



Administering the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

(For Teachers and Principals)

March 2007

Education Quality and
Accountability Office



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Section 1: New and Important

Purpose of This Guide

This guide has been developed to provide direction and information to principals and teachers administering the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in March 2007. Administering the test according to the guidelines in this document will ensure province-wide consistency before, during and after the administration.

This guide is available electronically at www.eqao.com. Two companion documents, the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* and *A Guide for Principals Preparing for the Administration of EQAO Tests* will also be found on the Web site.

What's New for the 2007 Assessment

- The OSSLT will be completed in two 75-minute sessions on the morning of Thursday, March 29, 2007.
- The section titled “Professional Responsibilities for the Administration of the OSSLT” describes the obligations of principals and teachers.
- This guide includes separate detailed steps for principals and for teachers that are to be carried out once the test materials arrive in the school.
- An electronic version of the test will be posted on the secure area of the EQAO Web site on Tuesday, March 27, at 9:00 a.m. Only those schools that indicated in the SDC system that one or more students will be accommodated with “assistive devices and technology” will have this service.
- “Key Words” have been developed to provide direction to students taking the test. (They are available on the EQAO Web site.)

Section 2: Professional Responsibilities for the Administration of the OSSLT

EQAO relies on principals and teachers in the development, administration, scoring and reporting of the OSSLT.

Principals are responsible for ensuring that

- they have read the 2006–2007 administration guide and board direction/policy;
- all students eligible for the test are accounted for, including those writing with accommodations and special provisions, and those deferred or exempted;
- complete and accurate information is provided to EQAO for each student eligible to write the test, including those writing with accommodations and special provisions, and those deferred or exempted;
- complete and appropriate test materials are ordered for each student, using the EQAO SDC system, including, if necessary, requests for additional materials after receipt of the initial shipment;
- all support material necessary for the preparation for and administration of the test is provided to all participating teachers and support staff;
- all teachers and other personnel (e.g., scribes, prompters and principals themselves) participating in, preparing for and administering the test have received training this year and follow the administration guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*;
- all test materials are kept secure prior to, during and after the administration;
- the locations and conditions for writing the test allow each student to work independently of every other student and conform to EQAO requirements as defined

in the administration guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*;

- there is no deviation from EQAO guidelines and instructions without explicit written direction from the relevant supervisory officer and EQAO's Chief Assessment Officer and
- any breach or suspected breach of security is reported to EQAO.

Principals and **teachers** are responsible to ensure the fair and consistent administration of the test as outlined in the administration guide. These procedures must be followed:

Before the Administration

- Student test packages **must not** be opened prior to the administration of the first test session.
- Only staff members administering the test may have access to test materials.
- Teachers administering the test may receive the student test materials no earlier than the morning of the day the administration begins.
- Scribes and prompters may have access to the test materials only during the administration sessions.
- Staff preparing test materials for assistive technologies may have access to the materials no earlier than 48 hours prior to the start of the administration.
- Test materials may not be copied in any way for any reason. The only exception is for the preparation of test materials for students using assistive technologies.

During and After the Administration

- Unused test packages (e.g., for absent students) must not be opened for any reason, except with EQAO's permission.
- Student test materials must not be removed from the classrooms during the administration.
- All classroom materials containing reading or writing content of an instructional nature must be removed from view or covered. The "Key Words" available at www.eqao.com may be posted. No additional tips or reminders may be posted in the classroom, written on the blackboard or handed out to students.
- Students must be supervised at all times during the administration. This includes students with accommodations and students who require additional time to complete the test.
- Once the test has been opened, no one may use information from the test to provide instruction on any concept or item being tested prior to or during the administration of the test.
- During the test, no one may explain, define or provide examples of reading vocabulary or writing terminology to students, including those with accommodations.
- During the test, nothing can be said or done to influence student responses, including, but not limited to, actions such as drawing a student's attention to an unanswered question.
- At no point during or after the test may anything be said or done to encourage students to alter or revise their responses.
- No one may read, review or correct student work during or after the administration. This includes darkening, rewriting, editing, erasing or altering student work in any way.
- Each test booklet must be completed in one continuous session. A session may not be interrupted by lunch or by any other school programming.
- After the administration of each test session, booklets must not be returned to students for further review, correction or completion.
- At the end of each session, the test booklet must be collected and stored in a secure place without review.
- Once both booklets are completed, they must be bundled and returned immediately to the principal for secure storage, without review, prior to the return of materials to EQAO.
- All test materials, used or unused, must be returned to EQAO.
- Student responses must not be copied in any way for any reason. The only exception is for photocopying Student Answer Sheets prior to returning them to EQAO.
- Any circumstances that may affect the scoring of student work (e.g., package ID number [barcode] issues) or may have affected the validity of any student performance (e.g., a discussion between two students during the test) must be documented and returned to EQAO in the Issues Envelope.

The Importance of Package ID Numbers

A 22-digit package ID number is printed on all assessment materials. The first 10 digits identify the form and package information and are for EQAO use. The **final 12 digits** are identical on all test materials in each student's package. When booklets are distributed to students, teachers must ensure that the final 12 digits on each student's booklets match those assigned to the student on the Student Tracking Sheet (STS).

Mismatched or Damaged Package IDs

- If a student has not started writing the assessment and finds that the **final 12 digits** of a package ID on any item in his or her package do not match call EQAO at 1-888-327-7377 for instructions.
- If the student has already worked on some components of the package and finds material with different ID numbers, instruct the student to continue with the material set. When the student has finished, place all of the student's materials in the Issues Envelope and document the issue on the outside of the envelope.
- If the package ID has been damaged on any of the student's materials, clearly write the 22-digit package ID on the cover of the affected material. Place all of the student's materials in the Issues Envelope and document the issue on the outside of the envelope.
- Do not use the package of an exempt or absent student without EQAO's permission.

Section 3: Detailed Steps for the Principal

A Guide for Principals Preparing for the Administration of EQAO Tests describes the steps for ordering test materials and ensuring that complete and accurate information is collected for each student.

Step	Action
STEP 1 Prior to the receipt of the test materials	• Send letters for students receiving accommodations, special provisions, deferrals or exemptions. Document the latter in the SDC system. • Determine the administration schedule. Include a break between the two sessions with a maximum length of 15 minutes. • Meet with staff administering the test to review the administration schedule, the accommodations and special provisions to be provided for students, the school's policy for students who are late and other details (e.g., STS). • Identify rooms that have sufficient seating for students to work independently. • Identify a secure location for the test materials. • Prepare copies of the Instructions from the inside cover of the <i>Sample Test Booklet 1</i> posted on the EQAO Web site.
STEP 2 Information Session	• Inform students about the instructions on the inside front cover of the booklet, the test format and times.
STEP 3 Receipt of test materials	• The shipment will arrive between March 23 and 27, 2007. • Review the STSs in the SDC to ensure that all required materials have been received. • Immediately call EQAO at 1-888-327-7377 if additional materials are required. • Do not provide student test materials to the teachers administering the test until the morning of March 29. • For accommodated students using word processors, a blank formatted disk must be prepared and ready for the start of the test day and clearly labelled with the student's name and 12-digit ID number.
STEP 4 Security	• Store the test materials in a secure location.
STEP 5 Distribution of STS and packages of test materials to teachers	• On the morning of March 29, distribute the test materials and a copy of the STS printed from the SDC system to the teachers administering the test. • If there is a package ID problem or if a package is incomplete, follow the directions in the "Importance of Package ID Numbers" section of this guide. <i>Note:</i> Ensure necessary arrangements have been made for students who are • receiving accommodations or special provisions and/or • receiving special versions of the assessment.

Step	Action
STEP 5 Cont'd	<i>Note:</i> The start time of the test may be delayed for up to one hour due to unforeseen circumstances affecting a group of students (e.g., bus delay, weather conditions) at the principal's discretion. For delays longer than one hour that would affect provisions for accommodated students on March 29, the principal should consult EQAO at 1-888-327-7377.
STEP 6 Receipt of test materials from teachers	• Check that all student test materials have been returned.
STEP 7 Preparation of test materials for return to EQAO	• Review the data in the SDC system to ensure that the student information is complete and accurate. • To help resolve potential issues in the future, photocopy and keep copies on file of: · the completed Packing/Return List · all Student Answer Sheets • Keep on file: · the STSs and Student Information Form for each class, printed from the SDC (do not return these to EQAO) · the signed consent forms for exempted students • Bundle all original Student Answer Sheets and put them in the Student Answer Sheet envelope. • Bundle all <i>Booklet 1s</i> together. • Bundle all <i>Booklet 2s</i> together. • Place all Issues Envelopes in the tote boxes. • Place all test materials and unused student packages in the tote boxes. Fill any free space with the original packing material. • Indicate on the Packing/Return List the total quantity of each item being returned. (The quantities returned must equal the quantities received by the school.) • Include the original Packing/Return List. • Affix the Return Service labels to the tote boxes, ensuring that the ID number on the label matches the one on the tote box. • Seal the tote boxes as indicated on the Return Shipping Instructions (UPS). • Record the date of the pickup and the shipment tracking number. • Keep a copy of the UPS waybill.

Section 4: Detailed Steps for Teachers

Step	Action
STEP 1 Preparation for the test	• Meet with the principal and staff administering the test to review the administration schedule, the accommodations and special provisions to be provided to students, the instructions for the information session and other details (e.g., the STS).
STEP 2 Test environment	• Arrange the test room to ensure that students work independently. • Cover or remove from view any reading or writing material that is instructional in nature. • Review the “Key Words” sheet and post it. • Ensure that students have the required materials for completing the test, especially sharpened pencils and an eraser.
STEP 3 Confirmation of test materials	• Check that you have received from your principal the correct STS and number of student packages for your room. If materials are incomplete, inform your principal immediately. Do not use packages intended for exempt or absent students. • Store all test materials securely throughout the administration. • Use the STS to distribute student materials. • Ensure that the final 12 digits of the package ID on the STS and the student package match. If there is a package ID problem or if a package is incomplete, follow the directions in the “Importance of Package ID Numbers” section of this guide. <i>Note:</i> Do not attempt to change package IDs. It is very important that they not be altered, as alteration will affect the accuracy of the student’s score. • Extra packages must not be opened. They must be returned to the principal at the end of the test session and will be returned to EQAO after the test administration.
STEP 4 Test procedures	• Tell students that they will have two and a half hours to complete the OSSLT. The time for preliminary test instructions, for the break and for the Student Questionnaire at the end of <i>Booklet 2</i> are not included in the time. • Tell students they have 75 minutes to finish each test booklet. If they finish early, they should review their work and check that they have not missed any questions. • At the beginning of the scheduled test time, ask students to remove their booklets from the plastic wrapping. They should check that they have <i>Booklet 1</i> and <i>Booklet 2</i> and a Student Answer Sheet. • Tell students to check that the final 12 digits of the package ID on each booklet are the same as those on the Student Answer Sheet. • Ask students to put <i>Booklet 2</i> face down on the corner of their desk while they are doing <i>Booklet 1</i>. • Before beginning each session, ask the students to check that the page numbers in the relevant booklet are in order and that no pages are missing.

Step	Action
STEP 4 Cont'd	• Tell students they may use blue or black ink or pencil for all written answers in the booklet. Pencil must be used to mark the multiple-choice answers on the Student Answer Sheet. <i>Note:</i> Students using large-print booklets do not receive a Student Answer Sheet. These students will circle their answers directly in the test booklets. • Read out loud the instructions from the inside cover of the test booklet. • Indicate that if students have any questions, they should ask them now, since you will not be able to talk during the test. If they do not have any questions, start the test and carefully keep track of the time. • Signal to the students when 15 minutes are left before the end of the test session. • At the end of the first 75-minute test session, collect all <i>Booklet 1s</i>, verify the student names against the Student Tracking Sheet and store all booklets securely. • For those students using word processors, a copy of the student's response should be printed at the end of each session. • Make sure the room is secure during the break. Have students leave the Student Answer Sheet and <i>Booklet 2</i> face down on their desks during their break. • At the end of Session 2, collect the <i>Booklet 2s</i> and the Student Answer Sheets separately. Verify that you have collected all of them using the Student Tracking Sheet. • Place all student materials with issues in the Issues Envelope.
STEP 5 Return of test materials and STS to the principal	• Use the STS to check that each student's test booklets and Student Answer Sheets have been returned. Use the STS to record student absences. • For accommodated students using word processors, a printed copy of student responses should be stapled to the inside front cover of the booklet. Discs should be kept in a secure location until the appeal period is over. • Bundle · all completed <i>Booklet 1s</i> with an elastic; · all completed <i>Booklet 2s</i> with an elastic; · all Student Answer Sheets together and place them in the Student Answer Sheet Envelope and · all unused student packages. • Bundle all documents with package ID problems or other issues (e.g., special version tapes) together and place them in the Issues Envelope. (Ensure that the issues are listed on the outside of the envelope.) • Note that the STS will be filed in the school as a record that you have followed these detailed steps. • Return all materials to the principal.

Appendix A—EQAO Policies and Procedures

The Role of EQAO

EQAO is an independent agency established by the Government of Ontario. Its purpose is to promote greater accountability and better quality in Ontario's publicly funded school system.

The role of EQAO is to

- design and implement a comprehensive program of student assessment within government-established guidelines;
- develop and implement a system for measuring the quality of education in Ontario;
- manage Ontario's participation in national and international assessments;
- promote research on best practices in assessment and accountability and
- report to the Minister of Education, the public and the education community on system quality issues and recommend improvements.

EQAO believes that the most important goal of assessment is to improve student learning, and it values only that information with the potential to bring about constructive change and improvement. The OSSLT has been designed specifically for Ontario students. It was developed by Ontario educators and was pilot tested and field tested with Ontario students. The reading and writing skills tested on the OSSLT are based on *The Ontario Curriculum*, up to the end of Grade 9.

Policies and Procedures

Consistency and Fairness

The consistency of testing procedures is important to ensuring fairness for all students. Students must work independently in a quiet environment, supervised by teachers trained to administer the test. Teachers are provided with a script (contained in the detailed steps) that must be followed to ensure that a common message is given to all students throughout the province. The conditions of the test administration include a time limit as well as limited access to the test booklets. The standardization of the test content and of the conditions under which the test is administered ensure comparable opportunities for students to demonstrate the skills measured by the test.

Quality Assurance

As part of EQAO's quality assurance procedures, a random sample of schools is visited during the test by observers representing EQAO. The observers' responsibility is to monitor the consistency of administration across the province. The observers will notify the school in advance by phone and will present a letter of identification to the principal.

Participation in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Successful completion of the OSSLT is a requirement for students who entered Grade 9 in September 2000 or later and are working toward an OSSD. Students can also meet this requirement through the OSSLC but must have had at least two opportunities to take the test (at the principals' discretion, this may be reduced to one) and have failed the test at least once.

Participants in the March 2007 OSSLT are

- students who entered Grade 9 in the 2005–2006 school year,
- students who did not pass the test on a previous administration,

- students who were absent or deferred in the 2006 administration and
- students who were exempted in 2006 administration but are now working toward an OSSD.

Punctuality

The school's late policy for exams will determine admittance of students to the test room. EQAO reports will deem students to be absent if there is no work for one or both sessions of the administration.

Teacher Absences

In the case of an absence, another teacher, supervised by the principal, may administer the test. The teacher taking over the administration of the test must be provided in advance with a copy of this guide and must follow the detailed steps provided. The teacher must have the opportunity to have the procedures clarified.

EQAO Policy on the Duty to Report Child Abuse

Under provincial law, persons dealing with children, including teachers, teaching assistants and principals, have a duty to report suspicions of child abuse to the Children's Aid Society. According to the *Child and Family Services Act*, the duty to report also applies where there are reasonable grounds to suspect patterns of child neglect.

If a teacher, non-teaching staff member, principal or volunteer working as a scribe has reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or neglect, he or she is obligated to report any suspicion and the information on which it is based directly to the Children's Aid Society. When reporting to the Children's Aid Society, send only the student's writing linked to the suspicion of abuse or neglect. Notify EQAO at 1-888-327-7377 at the same time, indicating which portion of the test is in question. Do not send the Children's Aid Society any part of the preprinted test, including the writing prompt. If they require more information, they will contact EQAO.

EQAO has procedures in place to facilitate scorers' reporting of suspicions of child abuse.

EQAO Policy on Offensive Language

Student work that contains offensive language or obscene or racist graphic depictions will be reported to the student's principal, so that appropriate action can be taken at the school level.

Reporting to Students and Parents

EQAO will provide an ISR for each student who participated in the OSSLT, following the test administration. A copy will also be provided for the student's school record. The ISR will indicate whether a student has successfully completed the test. Directors of education for each district school board will receive school, board and provincial results. School, board and provincial results will be reported publicly by schools, boards and EQAO.

Embedded Materials

Field-test questions are embedded in the student booklets. **Students will have different versions of these embedded questions.** These questions will not be included in the students' scores. However, it is important that students give them the same effort they give the other parts of the test.

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