Headset Recommendations

Pearson automated language tests can contain several items that require audio recording and playback to assess listening and speaking skills. Headsets should follow certain specifications to ensure high quality recordings and playback. Pearson encourages test administrators work with site coordinators to ensure that a supply of quality headsets is available. Pearson also encourages spacing test-takers appropriately to further ensure ideal testing environments.

Reviews:

Pearson conducted multiple headset reviews. Headsets were assessed in test-like settings using ideal spacing to analyze their appropriateness for speaking/listening items. After completing the reviews, the following three headsets are recommended by Pearson. The summary table below includes the headset information, input style, number of suggested specifications satisfied, and the operating systems that the headset was tested on. Headset specifications are listed on page 2 of this document.

Table 1. Recommendation Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headset</th>
<th>Jack/USB</th>
<th># Satisfied Specs</th>
<th>Operating Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kidz Gear wired headphones for Kids</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>9 / 10</td>
<td>iOS 9, iOS 10, Android 6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avid AE-36</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>9 / 10</td>
<td>iOS 9, iOS 10, Android 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logitech USB headsets H390</td>
<td>USB</td>
<td>7 / 7</td>
<td>macOS 10.9-10.12, Windows 7, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jack Input Specifications:
For devices which use microphone jack inputs (e.g. tablets), the following specifications are suggested. Selected headsets should have most of these features.

1) Single 3.5 mm plug (TRRS)       6) Over-the-ear style (non-earbud)
2) Lightweight and durable design   7) Adjustable plastic boom microphone
3) Clear audio through the headphones  8) Leatherette ear pads
4) Clear playback (recorded audio)  9) Ambidextrous headset design
5) Ambient noise cancellation functionality of microphone  10) No in-line volume control or mute button

USB Input Specifications:
For devices using USB inputs (e.g. desktop computers), the following specifications are suggested. Selected headsets should have most of these features.

1) Stereo Sound                  5) 32 ohms impedance (headphone)
2) Double ear piece              6) 100-12000 Hz frequency response
3) 32 mm driver unit size (headphone)  (microphone)
4) 20 - 20000 Hz frequency response  7) 3320 ohms impedance (microphone)
   (headphone)