

At a Glance

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

What Is Assessed?

- Whether students are meeting the minimum standard for literacy across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9 (the test can be taken starting in Grade 10)
- Reading and writing skills, including
 - understanding explicitly and implicitly stated information
 - making connections between information and ideas
 - writing effectively using conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) to ensure clear communication
 - developing a main idea with supporting details
- No additional preparation required, as *Ontario Curriculum* content is covered in regular classroom instruction
- Successful completion of the literacy test is one of the requirements to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma



What Are the Design and Format of the Assessment?

Online assessment using a linear test design model^{1,2}

Two sessions totalling 37 questions: 35 selected-response questions and two written open-response questions³

Introductory session to familiarize students with tools, resources and types of questions

Relaxation and visualization activities to help students stay calm and focused

Voluntary Student Questionnaire to collect information about students' attitudes and perceptions with respect to literacy, transferable skills and their learning environment

¹ For those who cannot complete an assessment online, an alternative version in various formats is available.

² The linear test design uses several equivalent test forms that are assembled ahead of test administration according to the same content and statistical specifications.

³ Additionally, the test includes field-test questions, which are not used in determining the student results.

How Is the OSSLT Scored and Reported?

Qualified Ontario educators scoring for open-response (written) questions and automated scoring (computer scored) for selected-response questions

Single literacy outcome (“Successful” or “Not yet successful”) provided for all students⁴

Student’s outcome determined by using a statistical method called “Item Response Theory”⁵

Individual Student Report generated after the scoring of the test

⁴ Since successful completion of the OSSLT is a graduation requirement, students are assigned a “successful” or “not yet successful” outcome after they complete the test. [Read more](#)

⁵ Item Response Theory takes into account the student’s responses to the questions and the difficulty of each of these questions. It locates the student’s outcome along a continuum of literacy ability.

Learn more

Read the [OSSLT Framework](#)

Watch [“What to expect on the OSSLT”](#)