

Understanding the Literacy Test

Information for Parents and Guardians: 2014-2015

Quick Facts

➤ Test Date

The *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test* will be written for approximately two and a half hours on the morning of:

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Schools will communicate the schedule for the day, and details regarding the structure of the remainder of the day.

➤ Test Format

Students will complete 2 test booklets. Each test booklet will be completed in 75 minutes. A 15-minute break is provided between booklets.

➤ Participation

Successful completion of the Literacy Test is a requirement for students who entered Grade 9 in September 2000 or later, and who are working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Participants in the March 2015 Literacy Test may include:

- students who entered grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year
- students who entered grades 10, 11 or 12 in 2014-2015 from outside Ontario
- students who did not pass the Literacy Test in a previous test administration
- students who were absent, deferred, or exempted from a previous test administration.

Go to <http://www.eqao.com> for more information about the Literacy Test.

What will students be asked to do on the test?

The test is based on the reading and writing skills across all subjects in *The Ontario Curriculum* up to the end of Grade 9.

Reading Selections and Questions

Students will be asked to read a variety of selections and answer questions about each selection.



There will be two kinds of questions: multiple-choice questions and questions that require a brief explanation. These questions will focus on:

- understanding directly stated ideas and information
- understanding indirectly stated ideas and information
- making connections between information and ideas in the reading selection and personal knowledge and experience

Reading selections vary in length from a single paragraph to two pages. The following types of reading selections are included on the test:

- information paragraph (225-250 words)
- news report (225-250 words)
- dialogue (225-250 words)
- real-life narrative (550-600 words)
- graphic text (fewer than 150 words)

Writing Tasks

Students will demonstrate their writing skills by completing the following:

- short writing tasks requiring a response in six lines
- two long writing tasks
 - a news report (one page in length)
 - a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion (two pages in length)
- multiple-choice questions.



The writing tasks focus on:

- developing a main idea with sufficient supporting details
- organizing information and ideas in a way that makes sense
- using conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) in a way that doesn't take away from clear communication.



► What happens if a student is not successful on the test?

Successful completion of the *Literacy Test* or the *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course* is a requirement for students who entered Grade 9 in September 2000 or later and are working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Students who are not successful will have the opportunity to re-take an equivalent test in future years. There is no limit to the number of times that the test may be re-taken.

Students can also meet this requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), but must have had at least two opportunities to take the test (at the principal's discretion, this may be reduced to one) and must have been unsuccessful on the test at least once.

► How do students receive their results on the OSSLT?

All students who write the test receive an individual report. This report will tell whether or not they have passed the OSSLT.

► Who scores student responses on the OSSLT?

Student work on the OSSLT is sent to EQAO for scoring. Student tests are scored by qualified individuals who have received special training for this purpose. The test does not count toward marks in any courses that students are taking.

► How can parents/guardians learn more about the test and what is required to complete the test successfully?

Teachers at all secondary schools are helping students understand the requirements of the test and are providing practice opportunities so that they are well prepared to write the test.

Parents/guardians are able to learn more about the requirements of the test by visiting the EQAO website at www.eqao.com

Resources available for download on the EQAO website include:

- **Sample Tests, Student Answer Sheet** and **Answer Key**– provide examples of what to expect on the March 2015 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.
- **The Getting Ready Guide** – provides details about the test content, instructions for completing the test and tips for doing well.



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