

Literacy Test Practice: Series of Paragraphs

Rationale

The OSSLT asks students to write a 'Series of Paragraphs' which means you have to write an essay. It will be an **OPINION** essay, and will be on a topic that is familiar and/or relevant to teenagers. You will need to pick one side and provide 3 reasons to support your opinion.

You can't study for it BUT you can prepare by knowing how to set up the essay properly and providing enough information to persuade the reader. Demonstrating that you know the proper structure is very important.

You are writing this for an adult to read who is interested in your opinion, so make sure to use proper language as well.

Scoring Guide- Content

The 'Series of Paragraphs' is worth up to 100 points- 60 for content and 40 for writing conventions (grammar, spelling, structure).

You will need to manage your time while writing this essay so good planning at the start is very important.

The suggested total writing time is about 40 minutes.



10	The response is related to the prompt but does not express an opinion. OR The response expresses an opinion with no supporting details or provides details unrelated to the opinion. There is no evidence of organization.
20	The response is related to the prompt but only part of the response expresses and supports an opinion. OR 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.
30	The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connections of the details to the opinion is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication.
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.
50	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details. The organization is logical.
60	The response is related to the assigned prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details that are thoughtfully chosen. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas.

Exemplar

Is it fair for schools to restrict the kinds of food children may bring in their snacks and lunches?

Supporting detail #1 to
back up the main idea

Main
idea

For a couple of reasons, I think it is fair for schools to restrict the kinds of foods children bring to eat at school. First, childhood obesity and poor physical fitness are increasing. Second, many children today have deadly allergies to some foods. Third, promoting healthy eating can lead to healthier adults and reduce the risk of disease. By restricting the kinds of foods eaten at school, schools can promote good health for everyone.

By now everyone knows that eating too much junk food and not enough fruits and vegetables is causing children to become overweight. Treats are a big part of lunch for a lot of children. They bring cookies, donuts, chips and candies in their lunch- and they eat these instead of their lunch. Parents complain that the sandwich and apple come home uneaten. But if junk food isn't packed in the first place, kids will eat what's available if they are hungry. After a while children will get used to having an apple or banana for a snack. In this way, school rules about snacks and lunches can help improve children's eating habits.

....reason two paragraph- point, proof and examples

....reason three paragraph- point, proof and examples

In conclusion, having restrictions on what children eat at school is a good idea. Obviously, if someone is allergic to certain foods, having restrictions shouldn't be optional. It is not worth risking someone's life. But even for non-allergic foods that are full of sugar and fat, restricting them is a step in the right direction. It will lead to better health and fitness and possibly better dental check-ups as well.

Supporting
detail #2

Restate
main
idea

Supporting
detail #3

Instructions for the Series of Paragraphs

A

Plan

1. Read the question and choose your stance/opinion.
2. Brainstorm and list three points (reasons) that support your response. Write down examples/proof that will support your points.

B

Write

3. Write an opening paragraph that clearly expresses your opinion. Include at least 3 sentences that provide the reasons that support your opinion.
4. To support the organization of your ideas, follow a **point, proof, and comment** series of sentences in your body paragraphs. Use connecting phrases such as: "This is true because..."; "For this reason I believe..."; or "Obviously, no one could doubt that...".
5. Make sure that your sentences are connected, and not a series of bullet points.
6. Write a concluding paragraph that connects to the main idea, beginning with words and phrases like "That is why," "Therefore," or "To sum it up."

C

Review

7. Review and correct. Make sure to have capitals at the start of all sentences and punctuation (periods, exclamation points, etc.) at the end.

Practice Questions- from previous Literacy Tests

Do students benefit from the two-month summer break?

A

Plan

My opinion: I agree or disagree with the question (*circle one*)

Point #1	Point #2	Point #3
Examples/proof	Examples/proof	Examples/proof

A large rounded rectangular box with a black border, containing 20 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box.

C Review

A checklist of the required elements for the series of paragraphs:



Position

- I have decided on my position

Content

- I have used the rough notes section to brainstorm my ideas
- I have included at three points/reasons that support my position
- For each of the three points/reasons, I have developed them with supporting details (facts, proof, and examples)

Structure

- I have written 5 paragraphs, including an introduction, 3 body paragraphs and a conclusion
- The main idea (what you believe) is stated clearly in the opening paragraph
- Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence
- I have used transitional words and phrases to begin a paragraph and link ideas (Firstly, etc.)
- The concluding paragraph summarizes my position and supporting details
- I have clearly marked paragraphs by indenting them and leaving a blank line between them
- I have used complete sentences and written AT LEAST 1 ½ pages
- I have used correct grammar, spelling and punctuation

Additional Practice Questions

Should the school year be twelve months long?

Should music be a mandatory subject in school?

Is it important for teenagers to pay attention to world news?

*Intro paragraph that states
3 points to be used:
Job/money, see relatives
and lose stress*

Code 60

Do students benefit from the two-month summer break?

Summer truly is a great season. It is sunny, warm, and enjoyable. Summer also brings happiness to students, because school is over and they get a two-month break. The summer break gives students the chance to get a job and save money for their future, see relatives that live far away from them, and lose the stress that school brings. These three great reasons show how important the two-month summer break is to students. Therefore, a two-month summer break is very beneficial to students.