textBOX

Client: Pearson
Project: Pearson English Connect accessibility statement
Service: Accessibility Statement + ASPIRE
Title: Pearson English Connect
Author(s):   Pearson

12 August 2022

hello@textboxdigital.com
textboxdigital.com
@textboxdigital

PEARSON ENGLISH CONNECT ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT [H1]*

* Heading levels (H1, H2 etc.) are provided for reference and color-coded ORANGE.

Welcome to the Pearson English Connect Accessibility Statement [H2]

Our mission is simple: add life to a lifetime of learning. Because wherever learning flourishes, so do people. We will only be successful when our educational materials are accessible to all users.

Pearson have long been committed to providing access to learners with disabilities. Our commitment is woven into the fabric of our learning materials, development processes, innovation efforts, employee culture, and partnerships.

 With Pearson English Connect learning is accessible anywhere, anytime. This platform seeks to support adaptability and it helps make online and hybrid teaching as effective as in-person, engaging students and creating a sense of community.

The platform supports learners with diverse content across a wide audience and age range, including our Stars and Heroes partnership with Disney and our established courses such as Roadmap, Gold Experience, and Wider World.

Pearson English Connect is a game-changing platform, giving you the ultimate flexibility to teach English effectively in the 'new' hybrid classroom in a highly communicative and interactive way. It takes good teaching practice from an in-person space to an online space. It is a first for English Language Learning solutions and we will continue to ensure that it meets the needs of all our readers.

Learn more about Pearson English Connect.

Table of Contents* [H2]

[* The Table of Contents can be included as a hyperlinked list in the body of the statement or presented as a menu on the left-side of the screen based on page design requirements.]

Industry Accessibility Standards [H2]

Pearson strives to provide equal access for all learners. Throughout our development process for every release, we test the capabilities of our products against the highest standards. Pearson English Connect is designed and developed to meet Level AA of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) and Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act for features and functions, and the European standard for digital accessibility, EN 301 549.

As part of our design process, Pearson have developed WCAG guidelines for our authors, content creators, and developers to help design a born accessible experience for all our users.

Pearson English Connect platform features + controls [H2]

To help improve the usability of the Pearson English Connect platform we have developed a bespoke suite of accessibility features and controls to create an inclusive learning environment.

Inclusive Design [H3]

Pearson English Connect has been designed to be inclusive for all readers. We consider the following accessible design issues when we develop our content:

- Sufficient color contrast on all pages.
- Avoid using color only to convey meaning.
- Hierarchical heading structure.

- Logical sequence through content on the page.
- Alternative text for any non-text content.
- Closed captioning and transcripts for video content.
- All page languages are defined to help screen reader compatibility.
- The inbuilt screen reader is configured for every page.

Interactive content + alternative submission methods [H3]

Some interactive exercises within Pearson English Connect require actions such as underlining sections of text or other input methods which require use of a mouse. All interactive exercises include two alternative submission methods for users to record a verbal answer or a written answer in text if they cannot complete the exercise due to accessibility barriers.

Magnification + Reflow [H3]

Some learners with low vision need to resize text to read it comfortably. The main beneficiaries of reflow are low-vision learners who need the option to enlarge text and still see the content on the screen without scrolling across the page.

Magnification [H4]

Page content can be magnified to 300% without text spilling off the screen using inbuilt browser features (e.g., CTRL +/- for PCs and Command +/- for Macs). Browsers also offer add-ons, plugins, or extensions that allow zooming options and personalization.

Reflow [H4]

Pearson English Connect has an integrated font size feature. Reflowable text is activated by clicking on font size (τT) button in the menu bar. The text size increases to more than 200% without the need for horizontal scrolling.
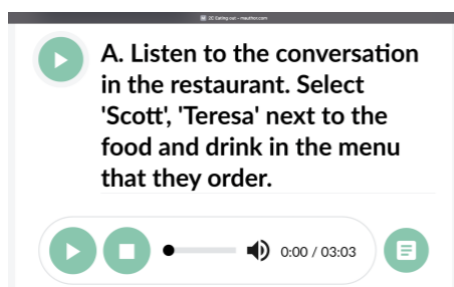

Figure 1. The font size (τT) button increases the size of the text and reflows the content on the screen.

The platform has been tested and is compatible with [A+ FontSize Changer](). This third-party app allows the user to adjust the color and size of the text on the page. It is also possible to change the default text size using the browser settings.

Dark Mode [H3]

To support dyslexic readers an inbuilt dark theme option is provided to increase contrast. The dark theme is activated by clicking on the Sun icon on the menu bar.
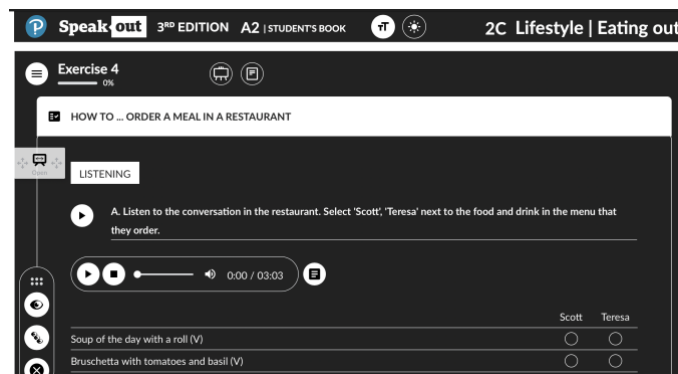

Figure 2. The Dark Theme feature offers increased contrast with a white text/black background.

All text content on Pearson English Connect is presented in sans serif fonts.

Color + Contrast [H3]

The Pearson English Connect platform has been designed to ensure content provides a sufficient contrast ratio with the background. Text has a contrast ratio with the background of 4.5:1 for small text and 3:1 for large text.

Users can also adapt the color scheme to their requirements by using the integrated high contrast mode (featuring white text against a black background). The platform is also compatible with third-party apps such as Change Colors and A+ FontSize Changer that allow greater flexibility in selecting your color preferences.

Keyboard navigation [H3]

Pearson English Connect features a keyboard navigation mode which is activated by pressing Shift+Enter for keyboard support.

Focus Indicator [H4]

The keyboard support mode features a focus indicator that visually highlights the location of the user when the user uses the keyboard to tab through the page elements. Each page element is highlighted with a dashed line box.

Page Elements [H4]

When using the integrated screen reader, the page elements include descriptive tags to inform the user of the type of content or activity and the purpose of the content.

Screen reader [H3]

The Pearson English Connect platform has been tested with NVDA screen reader 2019.2.1.18844, JAWS 2021, and VoiceOver. These screen readers are compatible with navigating around the platform menus and selecting courses from the table of contents. However, when exploring the

course and engaging with Pearson English Connect content, we recommend the use of the integrated screen reader which has been specially designed to enhance the user experience and enable interactive assessment.

There are two additional modes for you to work with the interactive exercises:

- Users with low vision and blindness mode, where the material is operated with the aid of a dedicated screen reader keyboard. In order to activate this mode you need to press a key combination: Ctrl + Enter.
- A keyboard support mode only. In order to activate this mode you need to press a key combination: Shift + Enter.

SCREEN READER CONTROLS [H4]

- To turn on/off the dedicated screen reader, use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Enter.
- Navigation between modules is done using Tab and Shift+Tab keys.
- To activate a selected module, press Enter, to deactivate it press Escape.
- User interaction with an activated module is controlled by the Space bar.
- Navigation inside a module is controlled by the Tab, Shift+Tab, and Arrows keys.
- The shortcut for skipping forward to the next page is Shift+Right Arrow.
- The shortcut for skipping back to the previous page is Shift+Left Arrow.
- The dashed module border means that the module is selected, but not active. The screen reader announces each page element highlighted by the dashed border.
- The screen reader mode fully supports the check answers mode.
- Feedback to correct or incorrect answers in interactive assessment is provided to the user in written and audio formats.

We have created a video to help you learn more about the features of the integrated screen reader: Screen Reader Demo

Figure 3. Explore the screen reader demo.

Text to speech [H3]

In addition to the integrated screen reader, the Pearson English Connect platform has been tested and is compatible with third party text-to-speech software such as Read Aloud and Natural Reader. The platform is also compatible with the built-in text-to-speech software available in the Edge browser.

Alt Text + Image Description [H3]

Pearson English Connect contains a rich selection of over 70,000 images chosen to enhance the learning experience. We have created detailed alt text image descriptions for all meaningful images and links to ensure that all readers can enjoy this visual content. Alt text descriptions are created based on context and audience level.

Figure 4. All informative images on Pearson English Connect include alt text.

Audio Content [H3]

Pearson English Connect features a range of audio content to help enrich the learning environment. The audio content features are as follows.

- Audio playback can be controlled by the user.
- Audio can be paused or stopped using the space bar.
- Audio does not autoplay.
- Audio player can be controlled with the keyboard.
- The speed of audio playback can be selected according to personal preference.
- Volume can be controlled independently from system volume.
- Dynamic Transcripts are provided for all audio content. The text in the transcript is highlighted as the audio is played.
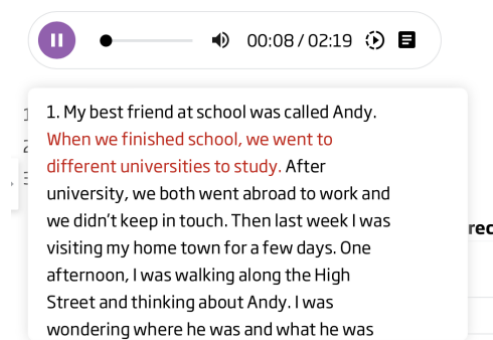

Figure 5. An example of the dynamic transcripts available in Pearson English Connect.

Video Content [H3]

Pearson English Connect features a range of immersive video content to help create a rich learning environment. The video content features are as follows.

- Video playback can be controlled by the user.
- Video content can be paused or stopped using the space bar.
- Video content does not autoplay.
- Video player can be controlled with the keyboard.
- The speed of video playback can be selected according to personal preference.
- Volume can be controlled independently from system volume.
- Closed captioning is provided for all video content as standard. Captioning can be controlled by the user (turned on/off).
- Transcripts are provided for all video content.

Figure 6. Closed Captioning is provided for all video content.

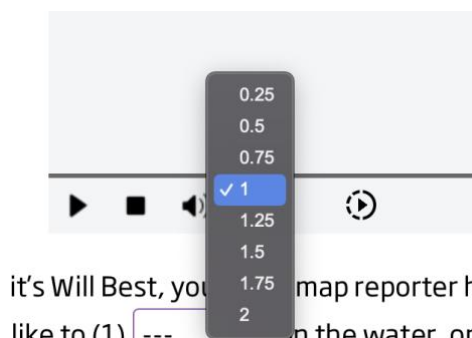*Figure 7. Transcripts are provided for all video content.*

Figure 8. Playback speed can be controlled by the user.

Multi Language Support [H3]

The Pearson English Connect platform supports multiple languages for navigation around the platform infrastructure such as menus. The preferred language can be selected from the Flag icon on the menu bar.
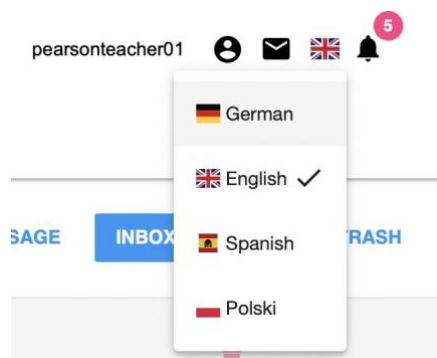

Figure 9. Pearson English Connect supports a range of languages.

SUPPORTED LANGUAGES:

- English
- German
- Spanish
- Polish
- Ukrainian

All content is provided in English. We are currently developing options for switching the language for navigation within the course content pages (e.g., button names, tooltips etc.)

Your Reading Experience with Pearson English Connect [H2]

Pearson English Connect can be enjoyed in both online and offline modes to suit your learning requirements.

Online Reading [H3]

The online experience contains a range of reading views including the Student Book, the Workbooks, the Whiteboard, and an exciting variety of interactive content.

Student Book [H4]

The Student Book contains the following features and options to improve the reading experience:

- Navigation arrows: when moving from on PDF page to another via the arrows in the middle of the page spread, the content opens in the same tab and creates the impression of flicking through the book.

- Built-in features: Screen reader, Keyboard Navigation, Mobile layout for zooming in, Changing color theme (dark/light theme).

- The Presentation Tool is equally effective in a face-to-face lesson or shared in a virtual class.

- Teachers and learners have identical views, avoiding guess work, whether on desktop or mobile.

Work Book [H4]

Icons in the header menu provide links to the Whiteboard, Work Books, Student Books, Resources, Teaching Notes and Answer Keys in Work Books, and Online Practice content. Icons and spelling are standardized across the platform. All destinations are announced by the screen reader.

Whiteboard [H4]

The Whiteboard feature allows users to add text, freehand draw, and insert images and can be used in real-time classroom setting. The results can be downloaded and printed.

Interactive Content [H4]

Pearson English Connect features a wide range of immersive methods of assessment including:

- **Live Collaboration Tools:** mCourser Learning Management System (LMS) offers a dedicated feature called Virtual Class to arrange real-time collaborations. Virtual Class enables a video conferencing call (one to many) with shared virtual whiteboard and chat. Teachers can give real time assignments with real time reporting, send questions, and publish all answers to class and breakout video conferencing rooms (many to many). Additionally, each class and group dashboard features a chat for real time communication. It is also possible to create dynamic chat rooms with any combination of students and teachers.
- **Course Customization:** the teacher is able to customize the course by creating their own collection with the combination of any lessons and tests from Pearson English Connect and their own documents and URLs.
- **Discussion Forums:** learners can interact with their peers in discussion forums and post questions to the group. Group Dashboard contains Chat that can be used by students and teacher to discuss the course
- **My Notes:** learners have an opportunity to save some answers to their notes (where this option is provided as a button option) and return to them at any time. Learners can also create more notes.
- **Video and audio content**
- **Test Generator:** Pearson English connect includes a test generator function that allows the teacher to add questions from pre-existing tests. Questions and answers can be randomised within the test question if desired. The test can also be set to expire at a particular point.
- **Test Content:** interactive questions include drag and drop, image matching, sentence completion exercises, highlighting, underlining, and circling content and answers. All interactive text-based exercises include two alternative submission methods for users to record a verbal answer or a written answer in text if they cannot complete the exercise due to accessibility barriers.

Offline Reading [H3]

Pearson English Connect is available in an offline version to address potential geographical bandwidth and data issues. The Pearson English Connect app allows users to download content to both mobile and desktop devices.

All work and learning progress completed offline is automatically synced when returning to the online environment.

Digital Rights Management [H3]

The Pearson English Connect platform employs digital rights management (DRM) for both online and offline versions. The platform is password protected and limits users to 2-3 devices on which they are allowed to use the content.

Users are not able to download the Student Book and Work Book content in full to their hard drives, but only to their computer's or mobile device's cache which then deletes automatically after a specific period of time.

Copying and Printing [H3]

Users are able to copy and paste content from the individual pages of the student book or workbook. The platform is compatible with copy and pasting page content to text-to-speech software.

Users are allowed to download additional resources, such as printable test content, photocopiable content, video worksheets, and Whiteboard content, etc., in either Word or PDF formats.

Further resources [H2]

If you have a disability and need to make your computer, tablet, or other device easier to use and create a more personalized reading experience, My Computer My Way from AbilityNet is a recommended resource and contains a wide range of advice and helpful tips.

User Guides [H2]

We have prepared a range of useful walkthrough videos and tutorials to help you get the best experience from Pearson English Connect.

Learn more about the platform by accessing the appropriate Quick Start Guide:

- Quick Start Guide for Students
- Quick Start Guide for Teachers

If you are new user of the platform, please visit our New User tutorials and videos:

- [New User tutorial for Students](#)
- [New User tutorials for Teachers](#)

Explore our [Frequently Asked Questions directory](#).

Non-Accessible Content + the Accessibility Roadmap [H2]

Pearson English Connect is always evolving, and we encourage our community of users to provide feedback to help us to continue to improve the user experience for everyone. We have identified some non-accessible content on the platform, and we are working to remediate these issues. You can review our Accessibility Roadmap to see what we are working on now and explore our plans for the future.

[Explore the Accessibility Roadmap](#)

Do you have feedback about your experience with Pearson English Connect? If so, we'd love to hear your thoughts. Please contact [Pearson English Connect CSSR team](#).

Alternative formats [H2]

Pearson are happy to support students and educators in sourcing alternative formats of our content. Please follow the links below to find out more details about sourcing Pearson content.

- Information for [students](#).
- Information for [campus accessibility professionals and educators](#).

Alternative formats can be requested via our [alternative format request form](#). We aim to respond to accessible content requests within 5 days.

Pearson have also partnered with the [RNIB Bookshare](#) project and the [AccessText Network](#) to provide expedited access to our digital content.

Support and Feedback [H2]

Do you have questions or feedback about Pearson English Connect? We'd love to hear from you. Please contact us via the routes listed below.

- Contact [the Pearson English Connect CSSR team](#).
- Visit [the Pearson general contact page](#).
- Visit [the Pearson Support page](#).

We strive to respond to all queries within 5 working days.

The [Pearson Knowledge Base](#) contains articles and information about our work to make our content and platforms as accessible as possible.

Technical Information about Pearson English Connect [H2]

Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) [H3]

The [VPAT](#) is a document which evaluates how accessible a product is based on the [Section 508 Standards](#) in the United States. The VPAT demonstrates how the features and functional characteristics of the Pearson English Connect platform support the Revised 508 Standards and the WCAG 2.1 requirements.

Explore the Pearson English Connect VPAT [PENDING VPAT + LINK]

Recommended Operating Systems and Browsers [H3]

Pearson English Connect is designed and optimized for the following browsers and operating systems:

- Microsoft Edge.
- Firefox.
- Safari.
- Chrome.
- Opera.
- Windows.
- iOS.
- Android.

Please see a more [detailed list of system requirements.](#)

Accessibility Testing [H2]

The platform was audited by [All Able](#) on 21st April 2022. The audit was conducted using a range of assistive technologies that support users with a variety of access needs. The tools used to conduct the audit were as follows:

- Chrome 83.04.4103.116.
- Microsoft Edge 44.18362.449.0.
- Firefox 95.0.2
- Safari.
- NVDA (Non-Visual Desktop Access) screen reader 2019.2.1.18844.
- JAWS 2021.

- VoiceOver.
- Dragon Naturally Speaking.
- Axe Beta accessibility checker.
- Windows and iOS magnifiers.
- Windows High Contrast Modes.
- Browser settings including magnification and text size changes.
- No styles views.
- Keyboard control.

Our involvement in the accessibility community [H2]

Pearson works closely with key members of the disability and advocacy community who are committed to developing accessible instructional materials. We work with organizations such as W3C, the DIAGRAM Center, Book Industry Study Group, the DAISY Consortium, and the National Federation of the Blind.

Pearson staff contribute time, expertise, and creativity to moving accessibility forward. We conduct user studies and a variety of research and usability studies on important topics, such as assistive technology use and product prototypes. We frequently collaborate with advocacy groups and share advances and insights through conference presentations and articles.

Pearson have created the Accessibility Guidelines for Higher Education: Ensuring every learner succeeds to help developers create the most effective educational content. The guidelines include a useful glossary of accessibility terms. You can learn more about Pearson's work to identify and remediate accessibility issues within our platforms with our accessibility roadmap. Based on extensive audits, we're working to improve our platforms across all our products. In this way, we aim to remove barriers that may impede learning for students with disabilities.

About this accessibility statement [H2]

The Pearson English Connect platform was audited and tested by All Able on 21 April 2022.

This accessibility statement was prepared on: 29 July 2022.

This accessibility statement was updated on: 12 August 2022.

This accessibility statement was reviewed by ASPIRE on 10 August 2022 and achieved a 100% ASPIREscore.

ASPIRE
2022

GOLD
100