

Assessment Technical Difficulties Tips and Solutions for IT Staff

The students are using an online assessment tool called E-SESS. The website is www.techfluency.org. This document details a few problems they may experience and suggested actions to either diagnose or fix the problem.

If the students are having general connection issues, check the following:

- If possible, check the packet loss in the lab
 - Perform a traceroute to www.techfluency.org to see if the connection to E-SESS is ok and packet loss is minimal.
- 1) The test will not load at all. The student clicks the Begin button but the page never opens.
 - a. Check for a popup blocker.
 - b. Check the firewall and/or proxy server to see if techfluency.org is being blocked.
 - 2) The student clicks Begin and the page opens, but the test never shows up.
 - a. Check the browser version. The testing program is supported on IE 9+, Firefox, or Chrome on Windows 7 and 8, or Mac.
 - b. Try just closing the assessment and clicking begin again.
 - c. Check for any specific errors showing up and contact CTECS with the exact error message.
 - 3) "The students keep getting disconnected". The message on the screen should be something like "Please wait while your test is being loaded. The connection to the server has slowed or stopped....".

This means the AJAX call to E-SESS failed. This could be due to sever packet loss on an overloaded network. When the student begins the test, it will download about 100K, but the typical transaction after that is only around 10K, so it doesn't require much bandwidth. You might also check if a firewall or proxy server is blocking communication with techfluency.org.
 - 4) The test is going really slowly. Each question takes more than 10 seconds to load.

The simplest check is to see if it is the computer itself by seeing if the browser is responsive enough when changing to other sites such as the local school website. If the computer seems acceptable, try a connection speed test such as <http://speedtest.net/>. Run the test and see if the numbers are abnormally low.