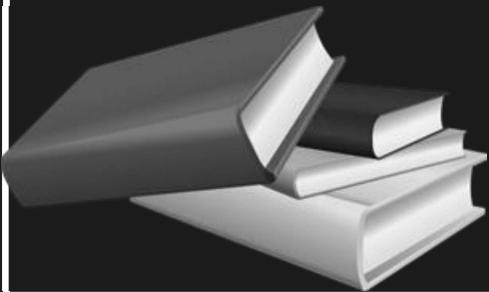


# The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)





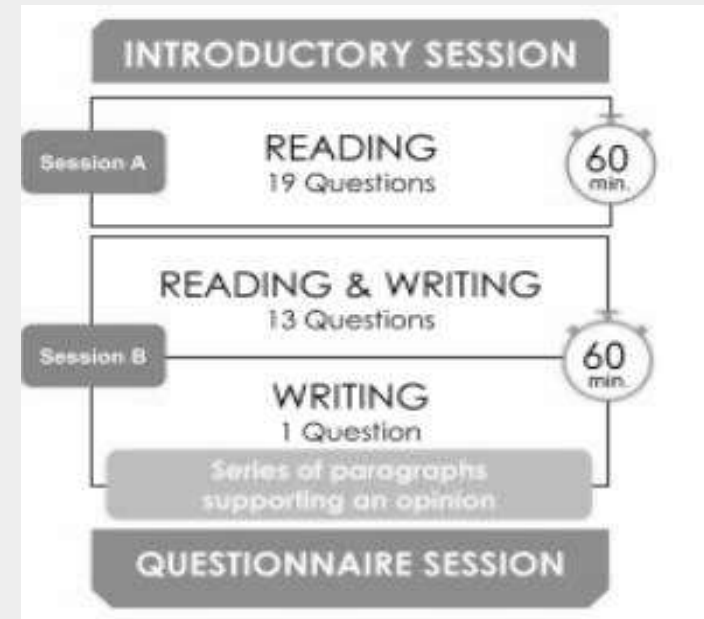
# What is the format of the OSSLT?

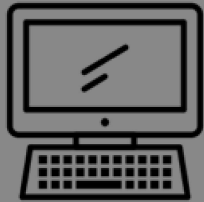
The OSSLT is an online based assessment that comprises two sessions: Session A & Session B.

Each session is designed to take 60 minutes followed by a questionnaire that is not marked.

33 Questions in total

- 31 Multiple Choice Questions (including drag & drop, checklist, drop down, etc)
- 2 open-response questions





## **Session A**

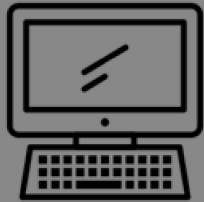
*Introduction +  
60 minutes*

**OSSLT**  
*Preparation*

**Introduction** (overview of features,  
opportunity to practice)

### **Reading**

Real Life Narrative (7 M/C)  
Information Paragraph (6 M/C)  
News Report (5 M/C, 1 100 word open-  
response)



## **Session B**

*60 minutes*

*+ Questionnaire*

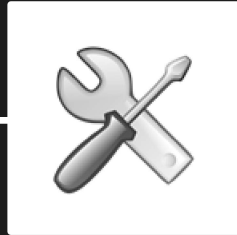
**Reading**  
Dialogue (5 M/C)

**Writing**  
Editing Skills (8 M/C)  
Series of Paragraphs  
Expressing an Opinion (500 words)

**Questionnaire**

**OSSLT**

*Preparation*



# Accessibility Tools on The Test

# Accessibility Tools Include:



- A help menu
- A text-to-speech function that reads the text on the screen out loud
- Zoom in and zoom out capabilities
- A line reader that helps students focus on one line of text at a time
- A high-contrast view
- Draw line
- Highlighter
- Eraser
- Rough notes

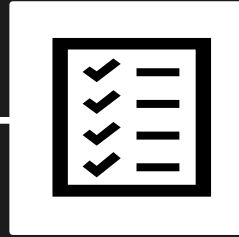
**OSSLT**  
Preparation

## During the test

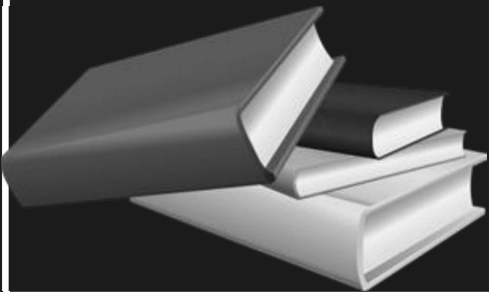
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During the assessment, students can have access to the following:

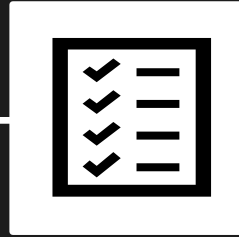
- Headphones for listening to questions
- White noise or calming music as required
- A supply of pens or pencils and paper for rough work
- Extra time, if needed



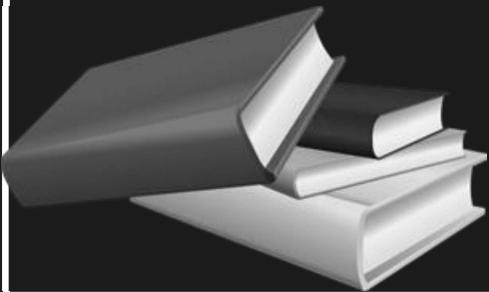
# TIPS & STRATEGIES FOR CONQUERING THE OSSLT







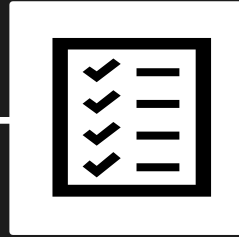
# MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS



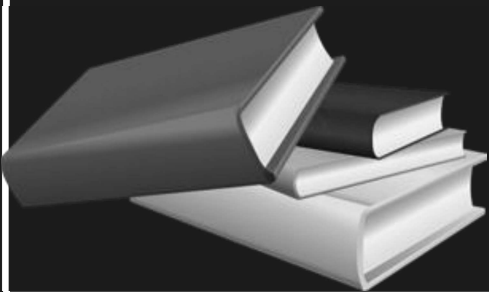


## Managing Multiple Choice Questions (5 Tips)

- **READ** the question carefully and think of an answer **BEFORE** you see the choices. Read the choices to see if your answer is there. If so, your answer is probably correct.
- **REDUCE** your options by removing choices that you know are incorrect.
- When you have narrowed your choices, **Go Back** and **Reread** the reading selection, try each answer with the question to see which makes sense.
- If you are stuck because you don't understand a word in the question, look at it closely. Can you **GUESS** the meaning based on the context of the question or sentence? Are there parts to the word that you **RECOGNIZE** from other words?
- If all else fails, make sure you **ANSWERED** every question. Your guess may be the correct answer!



# GRAMMAR & WRITING CONVENTIONS





# GRAMMAR QUESTIONS ON THE TEST

There are 8 questions on the test that require you to correct sentences to make them grammatically correct.

**Let's Practice!**





# Sentence Examples

Look at the following sentences and explain how you would fix them:

- Lets eat Grandma.
- You will be required to work twenty four hour shifts.
- Amy finds inspiration in cooking her family and cat.

## Sentence Corrections

- Let's eat, Grandma.
- You will be required to work twenty, four hour shifts.
- Amy finds inspiration in cooking, her family, and cat.

**Let's eat grandma!**



**Let's eat, grandma!**

**Punctuation  
Saves Lives.**

Drag and drop the punctuation to the correct blank space.

Before you start exercising  it's important to do the following  put on comfortable  
clothes, make sure you have the proper hydration and warm up by stretching

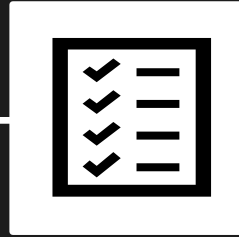
,  :  .



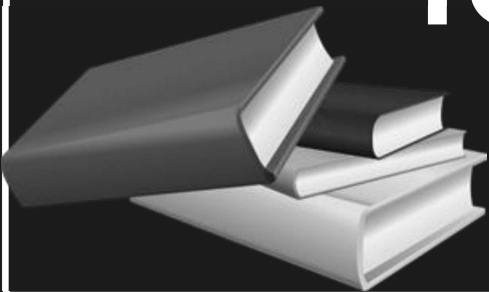
## Review

On your own, please review the following document: [14 Common Grammar Mistakes and how to fix them.](#)





# Basic Grammar Rules To Memorize for Writing Tasks





## Basic Writing Rules to Memorize

Always put a comma before **BUT**! Ex. There are many rules, **but** this one is important.

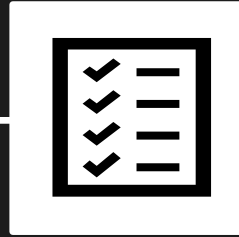
Never put a comma or other punctuation around **BECAUSE**! Ex. These rules are important **BECAUSE** they will help you with your writing.

Always surround the words or expression being spoken by a person or character in **QUOTATION MARKS**. Ex. The teacher explained, "These writing rules will help you," and then she smiled.

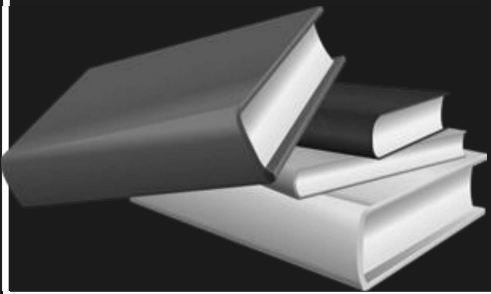


## Basic Writing Rules to Memorize Continued

4. Always put a comma after your **TRANSITION WORD**. Ex. **First**, we will look at the rules. **Next**, we will have a discussion. **Finally**, we will do some practice exercises.
5. All names of people, places or things are proper nouns and they must be capitalized. Ex. **Aunt Suzy** visited **The Royal Ontario Museum** and then read the book **Top Sights In Toronto** on the subway.
6. Always put a comma before **DIALOGUE**. Ex. She **asked**, “will you try it?” He laughed and **said**, “okay.” She **explained**, “I knew you could do it.”



# Reading Tasks OSSLT





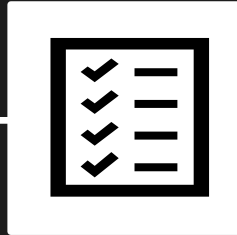
## Four Reading Tasks On The OSSLT

**Real Life Narrative (RLN):** read a passage and answer seven multiple-choice questions.

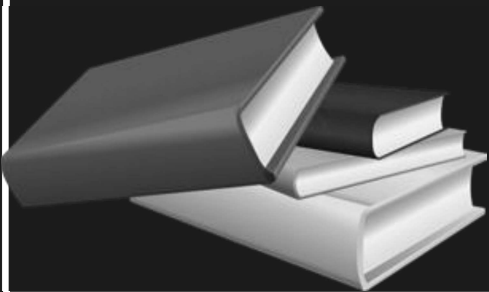
**Information Paragraph (INP):** read a passage and answer six multiple-choice questions.

**News Report (NR):** read a passage, one written response (paragraph) and five multiple-choice reading questions

**Dialogue (DIA):** five multiple choice questions



# Narrative Texts





# What is a narrative text?

A **narrative text** is written to entertain, provide insights, or communicate a writer's ideas and perspectives.

## Can Be Fiction or Nonfiction

A Narrative Text can be one of the following:

- 1. *Real Life Narrative*** - describes a significant time in a person's life
- 2. *Dialogue*** - presents a conversation between two or more people

**Both Real Life Narrative & Dialogue will be on the OSSLT.**



# Helpful Tips for Reading Narrative Texts





## Before Reading

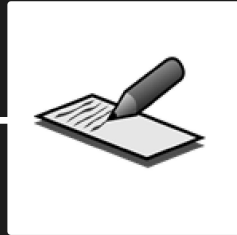
**Before you read the narrative text do two things FIRST:**

- **READ THE QUESTIONS** (this can help you to make predictions about what you will be reading)
- **SKIM THE SELECTION** (look at pictures, text, titles, graphs, etc.).

## 2

## During Reading

- **Underline or highlight** important information and ideas.
- **Try to “see”** what is happening while you read.
- **If reading an unfamiliar word, look at the words around it** to help you make meaning.
- If the meaning is still unclear, **try reading the sentences before and after.**
- If a sentence is still confusing, **try putting it into your own words.**



# PRACTICE

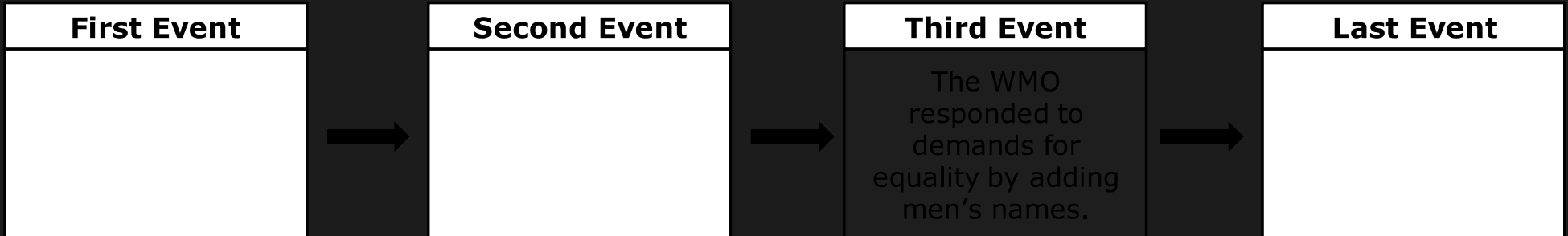
The methods of naming Atlantic basin hurricanes have varied over time, but all have encountered problems. Originally, a hurricane in the West Indies took its name from the particular saint who was celebrated on the day on which it occurred. Confusion arose when there was a recurrence. For example, on September 13, 1876, the day of San Felipe, a hurricane hit Puerto Rico. More than 50 years later, another hurricane struck on the same day. It was named "San Felipe II." In 1953 the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) adopted the alphabetical system of women's names, retiring names of significant storms to avoid this duplication. When demands for gender equality arose, the WMO added men's names in 1979. The male-female-male-female alphabetic naming pattern has continued since then. Twenty-one names are designated for each year, skipping the letters *q*, *u*, *x*, *y* and *z*. Names of major storms such as Hugo and Katrina are retired, and the WMO chooses new names to replace the retired ones. Storm activity increases and decreases in cycles over decades, but today, a new problem has developed. Hurricane activity has increased so much since 1995 that the WMO may need more than 21 names for a season. The 2005 season was the busiest on record, with 26 named storms, including 13 hurricanes. One proposal is to include the Greek alphabet, which adds 24 more names to the WMO roster. This idea is the latest in a series of solutions to the challenge of naming hurricanes.

Organize the following events in the order in which they actually happened.

It was the busiest recorded hurricane season.

San Felipe II struck Puerto Rico.

The WMO started to retire names of significant hurricanes.



The methods of naming Atlantic basin hurricanes have varied over time, but all have encountered problems. Originally, a hurricane in the West Indies took its name from the particular saint who was celebrated on the day on which it occurred. Confusion arose when there was a recurrence. For example, on September 13, 1876, the day of San Felipe, a hurricane hit Puerto Rico. More than 50 years later, another hurricane struck on the same day. It was named “San Felipe II.” In 1953 the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) adopted the alphabetical system of women’s names, retiring names of significant storms to avoid this duplication. When demands for gender equality arose, the WMO added men’s names in 1979. The male-female-male-female alphabetic naming pattern has continued since then. Twenty-one names are designated for each year, skipping the letters *q*, *u*, *x*, *y* and *z*. Names of major storms such as Hugo and Katrina are retired, and the WMO chooses new names to replace the retired ones. Storm activity increases and decreases in cycles over decades, but today, a new problem has developed. Hurricane activity has increased so much since 1995 that the WMO may need more than 21 names for a season. The 2005 season was the busiest on record, with 26 named storms, including 13 hurricanes. One proposal is to include the Greek alphabet, which adds 24 more names to the WMO roster. This idea is the latest in a series of solutions to the challenge of naming hurricanes.

5

10

15

Identify which of the follow statements is the **main idea** and which **two** statements are the **supporting details**.

The WMO responded to demands for gender equality by adding men’s names.

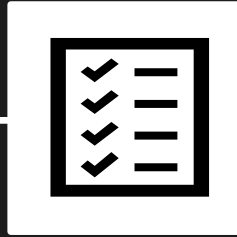
There are more storms today, requiring more names.

The process of naming hurricanes is complex.

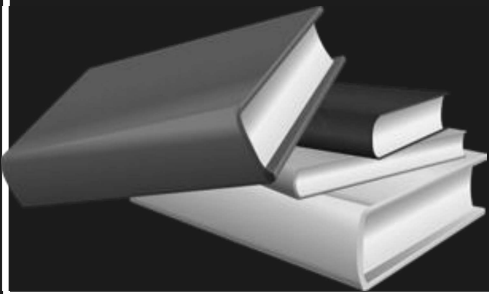
**Main Idea**

**Supporting Detail**

**Supporting Detail**



# Graphic Texts





# Tips for Reading Graphic Texts

## **Before Reading**

- **Read the title and the headings. What clues do they reveal about the text?**
- **Look for any pictures, tables, maps, schedules or graphs. Read them before you read the text.**
- **Read any captions or descriptive phrases that go with each graphic.**

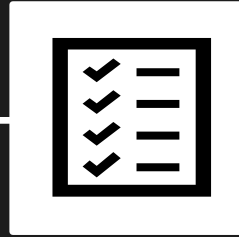


# Tips for Reading Graphic Texts

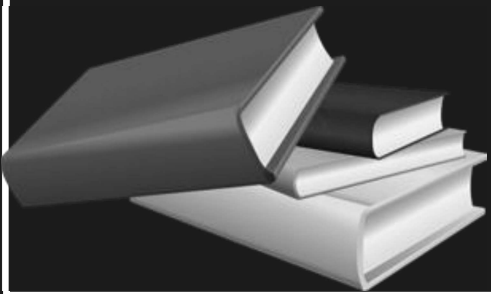
## During Reading

- Read the text from beginning to end.
- Look for the use of colour or symbols to emphasize important words and information.
- While reading, identify relationships between the text and the graphics in the text.





# Writing Tasks OSSLT





## OSSLT Writing Tasks

The OSSLT has TWO writing tasks.

1. Read a newspaper article, and write a paragraph response.
2. Write a series of Paragraphs (think of it like a 5 paragraph essay).





# Opinion Writing

On the OSSLT, you will be asked to **write a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion.**

This is a **4–5 paragraph response** (think of it like a 5 paragraph essay).

The expectation is that you will **give your opinion on a topic & support it with 3 clear reasons.**



# Writing Practice Examples

---

**1 Task:**

Write a **minimum** of **three paragraphs** expressing an **opinion** on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.).

**Audience:**

an adult who is interested in your opinion

**Length:**

The lined space provided in the *Answer Booklet* for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

**Topic:**

**Is what you are learning in school affecting the way you live your life now?**

Open response  
Series of paragraphs  
supporting an opinion  
(500 words)

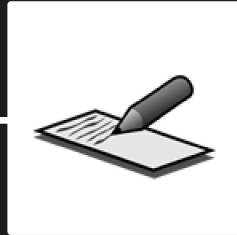


## Writing Tasks - Be Specific!

On all of the writing tasks on the OSSLT, higher marks will always be awarded to responses that give specific examples. Whether you are writing your opinion on your favourite video game, or writing an essay on why teens should be able to vote, specific examples can make the difference between passing the failing the OSSLT.

As a class use the table below to brainstorm two more specific answers to the question: What do you do to start your day?

Question	Vague Answer	Specific Answers
What do you do to start your day?	Eat Breakfast	a) Eat breakfast with maple syrup and not too much better b) c)



# Planning Out Your Series of Paragraphs:

## ESSAY RESPONSE



## What to expect?

**You will be asked to write a personal opinion essay.**

**Past examples of questions:**

**Should teenagers be able to vote at 16?**

**Should we change the driving age to 20?**



## **Brainstorm/Plan Out Your Ideas First**

**The test is online but there is space for rough work. You will also be provided with paper that you can use to plan out your ideas.**

**It is very important that you plan out your responses first, prior to writing.**

**This is important to make sure that you are on topic, and that your ideas are developed clearly.**



## Long Answer Question Practice:

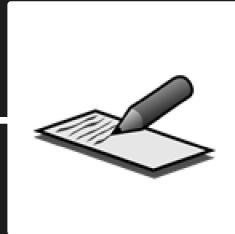
# IS SOCIAL MEDIA HARMING TEENAGERS?

**Step One:** Ensure that you have a clear position for this topic (Yes or No – not both)

**Step Two:** Before you start writing, take some time to write down your three supporting points

Reason #1	Reason #2	Reason #3
Evidence #1	Evidence #1	Evidence #1
Evidence #2	Evidence #2	Evidence #2

**Step Three:** Conclusion



# Structuring Your Response

## Tips for Writing a Series of Paragraphs



**B**rainstorm first: your opinion, reasons to support your opinion, evidence to support your reasons

**I**ntroduce the topic and your opinion in the first paragraph

**S**upport your opinion with specific **reasons**

**O**ffer specific **real or fake examples or facts** to support each reason

**N**ew line for each paragraph (intro, reasons, conclusion)



# 1 Paragraph One: The Introduction

1. Write two to three sentences that discuss the topic in general.
1. Rephrase the question to make a sentence that expresses your opinion. Remember this is an opinion piece – it is important & expected that you take a position on the question.

Example of a past OSSLT series of paragraphs question: *Do students benefit from the two-month summer break?*

## 2

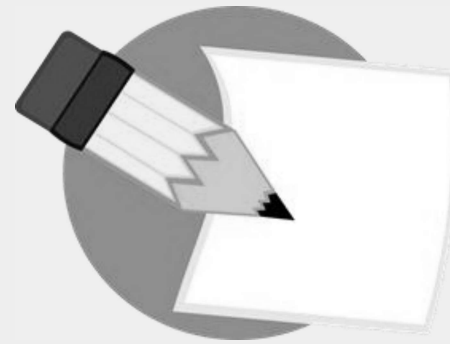
# Paragraph Two-Four: Your Arguments

- **Write a single sentence that expresses your first argument.** (ex. The two month summer break does not benefit students because they forget much of what they have learned over the summer break.)
- **State your first reason.** Start the sentence with a signal word such as first or firstly.
- **Explain how your first reason proves your opinion to be true** (this might take 1-2 sentences).
- **State your second reason.** Use a signal word such as second, secondly, next, in addition, also, moreover.
- **Explain how your second reason proves your opinion to be true** (this might take 1-2 sentences).
- **State your third reason.** Use a signal word such as lastly or finally.
- **Explain how your third reason proves your opinion to be true.**
- **Write a conclusion** that restates your opinion for the paragraph/essay.



## Conclusion

- Restate your opinion for the essay.
- Restate your first argument.
- Restate your second argument.
- Restate your third argument.
- Restate your opinion for the essay.
- Try to make a connection to something you said in the first paragraph as your final sentence OR write your final sentence as a comment on what you think is going to happen about this topic in the future.





## SERIES OF PARAGRAPHS IS MARKED TWICE

1. TOPIC DEVELOPMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF ARGUMENTS

1. WRITING CONVENTIONS.





# OSSLT Rubric - Topic Development

## Topic Development: Generic Rubric for Writing a Series of Paragraphs Expressing an Opinion

Code	Descriptor
<b>Off topic</b>	The response is off topic.
<b>10</b>	The response is related to the prompt but does not express an opinion. <b>OR</b> The response expresses an opinion with no supporting details or provides details unrelated to the opinion. There is no evidence of organization.
<b>20</b>	The response is related to the prompt, but only part of the response expresses and supports an opinion. <b>OR</b> 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.
<b>30</b>	The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the opinion is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication.
<b>40</b>	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.
<b>50</b>	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details. The organization is logical.
<b>60</b>	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.



# OSSLT Rubric - Writing Conventions

## Conventions: Generic Rubric for Long-Writing Task

Code	Descriptor
10	There is insufficient evidence to assess the use of conventions. <b>OR</b> Errors in conventions interfere with communication.
20	Errors in conventions distract from communication.
30	Errors in conventions do not distract from communication.
40	Control of conventions is evident in written work.





# Thank you!



Do you have any questions?