**LITERACY – TYPES OF QUESTIONS**

**OSSLT (literacy test) Breakdown**

81 marks total converted to a scale score of 200-400. 300 is the minimum pass. Student needs approximately 70% (56 or 57 out of 81) to pass. Reading: 43 marks

**Types of Reading Questions**

**Type 1: Directly Stated Information:**

7 multiple choice questions

**Type 2: Indirectly Stated Information:**

18 multiple choice questions – often students fail because of these questions

2 short answer questions worth three marks each

**Type 3: Making Connections:**

6 connection multiple choice questions

2 short answer questions worth three marks each

***We know that students’ area of weakness on OSSLT generally lies with inference questions. One strategy for improving this weakness is to help students identify what type of question they are answering.***

For **directly stated** information: Look in the text. The answer is there, although it might be broken up around other words or sentences.

For **indirectly stated** information: You must make an inference. Use what is written in the text and your background knowledge (e.g. what you already know) to figure out the answer.

**Inference questions** may ask you to:

* Figure out the definition of a word and how it is being used, if the text doesn’t define it for you
* Draw conclusions about people or characters
* Determine who is speaking if the speaker is not directly identified
* Recognize shifts in time and setting
* Answer questions raised but not answered by the writer
* Determine the writer’s audience and purpose
* Recognize bias of the writer or people in the writing
* Visualize details about an event or setting

In order to **infer** well (activate background knowledge), students must be able to make connections to the text. There are three types of connections good readers make: text to self, text to text, and text to world. \*\*Note that sometimes a connection can take readers away from the text and cause their minds to wander. For example, a science textbook explaining different types of light sources showed a photo of a young boy with a glow stick. I immediately made a text to self connection, remembering how my friends and I used to carry those types of glow sticks around at raves we went to in high school. This then caused me to think about my friends from high school, taking my mind completely away from light sources. I had to catch myself from letting my mind wander and bring myself back to the text.\*\*

For **connection** questions: Think about what you have learned about the topic and what you already knew about it to make predictions about what uses the information will have. In OSSLT, you are also asked to connect your knowledge of punctuation and other text features (e.g. italics) to draw conclusions about the text.

**How Students Can Help Themselves**

You could start by labeling questions as directly stated, inference and connection.

When reading, draw your own inferences and make your own connections to the text. Don’t always rely on the pre-made questions.

When reading, do a read-aloud: write down your thinking about the reading as you do it. Then, go back over your comments and identify which are inferences and which are connections.

**Helpful Terms**

**Directly Stated Questions:** The answer you are looking for is in the text.

**Inference**: Combining information from the text with what you already know to make a reasonable assumption or draw a conclusion.

**Background Knowledge:** What you already know about what you are reading about.

**Text to self connection**: Think about the parts of the text that remind you of experiences and people in your own life.

**Text to text connection**: Think about the parts of the text that remind you of other texts you have read or media you have seen.

**Text to world connection**: Think about the parts of the text that remind you of things you already know (or think you know) about the world.

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