

# **Getting Prepared** **for the OSSLT**

**(Ontario Secondary School**  
**Literacy Test)**



Thursday, March 27, 2014

## How To Follow Instructions

**Read the following set of instructions carefully and completely before doing anything else.**

1. Read all instructions first.
2. Count to 5 silently.
3. Circle the word ceiling in instruction #5.
4. Write your name in the top left hand corner of the page.
5. Stare up at the ceiling and count how many lights are in this room.
6. Write today's date in the bottom left corner of the page.
7. Write the name of your favourite song here: \_\_\_\_\_ .
8. Turn to one of your neighbours and roll your eyes.
9. Cross out instruction number ten.
10. Print your last name backwards here: \_\_\_\_\_ .
11. Turn your paper over for two seconds, and draw a heart on the other side of this paper.
12. In your head, sing the first line of *Oh Canada*.
13. Count the number of people who are in the classroom and indicate the answer on the line provided: \_\_\_\_\_ .
14. If you finish before others do, sit silently, don't give away any hints, and put your head down on your desk so the teacher knows you are done.
15. Only complete the following instructions: four, fourteen, and fifteen.

**Following instructions is an important key to your success.  
Remember to read the instructions on the OSSLT carefully!**

## **EQAO Website:** <http://www.eqao.com/>

- Select 'Student Resources' at the top of the page.
- Select "Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test"
- Review the page of headings: Some key sections you are encouraged to explore include:
  - ✧ Planning and Preparation Guide
  - ✧ Sample Test Materials
  - ✧ Getting Ready Guide
  - ✧ Frequently Asked Questions (see some responses below)

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the OSSLT** ([www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com))

### **What is the purpose of the OSSLT?**

The purpose of the OSSLT is to determine whether students have acquired reading and writing skills that they are expected to have learned by the end of grade 9. The skills are cross-curricular. Successful completion of the OSSLT is one of the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

### **Who created the OSSLT and who marks it?**

The test is developed by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in Toronto. EQAO is an independent government agency. All completed student work is sent to EQAO for marking after the test is finished. The student's teacher does not mark the test.

### **How will the test be graded?**

The test is marked on a pass/fail basis. A student who writes the test but is not successful will receive feedback in June of the year of the test. She or he must complete the test (or complete the literacy course OSSLC) in order to qualify for a secondary school diploma. There is no limit on the number of times a student can write the OSSLT.

### **Will I be able to see my test/my student's test afterward?**

No. Parents, teachers, and members of the public may not see the test. EQAO provides sample questions from previous tests online. Students and their parents are encouraged to use those materials to prepare for the test in advance.

### **Will students receive help during the test?**

No. Teachers administering the test must follow strict procedures during the test itself. They may not assist students while they are writing the test. Students who have special needs and meet requirements for accommodation through an IEP will be allowed accommodations according to their IEP.

### **Will the OSSLT count toward my course marks?**

No. The OSSLT is not tied to a particular subject and does not count toward any particular course grade. Successful completion of the OSSLT is one of the requirements for the OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma). The test will not count toward your course marks.

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

Students who are not successful will have the opportunity to re-try the following year. There is no limit to the number of times that a student can take the test. The number of attempts does not appear on the student's transcript, only whether or not the graduation requirement has been met.

### **How Can I Prepare for the OSSLT?**

- Read, read, read: news reports, editorials, schedules, graphs, maps/legends, charts, time lines, narratives, advertising, informational and other real-life texts, magazine articles.....
- Making connections between what you read and your own experiences. What are the similarities? What are the differences?
- \*Remember that help is available in the weeks preceding the test in the form of practice sessions, some lunch hour review sessions, on-line exemplars/samples/websites (EQAO), speaking to your teachers and parents/guardians and asking questions, practicing and reading/writing on your own and sharing these thoughts and ideas with peers, staff, and parents to ask for feedback (ie. opinion pieces, newspaper reports, graphic texts, short paragraphs...)

## More Ways to Get Prepared:

- Plan for this day. Don't schedule appointments or other plans.
- Get rest the night before and be sure to eat breakfast that morning.
- Take the time to listen to announcements about extra lunch hour OSSLT work sessions, research different sites, look at EQAO samples, and work on practice questions
- Refer to the following website as an additional resource:
  - ✧ <http://literacynet.org/cnsf/>  
Each module on this site includes a CNN or CBS 5 news story with interactive activities to test comprehension. These are designed for ease of use so the learner can use them independently. Look on the left hand side of the article page for the interactive activities.

### Things to Expect on the OSSLT:

--2 test booklets and 1 Answer Sheet (for multiple choice responses) that are in a plastic wrapping with the same electronic identification numbers on the booklets and the wrapping (each number is unique to a particular student)

- ✧ Multiple choice questions
- ✧ Writing Skills: Short and long writing tasks and multiple choice questions -----Long writing tasks include a news report **and** a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion.
- ✧ Reading Skills: Multiple Choice and Open Response questions (6 lines long) that focus on a short reading selection (length of reading varies from a paragraph to 2 pages). The selections include:
  - an information paragraph
  - a news report
  - a dialogue
  - a real-life narrative
  - a graphic text

\*Responses should be directly from the text and connected to real-life situations/experiences.