

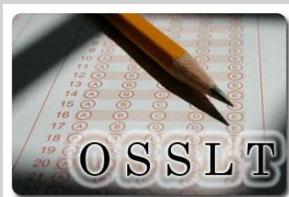
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Education Quality and  
Accountability Office



Preparation Workbook  
Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test  
(OSSLT)

# INTRODUCTION



## What You Need To Know

### What is the OSSLT?

- The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, (OSSLT) is a provincial test of literacy (both reading and writing) skills students have acquired by the end of Grade 9 in *The Ontario Curriculum* across all subject areas.
- Its successful completion is a requirement for graduation.

### Who writes the OSSLT?

- Grade 10 students in the province of Ontario.
- Previously eligible students who were unsuccessful on their first attempt.

### What are the basics of the OSSLT?

<b>Test Date</b>	- this date is determined on a yearly basis - refer to the EQAO website for the specific date ( <a href="http://www.eqao.com">www.eqao.com</a> )
<b>Test Materials</b>	- 2 Question Booklets and 2 Answer Booklets
<b>Duration</b>	- 2.5 hours of test time
<b>Results</b>	- An Individual Student Report outlining individual results will be distributed in June or September

# UNDERSTANDING THE OSSLT

## What is on the OSSLT?

- ❖ There are 2 Question Booklets and 2 Answer Booklets.
- ❖ Each Question Booklet contains both reading and writing selections.

<b>READING</b> (Approximately 53% of total score)	<b>WRITING</b> (Approximately 46% of total score)
<p><b>Types of Reading Tasks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informational Text (fact based/News Report)</li> <li>Narrative Text (story/fictional/Dialogue)</li> <li>Graphic Text (visual information)</li> </ul> <p><b>Types of Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple Choice</li> <li>Open Response (6 lines each)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Types of Writing tasks and questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long writing tasks (<i>News Report, Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion</i>)</li> <li>2 Short Writing Tasks (<i>6 lines each</i>)</li> <li>Multiple Choice Questions (<i>Developing a Main Idea with Supporting Details, Organization of Ideas, Language Conventions</i>)</li> </ul>

## Decoding the OSSLT

The OSSLT has its own special terminology. It is important to know what these terms mean.

<b>Selection</b>	A <b>selection</b> is the passage you must read. It might be part of a book, a story from a magazine, something from a website or news report. It is what you need to base your answers on.
<b>Task</b>	The <b>task</b> is the question you have to answer. It will instruct you on what to do. For example, it may tell you to develop your main idea with supporting details.
<b>Response</b>	Your <b>response</b> is your written answer to the task.
<b>Length</b>	The <b>length</b> is the amount of space your <b>response</b> must cover. For example, if 6 lines are provided on the test, you must fill all 6 lines.
<b>Rough Notes</b>	<b>Rough notes</b> are an area of space that they provide for you to brainstorm ideas for your <b>response</b> . This area is <u>NOT</u> scored.
<b>Scoring</b>	<b>Scoring</b> is the word used for marking or grading. Your score on each question is called a Code. If you get a 30, they call it a Code 30.
<b>Conventions</b>	<b>Conventions</b> are spelling, grammar, sentence structure and punctuation.
<b>Section</b>	A <b>section</b> refers to how the OSSLT is organized.

# READING

## UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- For the OSSLT, reading is defined as the process through which the reader makes meaning of a variety of written texts as reflected in the expectations in The Ontario Curriculum **across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9.**
- Each selection focuses on 3 reading skills:
  1. Understanding **explicitly (directly)** stated ideas and information.
  2. Understanding **implicitly (indirectly)** stated ideas and information.
  3. **Making connections** between information and ideas in a reading selection and personal knowledge and experience.

### EXPLICIT

- The answer can be found in the text, usually in one sentence.
- OR**
- The answer is in the text, but you will need to look in several different places to find it.

### IMPLICIT

- Using the facts and details from the text as clues to make reasonable guesses about what is not directly stated in the text.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

- The answer comes from your own experiences, beliefs, and background knowledge and how these connect to the selection.
  - ✓ Text-to-Text
  - ✓ Text-to-Self
  - ✓ Text-to-World

# READING STRATEGIES

## BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER

### BEFORE READING

- **PREVIEW** the selection. By skimming and scanning, you will get an overall idea of what the selection is about.
- **LOOK** carefully at the photograph or diagram. These graphic features will give you clues to the meaning of the selection.
- **READ** the questions. By doing this, you will know what to look for when reading the selection.

### DURING READING

- **MAKE NOTES.** Use the white space to jot down questions, key words, and thoughts you may have.
- **HIGHLIGHT or UNDERLINE** facts, details or ideas that link to the questions.
- Pay attention to **TEXT FEATURES.** *Italics*, **bold**, headings, “quotation marks” to show dialogue/quotations, headlines, numbering of paragraphs, etc. all help you to understand the selection.

### AFTER READING

- **ANSWER** the questions.
- **RE-READ** the selection in case you are unsure of an answer.
- **LOOK** carefully at the selection to find details that will help you answer the questions.

### Types of Reading Selections

<b>Information Paragraph</b>	Presents factual ideas and information on a topic.
<b>News Report</b>	Presents information in the form and structure of a news article.
<b>Dialogue</b>	Presents a conversation already in progress between 2 or more people and is indicated by the use of quotation marks. (“...”)
<b>Real-Life Narrative</b>	Presents an account of a significant time in an individual’s life.
<b>Graphic Text</b>	Presents ideas and information with the help of graphic features, such as diagrams, photographs, drawings, sketches, timetables, maps, charts, or tables.

## HIGHLIGHTING, UNDERLINING, AND MAKING MARGIN NOTES

- On the OSSLT, you are allowed to highlight and/or underline key words or phrases on the reading selections and/or questions.
- The best way to make highlighting/underlining useful as a tool for comprehension is for it to be **strategic, selective, and purposeful**.
- With selective highlighting and underlining the idea is to mark only the key **words, phrases, vocabulary, and ideas** that are central to understanding the piece.

**For example, highlighting/underlining can be used to:**

⇒ Mark important information as you **read** the selections.

**For example:** A great deal about your personality can be read in your handwriting, according to graphologists. Such experts consider handwriting a kind of “brainwriting,” a direct expression of mental impulses in the brain transmitted through the writer’s hand to the paper.

⇒ In the above example, the four words are underlined because they are the most important in the selection.

**Here are some suggestions to keep in mind when highlighting or underlining key words:**

- Look carefully at the first and last line of each paragraph. Important information is often found there.
- Highlight only necessary words and phrases - not an entire sentence. **Remember: Do not highlight any more than one-third of the paragraph.**
- Look for those **big ideas** that relate to or expand the main topic.
- Identify the **key words** in a question that can help you find the answer. Keep those key words in mind when you return to the selection. You should search for those exact words, or words similar in meaning.

## TIPS FOR ANSWERING MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

The OSSLT consists of 58 test questions. Ten of these questions are written responses that are to be answered in complete sentences and scored with rubrics. The rest are multiple-choice questions.

### What is a multiple-choice question?

- It is a question that lists possible answers and asks you to make a choice and select the correct one.
- You will have 4 choices to consider for each question.
- Many students like multiple choice because they think that multiple-choice questions are the easiest to answer. After all, the answer is right there on the page, so how hard can that be?
- You may be surprised to find out just how hard multiple-choice questions can really be. The choices are not meant to trick you, but rather to make you think. You know the correct answer is there, but all of the choices may sound correct. This is one of the things that make multiple-choice questions difficult to answer.

### HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT I AM SELECTING THE CORRECT ANSWER?

1. Read the question **FIRST**. Look for key words.
2. Don't look at the answer choices yet.
3. Before looking at the answer choices, try to think of an answer on your own. **Go back to the selection if necessary.**
4. Try to find an answer in the list of choices that matches what you predicted.
5. If you don't see the answer you predicted, see if you can cross out any of the choices you know are wrong. Narrow your choices down to as few as possible.
6. No matter what you choose, make sure that you read through all the choices. Sometimes more than one answer may seem right. After you have ruled out choices you know are incorrect, then select the best one. **DO NOT LEAVE BLANKS!**
7. Check and double-check that you have "bubbled-in" your choice in the correct section of the Student Answer Booklet.

#### Multiple-Choice

**1** (A) (B) (C) (D)

**2** (F) (G) (H) (J)

**3** (A) (B) (C) (D)

**4** (F) (G) (H) (J)

**5** (A) (B) (C) (D)



#### Remember to:

- answer **ALL** multiple-choice questions.
- transfer your answers to the **STUDENT ANSWER BOOKLET**.
- fill in the circle **completely** on the **STUDENT ANSWER BOOKLET**.

## SAMPLE READING SELECTION

### Teen's Recycling Recipe Bags Award

This is an  
example  
of a  
**News  
Report.**



Landfills are clogged with plastic bags that can take up to 1000 years to decompose. Daniel Burd, a 17-year-old high school student from Waterloo, Ontario, has discovered a way to break down the plastic in a matter of months. [1]

Burd's idea won the top prize of \$10 000 and scholarships at the 2008 Canada-Wide Science Fair in Ottawa. [2]

Burd said his idea literally hit him on the head one day. "Each time I open the closet ... the plastic bags are on the top shelf and they always fall down like an avalanche onto my head." One day he just got tired of it, so he researched what other people are doing with these bags. [3]

Burd discovered that approximately 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide each year. Many end up in the oceans, where they are ingested by animals that often die as a result. [4]

Burd's hypothesis was that if plastic bags can eventually break down, it should be possible to speed up the process by isolating and concentrating the micro-organism responsible for the decomposition. [5]

To test his hypothesis, Burd took soil samples from the landfill and mixed them with polyethylene (the substance used to make plastic bags) and a solution to encourage bacterial growth. After concentrating the solution and incubating it for 12 weeks, Burd was able to degrade the plastic by 43 percent in six weeks. He figures the bacterial soup would entirely break down plastic bags in three months. [6]

Burd envisions future "recycling stations" acting as large composters for plastic bags. Meantime, he says he hopes to attend a university to study science. [7]

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Booklet.)

1. Which paragraph describes the event that happened first?

- a. paragraph 2
- b. paragraph 3
- c. paragraph 4
- d. paragraph 5

The answer to this question is **NOT** directly stated. (IMPLICIT) Use a fact or detail to make an educated guess.

2. What is the meaning of “hypothesis” as used in paragraph 5?

- a. a recipe
- b. a problem
- c. a prediction
- d. an experiment

The word “hypothesis” is used directly (EXPLICIT) in the selection.

3. What is responsible for the decomposition of plastic bags?

- a. bacteria
- b. polyethylene
- c. additional water
- d. large composters

The answer is stated directly in the selection- “*bacterial soup*” (EXPLICIT).

4. What is the purpose of the information inside the parentheses in paragraph 6?

- a. It provides an explanation.
- b. It refers to another experiment.
- c. It presents a step in the experiment.
- d. It emphasizes the importance of the problem.

The answer to this question is **NOT** directly stated. (IMPLICIT) Use a fact or detail to make an educated guess.

5. Why did Burd’s experiment win the top prize?

- a. It could solve a significant problem.
- b. Burd plans to study science in university.
- c. It encourages people to reduce their use of plastic bags.
- d. Burd discovered the bacteria that break down plastic bags.

The answer to this question requires you to make a Text-to-World connection.

**Answers:**  
1. b   2. c   3. a   4. a   5. a

## Tips for Completing Short Writing Tasks

The second type of question that you will encounter on the OSSLT for the Reading Selections will be Short Writing Tasks.

It is always a good idea to plan your response in the “Rough Notes” section that is provided on the test. You are given only a few lines to answer the questions, so you must use them wisely.

**Provide your answers  
in the ANSWER  
BOOKLET.**

### AFTER READING THE SELECTION, HOW DO I ANSWER THE QUESTION?

1. Read the question carefully to understand what is being asked.
2. Answer the question by including part of the question as part of your answer. Note that sometimes you will be asked to state your opinion about something or comment on something you have read. Read carefully!
3. In answering the question, go back to the selection to find specific details to support your answer and/or opinion.
4. Think about your own experiences. In what way does the selection you have read connect to your own experience of the world?
  - Does it make you think about a personal experience you have had? (**Text-to-Self**)
  - Does it remind you of another book you have read or movie you have watched? (**Text-to-Text**)
  - Does it remind you of something that has happened in the news? (**Text-to-World**)

You can include these ideas in your answer. By including these ideas, you show that you have understood what you have read in the selection.

5. Some short writing tasks on the OSSLT are not connected to a reading piece. When this is the case, respond to the writing task that is provided. Write a clear **topic sentence** to start your paragraph and **state your main idea**. Then provide **specific details** (examples, explanations, etc.) to support your answer. Be guided by the number of lines – don’t leave more than one blank!
6. Check your punctuation (capital letters and periods) and spelling!



#### **KNOW YOUR TERMS:**

**Identify**— State or name a person, place, thing, or a reason.

**Explain** – Give a reason as part of your answer; try using the word “because”.

**Describe** – Tell about a person, place, thing or idea in your answer. Try to paint a picture.

**Define** – Tell the meaning of a word or phrase.

**Suggest**—provide an idea for careful thought

## SAMPLE READING SELECTION: *NARRATIVE WITH DIALOGUE*

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.



“Is tomorrow the big day?” asked Hanna. Her father was lost in thought. “Dad?” 1

“Sorry.” Gerry snapped out of his reverie. “I can’t focus. Nerves, I guess.” 2

“Don’t be nervous,” said Hanna. “You’re a fantastic chef!” 3

“Thanks. It’s not the cooking that I’m worried about—it’s the pace. ‘Go! Hurry!’ People yelling ... getting annoyed.” 4

Hanna could see his anxiety. “But we have given you lots of practice dealing with impatient, noisy people,” she said. “You have an advantage over the 20-year-old apprentices! *They* haven’t been cooking for five kids for 18 years.” 5

“True,” acknowledged Gerry. “It’s just scary trying a new career at 44, even with the help from the Second Career program.” 6

“Remember the night before I started that lifeguarding job? I was a wreck, and you and Mom gave me great advice.” 7

“What?” 8

“Take a deep breath,” she replied. “Go for a walk.” 9

Gerry exhaled loudly. “That helps. Any other tips?” 10

“You distracted me with a funny story—remember your lab partner who used salt instead of sugar?” 11

“Poor Steve,” recalled Gerry, chuckling. “Let’s hope I don’t make mistakes like that!” 12

“You won’t,” said Hanna reassuringly. “And Mom suggested that I visualize the end of my first day. Picture yourself cleaning your station after your shift and imagine the feeling of accomplishment.” 13

Gerry closed his eyes and swished his hands out in front of him, wiping an imaginary counter. 14

They burst out laughing. “Feeling of relief, or maybe exhaustion,” added Gerry. “Forget visualization, how about that walk?” 15

# Written Answers



Read the questions carefully!  
Use part of the question as part of your answer!  
**DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING BLANK**; fill up the lines!

1. Does Gerry believe that Hanna's suggestions will help him? Use specific details from this selection to support your answer.

**Start your answer with part of the question. For example:**

Gerry feels that Hannah's suggestions ...



This is an **IMPLICIT Question**. The answer is in the text, but you need to look in several different places to find supporting details.

2. What are some strategies that people can use to overcome stresses in their lives? Use specific details from this selection and your own ideas to support your answer.

**Start your answer with part of the question. For example:**



Some strategies that people can use to overcome stresses in their lives include...

This is a **MAKING CONNECTIONS Question**. Your answer must include your own thoughts and knowledge as well as information from the text as support.

## Rough Notes



A Rough Notes section is provided on the OSSLT. Use this area to brainstorm ideas before you begin writing. Remember, this area is not scored; however, it is a great way for you to brainstorm ideas in order to formulate your response.

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## Written Answers



1. Does Gerry believe that Hanna's suggestions will help him? Use specific details from this selection to support your answer.

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2. What are some strategies that people can use to overcome stresses in their lives? Use specific details from this selection and your own ideas to support your answer.

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### Rough Notes

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*



## SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES: QUESTION #1

- The following are student responses for the previous Reading Selection Questions.
- Two samples are provided for you: an **unacceptable** response and an **acceptable** response.
- The Scoring Guides that are used on the OSSLT for these open response questions follow the sample student responses.

**1. Does Gerry believe that Hanna's suggestions will help him? Use specific details from this selection to support your answer.**

### CODE 10

#### UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

Yes, Gerry believes that Hanna's suggestions will help him. Firstly, Hanna explained to Gerry that taking a walk will calm the nerves. Secondly, Hanna explained to Gerry that visualizing the end of the day will picture yourself as a feeling of accomplishment. Lastly, Hanna told a funny story to Gerry.

**Annotation:**

The response provides examples of suggestions that Hanna gave (*taking a walk will calm the nerves...visualizing the end of the day will picture yourself as a feeling of accomplishment*) but provides no evidence from the selection as to whether Gerry believes these suggestions will help him.

### CODE 30

#### ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

Gerry believes that Hanna's suggestions will help him. This is shown when Gerry breaths a sigh of relief and asks for more tips. Also, Gerry is cooperative with Hanna's suggestions, such as visualizing himself at his job. At the end of the story, Gerry also wants to go for a walk, just like Hanna suggested.

**Annotation:**

The response states that Gerry believes Hanna's suggestions will help him and clearly explains how this is evident using specific and relevant details from the selection (*Gerry breaths a sigh of relief and asks for more tips...Gerry is cooperative with Hanna's suggestions, such as visualizing himself at his job*).

**SCORING GUIDE FOR READING OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS  
QUESTION #1**

Does Gerry believe that Hanna’s suggestions will help him? Use specific details from this selection to support your answer.

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Blank	<b>nothing written or drawn in the lined spaced provided</b>
Illegible	<b>response is illegible</b> An <u>illegible</u> response cannot be read. A <u>comment on the task</u> (e.g., I don’t know.).
Off Topic/ Incorrect	<b>response is off topic, irrelevant or incorrect</b> A typical <u>off topic</u> response has no connection to the selection or the question. A typical <u>irrelevant</u> response comments on the selection or topic (e.g., I do not have a job.) or only restates the question. A typical <u>incorrect</u> response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides an answer based on a misunderstanding of the question <b>AND/OR</b> the ideas in the selection</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• states one character trait of Hanna and provides <u>no support</u> from the selection (e.g., Hanna is helpful.)</li> </ul>
Code 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates minimal reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides minimal or irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response identifies or describes one character trait of Hanna, but provides <u>irrelevant</u> support from the selection (e.g., a retelling of events in the selection) to explain the response.</p>
Code 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates some reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides vague ideas and information from the reading selection; it may include irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response identifies or describes one character trait of Hanna, but provides <u>vague</u> support from the selection to explain the response. The response often requires the reader to make the connection between the character trait and supporting detail(s).</p>
Code 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates considerable reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides accurate, specific and relevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response identifies one character trait of Hanna and uses <u>specific and relevant</u> support from the reading selection to <u>clearly</u> explain the response.</p>

## SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES: QUESTION #2

2. What are some strategies that people can use to overcome stresses in their lives? Use specific details from this selection and your own ideas to support your answer.

### CODE 20 UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

People can use strategies to overcome stresses. Some stresses help people to get to their new jobs, like going for a walk or talking to friends. There are many strategies to choose from like Gerry had a lot of stresses and found some ways to deal with it. Also, taking a deep breath can help you.

**Annotation:**

This response uses vague support from the reading selection to explain why everyone should learn about workplace safety (There are many strategies from like Gerry had a lot of stresses and some ways to deal with it). The reader must make the connection between the reason and the supporting detail.

### CODE 30 ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

People can use many strategies to overcome stresses in their lives. In the reading, Hanna suggests that Gerry can go outside for a walk, take deep breaths and Gerry thinks of something funny to help lighten his mood. When I am stressed, I listen to music and talk about it with my friends and this always helps. It is important to have a variety of ways to relieve stress in our lives.

**Annotation:**

This response uses specific and relevant details from the reading selection (*Hanna suggests that Gerry can go outside for a walk, take deep breaths and Gerry thinks of something funny to help lighten his mood*) to explain how people can overcome stresses. *The response also uses relevant support from their own lives (I listen to music and talk about it with my friends).*

## SCORING GUIDE FOR READING OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS QUESTION #2

What are some strategies that people can use to overcome stresses in their lives? Use specific details from this selection and your own ideas to support your answer.

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Blank	<b>nothing written or drawn in the lined spaced provided</b>
Illegible	<b>response is illegible</b> An <u>illegible</u> response cannot be read. A <u>comment on the task</u> (e.g., I don't know.).
Off Topic/ Incorrect	<b>response is off topic, irrelevant or incorrect</b> A typical <u>off topic</u> response has no connection to the selection or the question. A typical <u>irrelevant</u> response comments on the selection or topic (e.g., I do not have a job.) or only restates the question. (e.g., Everyone should learn about workplace safety) with no support. A typical <u>incorrect</u> response provides an answer based on a misunderstanding of the question (e.g., does not provide a reason) <b>AND/OR</b> of the ideas in the selection.
Code 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates minimal reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides minimal or irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response provides a reason why everyone should learn about workplace safety supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>no</u> support <b>OR</b> <u>no</u> details from the reading selection (e.g., only own ideas used) <b>OR</b> <u>irrelevant</u> details from the selection (e.g., a retelling of events in the selection)</li> </ul>
Code 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates some reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides vague ideas and information from the reading selection; it may include irrelevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response provides <u>vague</u> support from the reading selection to explain why everyone should learn about workplace safety. The response often requires the reader to make the connection between the reason and supporting detail(s).</p>
Code 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>response indicates considerable reading comprehension</b></li> <li>• <b>response provides accurate, specific and relevant ideas and information from the reading selection</b></li> </ul> <p>The response provides a reason and uses <u>specific and relevant</u> details from the selection to explain <u>clearly</u> why everyone should learn about workplace safety.</p>

## TIPS FOR READING A GRAPHIC TEXT

Another type of Reading Selection that you will encounter on the OSSLT is a Graphic Text.

A **Graphic Text** presents ideas and information with the help of graphic features, such as diagrams, photographs, drawings, sketches, patterns, timetables, maps, charts, or tables.

For the **Graphic Reading Text** you will be required to answer 6 multiple choice questions.

## HOW DO I READ A GRAPHIC TEXT?

- When you first see the graphic, **SCAN** it! Try to develop an overall impression of its content and possible meaning.
- Look at the graphic features (bullets, titles, labels, captions, legends, symbols, photos, tables, diagrams, italics). Try to figure out what these features add to the overall meaning.
- Now **READ** the text. First, read the **heading** or **title**. Try to find words and or sentences that tell you what the graphic is trying to show. Read **subheadings**. These will often be bolded or offset from the other words in a larger or **bolder** font or with the use of *italics*.
- Read each **label** and **caption** and look at the part of the visual it describes. Pay attention to **legends**. **Legends** or **keys** explain the different patterns, shading, abbreviations, symbols, icons, or line patterns that appear on maps, charts, floor plans, and diagrams.
- Follow any **arrows** or **numbers** in a logical way.
- Graphics are supposed to clarify and explain information. Take the time to reflect on the information and **draw conclusions** about it. In other words, reflect on what the graphic made you think or feel.
- When you need to answer the multiple choice questions related to the graphic text, you will need to **go back to the graphic** and consider it carefully more than once. Don't rush.

**Look at the label**

**Nutrition information on food labels...**

- Helps you make informed food choices
- Helps you follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating
- Is required on most packaged foods
- Is based on Health Canada's regulations

**Nutrition claims**  
There are two types of nutrition claims:

- 1) **Nutrient content claims** tell you about one nutrient such as sodium, fat or sugar.
- 2) **Health claims** tell you how your diet can affect your health.

**Ingredient list**  
The ingredient list tells you what ingredients are in a packaged food.

**Nutrition Facts table**  
The Nutrition Facts table provides you with information on the Calories and 13 nutrients for the serving size shown.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1/2 cup (125 mL)	
	% Daily Value
Calories 70	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
% Trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	0 %
Sodium 5 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 17 g	6 %
Fiber 3 g	12 %
Sugars 14 g	
Protein 0 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 4 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 4 %

Healthy diet rich in a variety of vegetables and fruit may help reduce the risk of some types of cancer.

Ingredients: Pears, water, juice.

Healthy Eating is the Move for You

# SAMPLE READING SELECTION: GRAPHIC TEXT

Read the selection below and answer the questions in the **STUDENT ANSWER BOOKLET**.

## Canada's Recreational Fish Tale

The recreational fishing industry in Canada, which contributes billions of dollars each year to the economy, relies on healthy freshwater ecosystems. Studies done every five years by Fisheries and Oceans Canada show that, while the number of anglers (people who fish) has dropped dramatically, fishing-related spending has remained relatively steady. Here's a look at recent statistics.



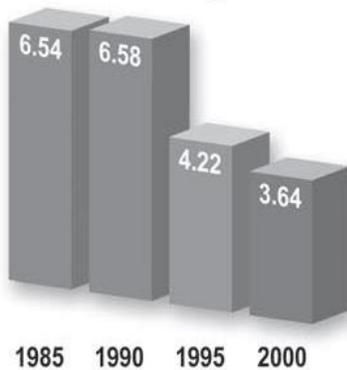
**SCAN it!** What is this graphic text trying to show you?



**READ** the subheadings and make a connection with the graphic below each heading.

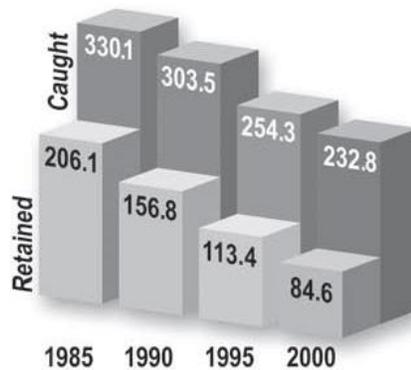
### Total number of anglers

*Shown in millions of resident and non-resident anglers*



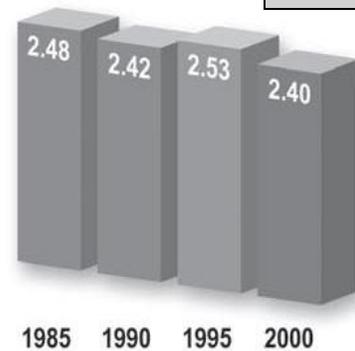
### Total fish caught and retained

*Shown in millions of fish*



### Direct fishing-related expenditures\*

*Shown in billions of dollars*



This is an asterisk. **Why** is it here? **Look** on this page for the connection.

\*Direct fishing related expenditures include food and lodging, transportation, fishing services and fishing supplies.

## Why are anglers releasing so many more fish?

In 1985, anglers released fewer than 38% of all fish they caught. By 2000, that number had climbed to 64%. In part, this is because many recreational anglers have adopted the "catch and release" approach to fishing. By using barbless hooks and carefully releasing fish, they help to ensure the continued sustainability of Canada's recreational fishing industry.



Barbless hook



**ALL** information, both graphic and written is important. Draw conclusions and reflect on what the information made you think and feel.

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the STUDENT ANSWER BOOKLET.)

1. What does the increasing use of barbless hooks suggest about anglers?

- a. They want to help maintain fish populations.
- b. They want to retain as many fish as possible.
- c. They want to make a lot of money selling fish.
- d. They want to make sure the fish are securely hooked.



Refer back to the *Tips for Answering Multiple Choice Questions* on page 6.

2. If the trends shown in the graphs continue, what is a logical prediction?

- a. The number of fish caught decreases.
- b. The number of anglers rises to 1985 levels.
- c. In 2005, anglers spend less than one billion dollars on fishing.
- d. In 2005, the number of retained fish reaches 150 million.

3. What is the purpose of the asterisk (\*) beside “Direct fishing-related expenditures”?

- a. to direct the reader to the graph
- b. to indicate the importance of the section
- c. to connect the heading to other information
- d. to emphasize the amount of fishing-related expenditures

4. Which part of the selection relates most closely to the final paragraph?

- a. the introductory paragraph
- b. the “Total number of anglers” graph
- c. the “Total fish caught and retained” graph
- d. the “Direct fishing-related expenditures” graph

5. What is the meaning of “adopted” as used in the final paragraph?

- a. used
- b. noticed
- c. suggested
- d. abandoned

6. Which part of the selection shows that the recreational fishing industry contributes to the economy?

- a. the picture of the angler
- b. the “Total number of anglers” graph
- c. the “Total fish caught and retained” graph
- d. the “Direct fishing-related expenditures” graph

**Answers:**

1. a   2. a   3. c   4. c   5. a   6. d

# WRITING



- For the OSSLT, writing is defined as a constructive process of communicating in the forms in which students are expected to write according to the expectations in The Ontario Curriculum across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9.
  
- Through a combination of short and long writing tasks, the OSSLT focuses on 3 writing skills:
  1. Developing a main idea with sufficient supporting details.
  2. Organizing information and ideas in a coherent manner.
  3. Using conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) in a manner that is correct and enhances communication.

## Types of Writing Selections

### LONG WRITING TASKS

#### **News Report:**

- You will be required to write a news report based on the photo and headline provided.
- You must find a link between the headline and the photograph that could be used as an event for a report that would appear in the newspaper, and **NOT on television**. Your report must be newsworthy!
- A news report answers the questions **who, what, where, when, why and how**.
- Your news report is an event that has occurred in the past in order to inform readers about the event. You are the reporter.

#### **Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion:**

- You will be required to write a minimum of 3 paragraphs which include an introduction, body paragraph, and a conclusion. HOWEVER, it is recommended that you try to write a 5-paragraph response; **introduction, 3 body paragraphs and conclusion**.
- You must express an opinion and support it with details.

### SHORT WRITING TASKS

#### **Open Response:**

- You will be required to demonstrate your writing skills using your knowledge and personal experiences.
- Your responses must be written in complete sentences.
- You will be given 6 lines for your response. **Use ALL 6 lines!**
- Some of the questions will relate to a reading selection while others may be based on a general topic.
- To start your responses always begin with a clear **topic sentence**. Then provide **specific details** (examples, explanations, stories, and facts, stats) to support your answer. End your response with a **concluding sentence**.

## Tips for Completing the News Report

It is always a good idea to plan your response in the “Rough Notes” section that is provided on the test. You are only given a certain number of lines for the News Report and you must use them wisely. You should aim to use as many of the lines as possible.



### AFTER LOOKING AT THE PHOTO AND HEADLINE, HOW DO I WRITE A NEWS REPORT?

1. View the photo and read the headline carefully. Know your topic. Decide what **single “happening”** or **event** your news report will be about. It’s always safe to turn the headline into an important sentence in the introduction.
2. Remember that your news report will be structured like an inverted pyramid. The **most important**, essential information will appear **first**. You will then add the extra details in the next sections. Look at the diagram to the right to help you understand this structure.
3. The “lead” section will answer the questions: who, what, when, where, and why. This section is really a short summary of the whole story. It should be 1 to 2 sentences long.
4. Use **short sections**. Each section of the news report should have 1 to 3 sentences. Each time you start a new section, remember to indent.
5. Use **quotations**. Make up people who might have been part of the event your report is about. Pretend you have interviewed them. Then quote these people in your news report and identify them by name. Don’t write “the principal”, but instead write “Mr. Smith, the principal ....” Other examples include: Officer Susan, John Doe - a volunteer, etc. Remember to start a new line each time you include a quotation.
6. Write your answer using **third person** point of view: he, she, they, etc. Never use first person (I, me, my, your) unless the sentence is a direct quotation and the person you interviewed was talking about herself or himself.
7. Remember that you **must** write multiple short sections (1 to 3 sentences)! Each time you start a new section, you **must indent**.
8. Check your spelling and punctuation. Do all your sentences start with capital letters and end with periods?



## Writing a News Report



# School Team Qualifies for Finals

This is the **headline** – make sure to incorporate this in your news report.



This is the picture provided. Examine what is happening and find a **link** between the headline and this picture.

**DO NOT** put yourself into the situation.  
**DO NOT** use 1<sup>st</sup> person narration.

e.g.

- X** I couldn't get out of my driveway this morning.
- ✓** People who live on Locke Street couldn't get out of their driveways this morning.

**Task:** Write a **news report** based on the headline and picture above.

- You will have to make up the facts and information to answer some or all of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
- You must relate your newspaper report to **both** the headline **and** the picture.

**Purpose and Audience:** to report on an event for the readers of a newspaper

**Length:** The lined space provided in the Answer Booklet for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.



### REMEMBER!

It's up to you to come up with:

- THE FACTS
- PEOPLE'S NAMES
- STREET NAMES,
- PLACES, and
- QUOTES

**School Team Qualities for Finals**

This is the amount of space that you will be provided with on the OSSLT. **USE ALL OF THE LINES!**



**USE YOUR IMAGINATION!**

Remember the 5 W's and H:

**Who** is involved?



**What** is happening?

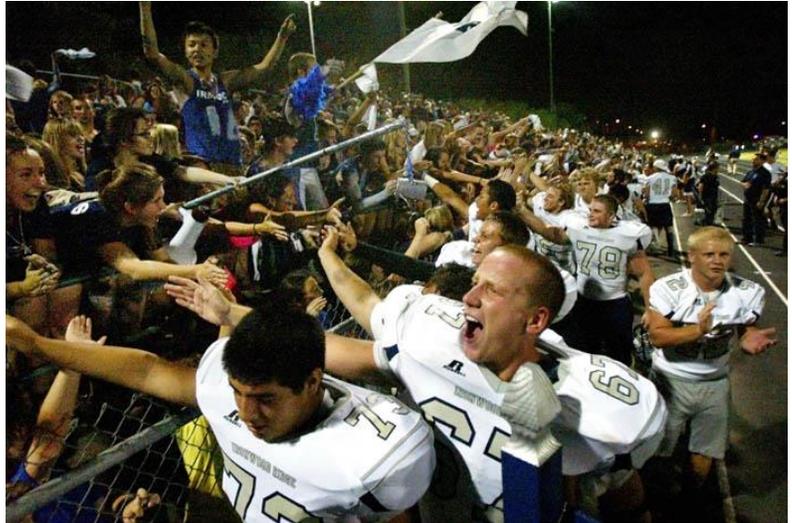
**Where** is the event taking place?

**When** did the event occur?

**Why** is the event happening?

**How** did the event take place?

## School Team Qualifies for Finals



## SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES: NEWS REPORT

- The following are student responses for a news report with a similar topic as the previous page.
- Three samples are provided for you: 2 **unacceptable** responses and an **acceptable** response.
- The Scoring Guides that are used on the OSSLT follow the sample student responses.

### CODE 10

#### UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

**School team qualifies for finals**

On March 25<sup>th</sup> 2015,  
Colgate Highschool qualified  
for the Basketball tournament

Topic Development  
Scoring Guide Code 10



**Annotation:**

The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo. It identifies an event (On March 25th, 2015, (insert school name) Highschool qualified for the Basketball tournament), but provides no supporting details.

### CODE 20

#### UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

On march 26<sup>th</sup> 2015, the girls  
Volleyball team have qualified for  
the finals after 10 years. On  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, this Saturday the  
team will be having their first  
game. The best part is its a home game! At  
secondary school. Some of  
you may ask how the team got this far, well  
as you can tell in the team photo by the  
expressions on their face and the excitement,  
they're a great team, you can tell they have hope  
in each other, you love your team like you love your  
family, that's exactly what they have. On Saturday  
at 12:00 P.M. We better see you there  
supporting your team !



**Annotation:**

The response is related to the headline and/or photo (On march 26th 2015, the girls Volleyball team have qualified for the finals after 10 years.), but only partly in the form of a news report. It lapses into a conversational narrative (Some of you may ask how the team got this far, well as you can tell in the team photo by the expressions on their face and the excitement, they're a great team). It concludes with an announcement (On Saturday at 12:00 P.M. We better see you there supporting your team (insert Mascot)!)

**CODE 60**  
**ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE**

High had been long anticipating Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, the day of the \_\_\_\_\_, Ontario Regional Basketball Playoffs, as the day their team would lead them to glory. Their hopes did not go unfulfilled!



According to Jay \_\_\_\_\_, long-time coach of the \_\_\_\_\_, one of the province's first co-ed basketball teams, victory didn't come without a price. "So many of my players worked themselves to death with after-school practices in the months before the game, giving up social activities, extracurriculars, time with family, and even study time," he adds with a chuckle.

Such sacrifice truly proves the players' extreme dedication to their sport. To many members of the team, it was far more than an after-school sport. "It represents true gender equality, that girls and guys can both be great at sports," \_\_\_\_\_, starting pointer, said in a post-game interview. "That's why it's so important to me."

The \_\_\_\_\_ started off slow, with the opposing team, the \_\_\_\_\_ taking the lead, 4-2, for the first half of the game. But the \_\_\_\_\_ stepped it up, pulling off some gravity-defying shots and an amazing slam dunk by \_\_\_\_\_. The end score was 14-8, which means the \_\_\_\_\_ move on to the National Playoffs, scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> this year. "The competition will be fiercer," admits \_\_\_\_\_, "but we've come too far and faced too much adversity to give up now. Nationals, here we come!"

**Annotation:**

There is a clear and consistent focus on an event (Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup>, the day of the (insert City), Ontario Regional Basketball Playoffs). The news report is developed with thoughtful and specific supporting details (...one of the province's first co-ed basketball teams; after-school practice gravity-defying shots; the end score was 14-8; represents true gender equality).

Organization is coherent with a clear introduction and conclusion and logical paragraphing. There is a sophisticated progression of ideas from general facts to specific details about the team's sacrifices and ultimate game play success. Each quotation is effectively placed to add additional information ("giving up social activities; girls and boys can both be great at sports").

## SCORING GUIDE FOR LONG WRITING TASK: News Report

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Blank	The page is blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided.
Illegible	The response is illegible or irrelevant to the prompt.
Off Topic	The response is off topic.
Code 10	The response is related to headline and/or photo, but is not a news report. <b>OR</b> The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo. It identifies an event, but provides no supporting details, or provides details that are unrelated to the event. There is no evidence of organization.
Code 20	The response is related to headline and/or photo, but only partly in the form of a news report. <b>OR</b> The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo, but the focus on an event is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.
Code 30	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear focus on an event. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the event is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication.
Code 40	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient supporting details, however, only some are specific. The organization is mechanical and any lapses do not distract from the overall communication.
Code 50	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient specific supporting details to develop the news report. The organization is logical.
Code 60	The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient specific supporting details, which are thoughtfully chosen to develop the news report. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas.

❖ **Writing conventions on Long Writing Tasks are also scored. Examples of writing conventions are: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and sentence structure.**

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Code 10	There is insufficient evidence to assess the use of conventions. <b>OR</b> Errors in conventions interfere with communication.
Code 20	Errors in conventions distract from communication.
Code 30	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication.
Code 40	Control of conventions is evident in written work.

## TIPS FOR WRITING A SERIES OF PARAGRAPHS TO EXPRESS AN OPINION

The last long writing task that you will encounter on the OSSLT will be the task of writing a series of paragraphs to express your opinion.

The topic will be current and familiar to teenagers.

### HOW DO I EXPRESS MY OPINION IN A SERIES OF PARAGRAPHS?

- This is the longest writing task on the OSSLT.
- It is always a good idea to **PLAN** your response in the “**Rough Notes**” section that is provided in the Student Answer Booklet. You are only given a limited number of lines and you must use them wisely.
- You must have at least 3 paragraphs, including an **introduction**, a **body**, and a **conclusion**.
- Read the question carefully to understand what is being asked. Decide what your **opinion** is. Then plan the **arguments/reasons** you will use to support this opinion. Make sure you can back your arguments/reasons up with good **specific examples** or **facts**. Ideally, each supporting argument/reason will be developed in a body paragraph.
- In the introduction, clearly state your opinion. Choose the side of the argument that you strongly believe. This is your **main idea**. Stick to **ONE** side of the argument. Don’t “sit on the fence.”
- Begin each body paragraph with a **topic sentence**. This sentence will give the reader information about what this paragraph will address. Use **specific details** (examples or facts) from what you know and how you feel about the topic to support your answer/opinion.
- In the **concluding paragraph**, summarize your opinion. Think of a sentence to wrap up your writing.



- Remember to check your **punctuation** (capital letters, periods, etc.) and **spelling**!
- Remember to **indent** each time you start a new paragraph!

# Writing a Series of Paragraphs

**Task:** Write a **minimum** of **three paragraphs** expressing an **opinion** on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.).

**Audience:** an adult who is interested in your opinion.

**Length:** The lined space provided in the Answer Booklet for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

**Topic:**

**Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?**

**READ THE QUESTION.  
PICK A SIDE; DON'T SIT ON THE FENCE!**



## Rough Notes

*To be successful you should create an outline like this.*

*On the day of the test, the rough notes area will be blank (below).*

*Use it for planning and brainstorming. For the next task, use the rough notes section before you write your series of paragraphs.*

<p><b>STATE IT!</b> Introduction Paragraph</p>	<p><b>What is your opinion?</b> (Fill in the blank with IS or IS NOT)</p> <p>I believe that participation _____ an important part of secondary school life.</p>
<p>↓</p>	<p><b>Why do you believe this?</b> (Use your opinion along with examples to support your points.)</p>
<p>↓</p>	<p><b>POINT #1 (Reason#1)</b> <b>PROOF #1 (Example from your experience)</b></p>
<p>↓</p>	<p><b>POINT #2 (Reason#2)</b> <b>PROOF #2 (Example from your experience)</b></p>
<p>↓</p>	<p><b>POINT #3(Reason#3)</b> <b>PROOF #3 (Example from your experience)</b></p>
<p><b>END IT!</b> Conclusion Paragraph</p>	<p><b>Wrap it up!</b> (Re-state your opinion and summarize your major points)</p>

## Writing a Series of Paragraphs Practice

**Task:** Write a **minimum of three paragraphs** expressing an **opinion** on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.).

**Audience:** an adult who is interested in your opinion.

**Length:** The lined space provided in the Answer Booklet for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

**Topic:** **Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?**

*Write your series of paragraphs on the lines provided on the following two pages.*

### Rough Notes

Use the space below for your rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

---

**Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?**



- Clearly state your opinion.
- Use supporting details with your examples.
- Indent every new paragraph.
- Check your spelling, punctuation and grammar.



## SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES: SERIES OF PARAGRAPHS

- The following are student responses for the previous Writing a Series of Paragraphs question.
- Two samples are provided for you: an **unacceptable** response and an **acceptable** response.
- The Scoring Guides that are used on the OSSLT for this question follow the sample student responses.

### CODE 30 UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

Opinion  
Topic Development  
Code 30

Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?

Participation in extracurricular activities are important part of secondary school life because. It is a way to meet new people, To make some new friends, It can be a lot of fun, and it deffentally keeps you out of troubles. Extra circular activties are a great way to get out of class a lot of the time. It is also a great way to become a lot better at what ever extracurricular event that you are Partreipating in. Extracurricular activities are just an amazing way to have fun and just to fully expeirience Highschool. It has been proven that kids that participate in a fair amount of extre curricular activities are more likely to stay out of drugs, smoking, and other mischeif.

#### Annotation:

The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. (Participation in extracurricular activities are important Part of secondary school life). Reasons are listed, but are not developed (It is a way to meet new people. To make some new friends. It can be a lot of fun and it deffentally keeps you out of trouble). Lapses in organization distract.

CODE 60  
ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Opinion  
Topic Development  
Code 60

Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?

Students who participate in extracurricular activities in high school have greater advantages than those who do not, which is why participation in these activities is significant. Extracurricular activities such as sports, photography groups or book clubs are few of the many groups that can enhance a student's academic performance. It is important that a high school student joins an extracurricular activity to develop co-operation skills, organizational skills and to increase chances of receiving academic rewards.

Students who take part in book clubs or sports develop skills that allow them to work well with others. They learn skills that may not be taught at home or in the classroom. For instance a person who plays volleyball is able to negotiate, co-operate, compromise, share and socialize more confidently than one who is not used to stepping outside of their comfort zone. Extracurricular activities provide a way for young teens to get to know each other and improve their socializing skills to ultimately enhance their secondary school experience.

Not only do teens develop skills in interaction but they also improve their organizational skills. A student who is able to finish their homework and make practice on time is a student who can prioritize, set goals and manage their time. These qualities are highly beneficial to the student's future when it comes to finding their career path which is why mastering these attributes in high school is important. Extracurricular activities teach a student how to excel in that particular activity and how to

use those skills in the classroom. If these tasks are practised well they will become good habits that can increase their chances of acceptance into a college or University of their choice.

Students who have experience in extracurricular activities have more options when it comes down to applying for college, University and for Scholarships. For example a student who gets good grades and is able to juggle a sport or club is more likely to possess the qualities needed in obtaining a scholarship that specializes in that sport or club in comparison to a student who did not have the same experience. Ultimately Universities want to see that you put effort into maintaining good grades but also that you went the extra mile to do your best.

As a result students who enhance their skills in communication and organization are more likely to receive a greater benefit such as getting accepted into an elite University or saving money by receiving a scholarship. Even after University and College the skills achieved from joining these activities will benefit in the long run because after all the more effort and hard work you put into something, the greater the award.

**Annotation:**

A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details that are thought chosen (develop skills that allow them to work well with others, improve their organizational skills, are more likely to receive a greater benefit).

The organization is coherent and demonstrates a thoughtful progression of ideas. The second body paragraph is linked to the first body paragraph (Not only do teens develop skills in interaction).

The conclusion returns to the idea of the benefit of participation in extracurricular activities which is threaded throughout the entire response.

## SCORING GUIDE FOR LONG WRITING TASK: Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Blank	The pages are blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided.
Illegible	The response is illegible or irrelevant to the prompt.
Off Topic	The response is off topic.
Code 10	The response is related to the prompt, but does not express an opinion. <b>OR</b> The response expresses an opinion with no supporting details or provides details unrelated to the opinion. There is no evidence of organization.
Code 20	The response is related to the prompt, but only part of the response expresses and supports an opinion. <b>OR</b> The response is related to the prompt, and expresses and supports an opinion, but the opinion is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.
Code 30	The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the opinion is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication.
Code 40	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient supporting details, however only some are specific. The organization is mechanical and any lapses do not distract from the overall communication.
Code 50	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details. The organization is logical.
Code 60	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details, which are thoughtfully chosen. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas.

❖ **Writing conventions on Long Writing Tasks are also scored. Examples of writing conventions are: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and sentence structure.**

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Code 10	There is insufficient evidence to assess the use of conventions. <b>OR</b> Errors in conventions interfere with communication.
Code 20	Errors in conventions distract from communication.
Code 30	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication.
Code 40	Control of conventions is evident in written work.

## Short Writing Tasks



These tasks will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your writing skills by using **your knowledge** and **personal experience**.

There is **no** reading selection connected to these tasks. In other words, you must write your response based on your own experiences, background knowledge and connections in relation to the question.

For tips on writing Short Writing Tasks without a reading selection, refer to the *“Tips for Completing Short Writing Tasks”* on page 9.

### Short Writing Task (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

1. What is the best advice you have ever given to someone? Use specific details to explain your answer.

#### Sample Format:

- **Topic Sentence** – answers the question (*The best advice that I have ever given to someone was...*)
- **Body Sentences** – decide on 2 points to explain your answer (*Why was it the best advice?*) State and explain 2 reasons
- **Concluding Sentence** – it ends your thought and leaves the reader with a little bit of extra information (*Giving my friend this advice made me feel like I helped.*)

- Responses must be written in complete sentences.
- You are only given 6 lines to answer the question. Use **all** 6 lines.

2. Identify the ideal destination for a high school field trip. Explain your choice with specific details.



Both of these sample questions are **MAKING CONNECTIONS Questions**. The answers come from your own experience and knowledge.

A Rough Notes section is provided in the Answer Booklet. Use this area to brainstorm ideas before you begin writing. Remember, this area is not scored; however, it is a great way for you to brainstorm ideas in order to formulate your response.

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**Short Writing Task** (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

1. What is the best advice you have ever given to someone? Use specific details to explain your answer.

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- Responses must be written in complete sentences.
- Use all the lines provided
- Check spelling and grammar

2. Identify the ideal destination for a high school field trip. Explain your choice with specific details.

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**Rough Notes**

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.



## SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES: SHORT WRITING TASKS

- The following are student responses for the previous Short Writing Tasks.
- Two samples are provided for you: an **unacceptable** response and an **acceptable** response.
- The Scoring Guides that are used on the OSSLT for these Short Writing Tasks follow the sample student responses.

**1. What is the best advice that you have ever given to someone? Use specific details to explain your answer.**

### CODE 10

#### UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

The best advice I have ever given someone was to tell the truth in bad situations.

**Annotation:**

This response identifies an example of advice (*tell the truth in bad situations*) but does not provide an explanation for why it was the best.

### CODE 30

#### ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE

The best advice I have ever given to someone was telling my sister to apply for a job that she didn't think she would be good at. She is still working at this job three years later, and is constantly telling me how much she loves it. She tells me of the many friends she has made and the pleasure of going in to work.

**Annotation:**

This response provides an example of advice given (*telling my sister to apply for a job she didn't think she would be good at*). The answer is clearly supported with specific and relevant details (*She is still working at this job three years later...constantly telling me how much she loves it...tells me of the many friends she has made and the pleasure of going in to work*).

**2. Identify the ideal destination for a high school field trip?  
Explain your choice with specific details.**

**CODE 10**

**UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE**

Destination for a high school field trip to the Toronto Zoo. Take the 401 until you reach Toronto take a right so you can exit off the highway at the 87 exit then you take a left and you find yourself at the Toronto Zoo.

**Annotation:**

This response identifies an ideal destination for a high school field trip (*Toronto Zoo*) but provides an irrelevant explanation for the choice. The response provides directions to the zoo.

**CODE 30**

**UNACCEPTABLE RESPONSE**

An ideal destination for a high school trip would be to Quebec City. Here, students could observe a new culture and practice their French language skills and learn about Canada's history. Furthermore, Quebec City is a provincial capital so students can learn about and understand Canadian politics.

**Annotation:**

This response identifies an ideal destination for a high school field trip (*Quebec City*) and provides details that are specific and relevant to the destination (*practice their French language skills...Quebec City is a provincial capital, so student's can learn about & understand Canadian politics*) to clearly explain this choice.

## SCORING GUIDE FOR SHORT WRITING TASK

### Questions #1 & #2

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Blank	<b>nothing written or drawn in the lined spaced provided</b>
Illegible	<b>response is illegible</b> An illegible response cannot be read. An inappropriate response comments on the task (e.g., I don't know).
Off Topic	<b>response is off topic, irrelevant or incorrect</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not identify an opinion in relation to the question</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• is not specific to the question</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• comments on the topic of the question</li> </ul>
Code 10	<b>response provides at least one reason, but</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not provide an explanation of the reason</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• the explanation of the reason is irrelevant</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></li> <li>• the explanation of the reason is not unique to the situation</li> </ul>
Code 20	<b>response provides at least one reason, but the explanation is vague</b> The response usually requires the reader to make the connection between the main idea and the support.
Code 30	<b>response clearly explains at least one reason by providing specific and relevant details as support</b>

❖ Writing conventions on Short Writing Tasks are also scored. Examples of writing conventions are: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and sentence structure.

Assess your level using the following rubric by highlighting which code your response corresponds with:

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
Code 10	Errors in conventions distract from communication.
Code 20	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication.

## TESTING WRITING SKILLS WITH MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

The multiple-choice questions connected to writing deal with three writing skills:

- **developing** a main idea with supporting detail
- **organization** of ideas
- language **conventions** (using commas, semi-colons, colons, using capitals, writing in full sentences)



### HOW DO I ANSWER THESE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS?

1. Read the sentence or paragraph and listen to the way it sounds. Hear yourself saying the sentence or paragraph as though you were speaking out loud and ask yourself these types of questions:
  - Does this sound right?
  - Does this make sense?
  - What do I know about using capitals?
  - Does this look right?
2. Think of an answer before you read the choices.
3. Eliminate all of the choices you know are wrong.
4. Look at your remaining answers and make a choice.



Term	Definition
<b>Comma</b>	Separates items in a series – very short pause <i>e.g. In the end, I stayed home to read.</i>
<b>Colon</b>	Is used to introduce explanation, long quotations or a series – the words after a colon do not make up a sentence <i>e.g. I went to the store to buy: tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers.</i>
<b>Semicolon</b>	Is used to separate two contrasting parts of a sentence – very long pause <i>e.g. I love watching TV after school; it relaxes me.</i>
<b>Quotation Marks</b>	Are used to show what someone said (dialogue) or to show a title. <i>e.g. The teacher said, "You must use all of the lines provided."</i>
<b>Hyphen</b>	Connects two or more words that form one idea. <i>e.g. One-half of a pie</i>
<b>Dash</b>	Separates a word or phrase from the rest of a sentence (is often used near the end of sentence to summarize an idea) <i>e.g. Jack works hard – when he has to.</i>
<b>Parentheses</b>	Separates extra information from the rest of the sentence. <i>e.g. They lived happily ever after (and so did the dog).</i>

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## Multiple-Choice

(Record the best or most correct answer in the Student Answer Booklet.)

### 1. What should the writer of the following paragraph do to improve its organization?

(1) The Comfort Maple tree stands in a field near Welland, Ontario. (2) It is over 30 metres high and eight metres around the trunk. (3) Today it is a local attraction. (4) The tree was already 300 years old when the Comfort family settled the land in 1816. (5) Few trees like it survive.

- a. Break sentence 2 into two sentences.
- b. Switch the order of sentences 3 and 4.
- c. Insert "Since" at the start of sentence 4.
- d. Move sentence 5 to the start of the paragraph.

### 2. Which sentence is written correctly?

- a. I travelled along the trans-Canada highway near North Bay.
- b. I then continued toward Sudbury, passing the village of wahnapitei.
- c. Once I got to Sudbury, I went to the lake laurentian conservation area.
- d. Mayor Fortin greeted me at the park gate before my tour of the wetland.

### 3. Choose the best closing sentence for the following paragraph.

Travel is exciting and educational, but preparation is necessary. You should book transportation ahead. Guidebooks will help you learn about attractions. Knowing about the weather will help you make good decisions when packing your suitcase. \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Travel guides are exciting to read.
- b. Summertime is a popular time to travel.
- c. Updating travel documents might be necessary.
- d. Planning will make your vacation enjoyable.

### 4. Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

- a. The flagpole stands on it's own.
- b. The cat licked its wounded paw.
- c. Because of the storm, it's roof caved in.

**Answers:**

**1. b    2. d    3. d    4. b**

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