked up and cause formatting problems that might not be apparent when you look at the item.



A best practice is to use the **Paste as text** icon instead of the standard **Paste** icon. Also, when you are copying text from another document, try to NOT pick up spaces before and after the content – this sometimes brings in numbering and unintended additional HTML code that may not show up in the view but cause issues when publishing.

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting

Which best describes the relationship between genes and DNA?

- A. A gene is a segment of DNA that codes for a carbohydrate.
- B. A gene is a segment of DNA that codes for a protein.
- C. A gene is segment of DNA that contains multiple chromosomes.
- D. A gene is a segment of DNA that contains multiple nuclei.

In this example, stray HTML codes are causing uneven spacing among answer choices.

How Do I Know if there are Stray HTML Codes?

If you see strange formatting in the preview, stray HTML codes may be the cause. To confirm, click the **Source code** icon (<>) for the passage, item or answer choice.

The process used by some cells to copy and store genetic information.

Source code

```
<p><span style="font-family: 'times new roman', times, serif, font-size: 14pt;"><span style="color: #000000; background-color: transparent; font-style: normal; font-variant: normal; text-decoration: none; vertical-align: baseline; white-space: pre-wrap;">The process used by some cells to copy and store genetic information.</span></span></p>|
```

In this example, notice the unnecessary alignment and font tags.

Source code

```
<p>The process used by some cells to copy and store genetic information.</p>
```

In this fixed example, only <p> tags are visible.

For the previous example, the answer choice was fixed by copying the text to the clipboard, deleting what was in the field, and then pasting back in using the **Paste as text** icon.

The process used by some cells to copy and store genetic information.

As an alternative, you could also paste the text into a text editor application, such as WordPad, Notepad, or TextEdit, then copy and paste the text into the text editor using the **Paste as text** icon.

Working with Passages and Tables

Passages are often put in tables to support the addition of row, sentence or section numbering. Tables can typically be copied over intact from a Word document. However, if you have trouble with the formatting, you can create the table in Schoolnet and then copy and paste in the text only.

Table

Table properties

Delete table

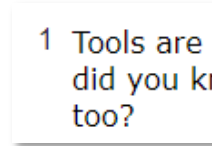
Cell

Row

Column

Many formatting adjustments can be made by highlighting the table and then selecting **Table > Table Properties**.

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting



Sample text after increasing cellpadding to 5.

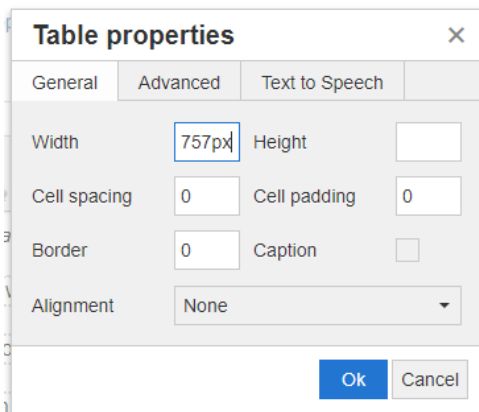
Text to Speech Potential Issues

Text to speech converts words to audio. When you create a test with text to speech, always preview and listen to the audio before scheduling. Alt-text may be needed for images, words lacking standard pronunciation, etc. To prevent issues, keep an eye out for the following:

- **Honorifics** such as Mr., Mrs., Dr. **missing a space**; e.g., Mr.Smith, Mrs.Jones, Dr.Rodger. These will all generate an error. There must be a space for the system to interpret correctly: Mr. Smith, Mrs. Jones, Dr. Rodgers.
- **Conjunctions without the apostrophe** such as didnt or wouldnt will generate an error. Sometimes, the test creator may purposefully want one of these to be in question or answer choice. In this case, add Alt-Text.
- **All Caps** will sometimes be read out letter by letter. If this is not the intent, add Alt-Text.

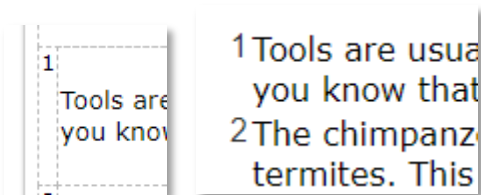
Example: Adding Alt-Text

Answer B in the item below will generate an error for text to speech will not generate for the test. Also when you preview a test with text to speech, always play the audio to check pronunciations or other issues which can be fixed with alt-text.



For example, if you see a passage that is cut off like the example above, check the table properties to make sure it does not have a set width or height. Remove the fixed width reference and the passage will adjust appropriately.

If you find that content in columns are too close to each other, you can add some visual spacing. By changing the cellpadding value, you can increase the space around the text. As an alternative, you could also modify the cell spacing to add space between each cell.



Sample numbering in both the editing window and TestNav view

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting

Multiple Choice

Review the passage and choose the best way to complete the paragraph.

- A 3) not rang
- B 3) didnt ring
- ✓ C 3) didn't ring
- D 3) didn't rang

To fix this answer B, add alt-text to replace the problematic word.



Font Considerations

Because you can specify the desired font and size at the test (or site) level, there is rarely a need to specify one at the item level. Headers will have different sizes and you can use another font to emphasize select text, but typically, all the font information shown in this example would be extraneous.

```
<p><span style="font-family: 'times new roman', times, serif; font-size: 14pt;"><span style="color: #000000; background-color: transparent; font-style: normal; font-variant: normal; text-decoration: none; vertical-align: baseline; white-space: pre-wrap;">A gene is a segment of DNA that codes for a protein.</span></span></p>
```

Scaling Images for Rulers

If you plan to have students use a ruler (inch or centimeter) to measure an item in an online test, you need to make sure the image is scaled correctly.

Follow these steps:

1. Upload image into item
2. Determine the length/width the image needs to be in inches or centimeters
3. Convert these measurements to pixels (there are plenty of online converters you can google)
 - 1 inch = 78 pixels
 - 1 cm = approx. 38 pixels
4. Once you know your length and width, go to item editor and click on the <> to go into the HTML code
5. Find your image reference in the HTML code. You will see a width and length with numbers. These are pixels. Update the measurements and save

Test Item Tips and Troubleshooting

6. Your image will resize
7. Make sure you have the correct rulers turned on for the item in the manipulatives area
8. Now preview the item and complete the measurements as a student would do to confirm it is correct
9. Because the image is a screen shot and there may be some borders, you may need to play with your pixel size a little bit to get the exact measurement you want. Repeat steps 5-8 until the image is scaled correctly