

BOOKLET

1

March 2008

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

SESSION 1

RELEASED SELECTIONS
AND TEST QUESTIONS

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Session 1

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

New Discoveries at the Dinosaur Capital of the World

Recent discoveries have strengthened Alberta's reputation as the "Dinosaur Capital of the World." Scientists at the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller, Alberta, are examining the first duck-billed dinosaur skeleton to be recovered in northern Alberta. The skeleton could represent a new species of dinosaur.

The hadrosaur, or duck-billed dinosaur, lived about 73 million years ago, when much of Alberta was covered by a vast inland sea. Herds of duck-billed creatures moved across the lushly vegetated lowlands, followed in time by predators such as *Tyrannosaurus rex*.

1

2

Since the retreat of the ice more than 10 000 years ago, erosion has carved out the hillsides, uncovering the bones of the once abundant dinosaurs and shaping the dramatic and mysterious Badlands. Interested teens and adults can attend Day Digs sponsored by the Royal Tyrrell Museum. Thousands of important specimens have been uncovered by participants, including a 1.3-metre-long leg bone from a duck-billed dinosaur, fragments of turtle shell, fossilized crocodile and fish teeth, remains of horned dinosaurs and nearly 100 tyrannosaur teeth!

3



Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** The headline of this news report does **not**
- a describe the museum.
 - b summarize the story details.
 - c suggest the kind of discovery.
 - d identify the location of the story.
- 2** Scientists in Alberta are studying the duck-billed dinosaur skeleton to
- a perhaps discover a new species.
 - b determine the degree of hillside erosion.
 - c learn about the ancient climate of Drumheller.
 - d possibly uncover the mystery of the Badlands.
- 3** Hadrosaurs were most likely threatened by
- a the retreat of ice.
 - b the erosion of land.
 - c predatory dinosaurs.
 - d newly discovered species.
- 4** In paragraph 3, the words “dramatic and mysterious” are used to
- a explain erosion.
 - b describe dinosaurs.
 - c explain the day digs.
 - d describe the landscape.
- 5** Paragraph 2 relates to paragraph 1 because paragraph 2
- a outlines the contents of the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller, Alberta.
 - b explains the term “Dinosaur Capital of the World” as used in paragraph 1.
 - c describes a sequence of steps in the discovery process identified in paragraph 1.
 - d provides additional information about the skeleton recovered in northern Alberta.

Written Answer

- 6 How might the information in this news report encourage people to visit Alberta? Use specific details and examples from the selection to support your answer.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

1 Which sentence does not belong in the paragraph?

(1) The Torino games were Canada's most successful Winter Olympics to date.
(2) During the two weeks, 24 medals were earned by the Canadian athletes. (3) Canadian competitors did exceptionally well in women's hockey, moguls, curling, cross-country skiing and skeleton. (4) The most successful athlete was Cindy Klassen of Calgary who accumulated five medals in speed skating.
(5) Cindy also enjoys hiking and rock climbing.
(6) The next games will be held in Whistler, British Columbia, where Canada hopes to improve on this impressive result.

- a Sentence 1
- b Sentence 3
- c Sentence 5
- d Sentence 6

2 Choose the option that best combines all the information in the boldfaced sentences.

Some forms of transportation do not pollute the environment.

Some people walk.

Some people ride bicycles.

- a Some forms of transportation do not pollute the environment some people walk some people ride bicycles.
- b Some people walk or ride bicycles, which are forms of transportation that do not pollute the environment.
- c Some people walk, some people ride bicycles but some forms of transportation do not pollute the environment.
- d Some people walk and some people ride bicycles, and some forms of transportation do not pollute the environment.

3 Choose the sentence that is correctly written.

- a She was interested in applied for the job, and submit her application tomorrow.
- b She was interested in apply for the job, and submitted her application tomorrow.
- c She is interested in applying for the job and will submit her application tomorrow.
- d She is interested in applying for the job, and will submitted her application tomorrow.

4 Choose the sentence that is correctly written.

- a Ying Lu a world-class golfer, is competing in a golf tournament today.
- b Ying Lu, a world-class golfer is competing in a golf tournament today.
- c Ying Lu, a world-class golfer, is competing in a golf tournament today.
- d Ying Lu, a world-class golfer is, competing in a golf tournament today.

Short Writing Task (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

1 If you could visit anywhere in the world, which place would you visit? Explain why.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

End of Section III. Continue to Section IV. 

Writing a News Report

- 1 Task:** Write a **news report** based on the headline and picture on the next page.
- You will have to make up the facts and information, answering some or all of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
 - You must relate your newspaper report to **both** the headline **and** the picture.

Purpose and Audience:

to report on an event for the readers of a newspaper

Length: The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

Guest speaker's message inspires students



Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

Write your report on the lines provided on the following page.

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

Smog warnings and stifling heat sum up summer in a city. And no wonder. Compared to the countryside, a city becomes hot and smoggy because pavement and cement buildings absorb and release solar heat. Air conditioning is a costly solution that is harmful to the environment. That's why some innovative people have turned instead to Mother Nature's solution by planting prairie grass on their rooftops to cool down their buildings. The grass takes care of itself — it is watered by rain and seeds itself year after year. The benefits of a grass roof outweigh the start-up costs. If six per cent of the roofs in Toronto were "green," the city's temperature would be a degree or two cooler and there would be a five to 10 percent reduction in smog. Because green roofs trap rain water, the water runoff carrying pollutants into streams is reduced. At the same time, the grass releases clean oxygen into the air. Not only that, green roofs are also a haven for birds and provide a pleasant view for neighbouring buildings. We don't have to look too far to find a solution to the heavy demand for electrical power for summertime air conditioning. The answer is over our heads.

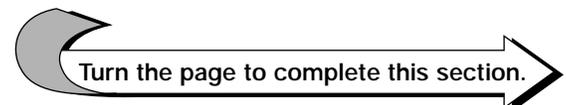
5

10



Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** What is the main purpose of this passage?
- a to make building roofs more attractive
 - b to reduce the use of air conditioning in cities
 - c to sell prairie grass to people who live in cities
 - d to provide information about an environmental innovation
- 2** In this selection, quotation marks around the word “green” are used to
- a indicate a specific colour.
 - b emphasize an unfamiliar word.
 - c indicate that someone is speaking.
 - d show the word has more than one meaning.
- 3** What would be a primary advantage of installing green roofs?
- a Urban air pollution would be reduced.
 - b They keep solar heat absorption stable.
 - c The grass is watered by rain and seeds itself.
 - d Runoff water would not contain pollutants.
- 4** How would “green” roofs reduce the heavy demand for electrical power in the summer?
- a The polluted water runoff would be prevented.
 - b The need for air conditioning would be decreased.
 - c The roofs would save energy by trapping rainwater.
 - d The grass would release clean, cool oxygen into the air.
- 5** “The benefits of a grass roof outweigh the start-up costs.” In this sentence, what is the best meaning of “outweigh”?
- a are focused on
 - b are greater than
 - c are dependent upon
 - d are less expensive than
- 6** The last sentence states “The answer is over our heads.” What is it referring to?
- a the hot, smoggy air
 - b the tall city buildings
 - c the use of prairie grass on rooftops
 - d the use of rainwater to feed prairie grass



Written Answer

7 Summarize this selection. Include a main idea and one relevant point that supports it.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

**Education Quality and
Accountability Office**



The information in this booklet is being collected under authority of clause 4 (1) (b) and subsection 9 (6) of the *Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996*, for the purposes of administering and marking tests of pupils in secondary schools and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of secondary education, in accordance with section 3 of the Act. Inquiries regarding this collection should be directed to the Senior Policy Analyst, EQAO, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1200, Toronto, ON M5B 2M9 • 1-888-327-7377.

BOOKLET

2

March 2008

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

SESSION 2

**RELEASED SELECTIONS
AND TEST QUESTIONS**

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Session 2

Writing a Series of Paragraphs

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.).
	Purpose and Audience: an adult who is interested in your opinion
	Length: The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.
	Topic: Are today's famous people good role models for young people?

Write your series of paragraphs on the lines provided on the following two pages.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** Choose the option that best combines all the information in the three boldfaced sentences.

**There was a snowstorm.
The airplane could not leave.
We were delayed.**

- a A snowstorm and the airplane caused our delay since we could not leave.
- b We were delayed because the airplane could not leave due to a snowstorm.
- c The airplane cannot leave when there are snowstorms then we were delayed.
- d We were delayed and there was a snowstorm and the airplane could not leave.

- 2** Choose the best topic for the paragraph.

They may spend hours downloading their favourite artists' songs. Hats and T-shirts announce their love of various rap or rock groups. Concerts and dance clubs are sold out on Saturday nights. Music can be an important part of a teenager's world.

- a Many teenagers love music.
- b Teenagers have different tastes in music.
- c Teenagers express themselves in different ways.
- d Most teenagers spend too much time listening to music.

- 3** Choose the sentences that are correctly written.

- a "It was cold yesterday, he said. I hope it warms up soon."
- b "It was cold yesterday, he said. "I hope it warms up soon."
- c "It was cold yesterday", he said. I hope it warms up soon".
- d "It was cold yesterday," he said. "I hope it warms up soon."

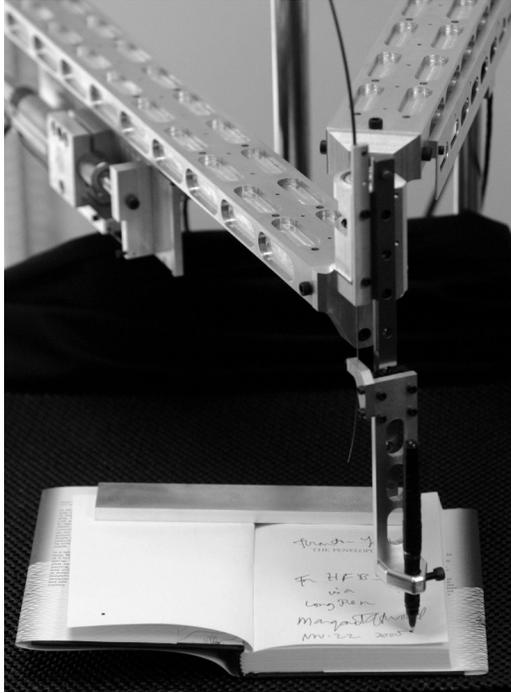
- 4** Choose the sentences that are correctly written.

- a Several items were recycled. That went into the blue recycling bags.
- b Several items were recycled. Then went into the blue recycling bags.
- c Several items were recycled. They went into the blue recycling bags.
- d Several items were recycled. Them went into the blue recycling bags.

End of Section VII. Continue to Section VIII.

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

The Long-Distance Pen



A world-famous Canadian author has become an inventor. Margaret Atwood, known to millions as the sharp-witted, bestselling author of works such as *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Alias Grace*, has combined computer technology, webcams and robotics to create the world's first long-distance signing device, the LongPen. 1

During a hectic and tiring book tour for *Oryx and Crake*, her 2003 novel, the idea for the device came to the Ottawa-born author. Rushing from city to city across the United States and living on fast food meals, Atwood thought that there must be a better way to do book-signing tours. She hired a couple of technical experts and started her own company, Unotchit (you no touch it), in the summer of 2004. Together she and the experts designed the LongPen, a machine that 2

allows writers to sign books for fans anywhere in the world. Here's how it works: The author writes a personal message and signature on a computer tablet using a stylus pen. On the receiving end, in another city, a robotic arm fitted with a regular pen signs the book. The author and fan can talk with each other via webcams and computer screens.

Work on the LongPen began in Atwood's basement. There was no high-tech laboratory or office. Heading into the project, Atwood and her company had no idea it would be as hard as it turned out to be. The device went through several versions, including one that actually had smoke coming out of it. They sometimes felt like the scientists you see in movies! 3

Their biggest design challenge was the nature of handwriting itself. "You're writing at a very fast speed. You're reversing the direction of pen strokes very quickly, so the actual gravitational forces are quite astonishing," said Atwood, whose business card identifies her as president of LongPen. When the inventing was finally completed, they subcontracted the building of the device to a Toronto manufacturer. 4

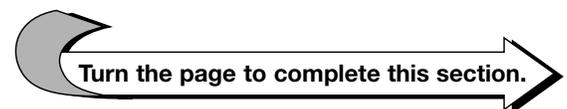
After test runs in Ottawa and Guelph, Ontario, the LongPen was officially launched in England at the 2006 London Book Fair. From here, Margaret Atwood conducted two transatlantic book signings of her latest release, *The Tent*, for fans in Guelph and New York City. 5

Unlike a photocopier or automatic pen, which simply duplicates the same signature over and over again, the LongPen produces a unique signature each time because it copies the movement of the author in real time. Invented with book tours in mind, the machine has several other potential applications. It could enhance credit card security and allow doctors to write prescriptions for out-of-town patients and the signing of legal forms such as real-estate documents from another province. The video exchange between signer and receiver can be recorded on DVD as a memento, or for proof when legal documents or credit-card transactions are used. 6

The LongPen also adapts to hold CDs and hockey sticks, allowing music and sports stars to give autographs remotely. Eventually, the designers hope to make the gadget small enough for use on home computers. 7

“It’s really fun,” said Doug Minett, co-owner of a Guelph bookstore, who was present for one of the test runs. “Obviously you can’t shake hands with the author, but there are chances for a connection that you don’t get from a regular book signing when there are 5000 people standing around you and you’ve got 30 seconds with the author.” 8

The response to the invention hasn’t been all favourable. Atwood has received criticism from authors who think she’s trying to end book tours. She denies any such intention. “But it will be possible to go to places that you never got sent to before because the publishers couldn’t afford it.” 9



Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** At the signing of which book was the LongPen first used in public?
- a *The Tent*
 - b *Alias Grace*
 - c *Oryx and Crake*
 - d *The Handmaid's Tale*
- 2** According to this selection, what is an accurate statement about the invention of the LongPen?
- a Atwood designed it herself in her Toronto basement.
 - b Publishers encouraged this invention as a money saver.
 - c The invention required a high-tech laboratory and experts.
 - d Many versions failed during the design and manufacturing process.
- 3** In paragraph 2, the purpose of the words in parentheses is to
- a show the title of Atwood's novel that was on tour.
 - b provide additional details about how the LongPen works.
 - c give less important information that the reader can skim over.
 - d help the reader pronounce and understand an unfamiliar word.
- 4** The word "documents" in paragraph 6 refers to
- a transactions.
 - b applications.
 - c official forms.
 - d video exchanges.
- 5** For both authors and their fans, the LongPen will be better than a photocopier because the LongPen can
- a produce many signatures at a greater speed.
 - b eliminate book tours that publishers cannot afford.
 - c duplicate an unlimited number of signatures in new locations.
 - d write unique signatures and personal messages across great distances.
- 6** In the future, the LongPen designers hope to
- a produce larger versions of their product for industrial use.
 - b invent other similar laboratory and office equipment machines.
 - c design more versions for business, entertainment and home use.
 - d subcontract the design of similar high-tech handwriting devices.
- 7** According to this selection, critics of the LongPen are
- a book fans who prefer traditional uses of technology.
 - b designers who want to enhance computer technology.
 - c authors who worry that book tours may be eliminated.
 - d doctors who write prescriptions for out-of-town patients.

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 8** In paragraphs 8 and 9, the purpose of the quotations is to
- a describe the role of the president of LongPen.
 - b give information about the advantages of the LongPen.
 - c explain why several versions of the LongPen have been developed.
 - d emphasize reasons why the reaction to the LongPen has not been all favourable.
- 9** What pattern best describes the order of this article?
- a background, challenges, advantages, criticism
 - b advantages, background, criticism, challenges
 - c advantages, criticism, background, challenges
 - d background, criticism, advantages, challenges

End of Section VIII. Continue to Section IX.

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.



“Good evening! My name is Ben. I’ll be your server tonight,” the waiter said brightly. 1

“Hi, Ben. We’ll be your customers this evening.” Ali imitated the waiter’s cheery tone. 2

“Would you like to hear about our specials?” Without waiting for an answer, Ben began to recite the list he had repeated so many times already that evening. “We have a vegetarian frittata made of farm-fresh eggs, grilled mushrooms and roasted peppers” 3

“That’s enough, Ben,” interrupted Dana. “We know what we want. We had twenty minutes to look at the menu while we waited for a table. First, can you please bring us both a ginger ale? No ice.” 4

Ali shook his head. “I’d rather have a coffee. There were so many customers waiting in your front entrance that we had to wait outside *in the cold*. Why so busy, Ben?” Ali asked. 5

“Well, it’s 7:00 on a Saturday night. We’re usually full by 6:00. I’m sorry you had to wait but I’ll do what I can to bring your food quickly. Shall I finish taking your order now? So far, we have one ginger ale, no ice, and one coffee.” 6

“Actually, Ben, I’ll change that ginger ale to a hot chocolate.” 7

“Coming up! And to eat?” 8

“We’ll be sharing an order of fries.” 9

“That’s it? You waited twenty minutes in the cold to order *one* plate of fries?” There was a brief pause. Then Ben returned to his waiter’s voice. “Very good. I’ll place your order right away.” 10

Dana and Ali smiled as Ben left their table. 11

The restaurant owner gestured to Ben, calling him over. “What’s going on with those two? They insisted on waiting for a table in your section,” she told him. 12

“They’re my younger brother and sister,” Ben explained, rolling his eyes in exasperation. 13

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** Which statement was most likely spoken before the events in this selection took place?
- a “I keep forgetting to tell people about our specials,” said Ben.
 - b “This restaurant is too busy. Let’s go somewhere else,” said Ali.
 - c “No, thanks. We’d rather wait for a table in that section,” said Dana.
 - d “We’re not usually this crowded on Saturday,” said the restaurant owner.
- 2** When Ben recites the list in paragraph 3, he shows that he
- a has memorized the information.
 - b is confused by so many choices.
 - c does not care what his customers want.
 - d must speak loudly in the busy restaurant.
- 3** What is the main purpose of the italics in paragraphs 5 and 10?
- a identify direct speech
 - b indicate who is talking
 - c highlight unusual words
 - d emphasize tone of voice
- 4** Who is speaking in paragraph 7?
- a Ali
 - b Ben
 - c Dana
 - d the restaurant owner

Written Answers

5 Explain why the final sentence is an effective conclusion to the selection. Use relevant and specific information from the selection to support your answer.

6 Explain whether or not Ben is a good waiter. Use specific details and examples from the selection to support your explanation.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.



Short Writing Task (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

1 Describe two positive features of living in Canada. Give reasons to support your answer.

Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

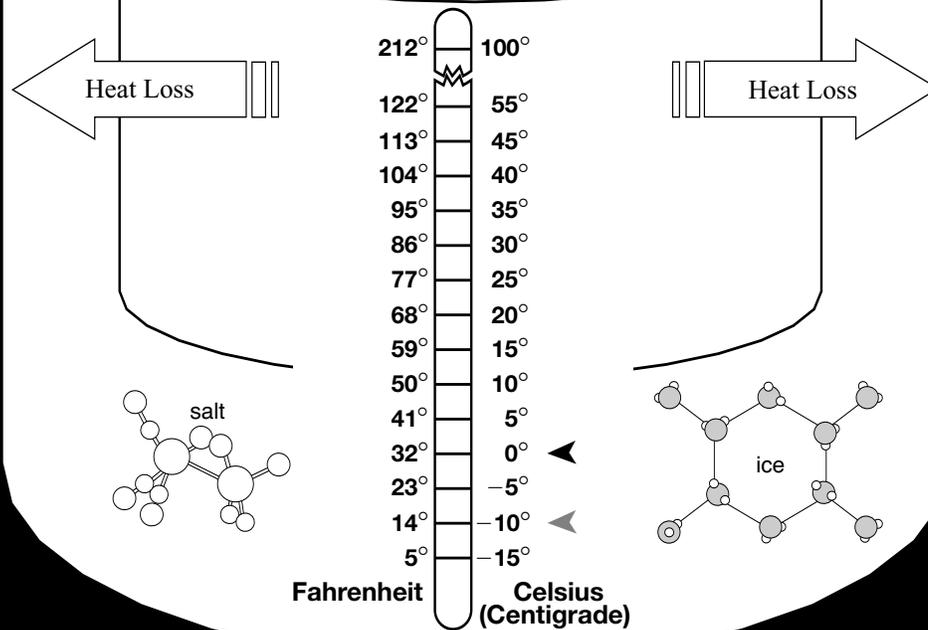
The Chemistry Behind Ice Cream

Making your own ice cream is a great way to cook with chemistry. Put the ice cream mixture in a small sealed can and the ice and salt mixture in a larger outer can. Shake the sealed unit for five to eight minutes and then eat a sweet treat!

Ice reduces the temperature of the cream to the freezing point of water (0 °C), but this is not cold enough to freeze the cream, which has a lower freezing point than water. Adding salt to the ice forces the ice to melt at a lower temperature, which in turn lowers the temperature of the cream to about -10 °C, where it can freeze.

Ice Cream Mixture:
125 mL whole milk
60 mL sugar
5 mL vanilla

Ice and Salt Mixture:
1 L ice
60 mL salt



The making of ice cream is an exothermic process, meaning heat must escape the ice cream mixture in order for it to change forms from liquid to solid. Without the addition of salt, ice cream could not be made.

Multiple-Choice (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** What allows the exothermic process to take place in the making of ice cream?
- a shaking the sealed unit
 - b sealing one can inside the other
 - c adding salt to the ice cream mixture
 - d surrounding the inner can with ice and salt
- 2** Text boxes are used in this selection to
- a highlight contrasting information.
 - b organize information in a sequence.
 - c separate different kinds of information.
 - d present information in a scientific way.
- 3** The thermometer shows both Fahrenheit and Celsius (Centigrade) because
- a the ice cream changes temperature quickly.
 - b the ice and salt have different temperatures.
 - c there is a small sealed can inside a larger outer can.
 - d there is more than one standard scale of temperature.
- 4** The small sealed can is placed inside the larger outer can to allow
- a the small can to float.
 - b the salt to enter the small can.
 - c the ice to melt inside the small can.
 - d the mixture inside the small can to freeze.
- 5** The large arrows on the diagram indicate that the temperature in the small sealed can is
- a increasing.
 - b decreasing.
 - c remaining at a constant level.
 - d becoming warmer and then cooler.
- 6** The purpose of the information in italics at the bottom of the selection is to
- a define a process in making ice cream.
 - b list the chemicals used in making ice cream.
 - c encourage the reader to try making ice cream.
 - d describe a final step in the making of ice cream.

Background Information (Record your answers on the Student Answer Sheet.)

We need to know about your background, so we can see how students with different experiences do on the test. All responses will be summarized and reported at the school, board and provincial levels.

Read each question carefully. If no answer seems exactly right, fill in the circle on the Student Answer Sheet with the response closest to what you want to say.

Language Background

1 a) Is English the first language you learned at home?

Y Yes N No

b) What languages do you speak at home (choose one only)?

a Only or mostly English

b Another language (or languages) as often as English

c Only or mostly another language (or other languages)

Home Computer Use

2 Indicate how often you use a computer at home for homework (choose one only).

a I don't have a computer at home.

b I never or hardly ever use the computer for homework.

c I use the computer once or twice a month for homework.

d I use the computer once or twice a week for homework.

e I use the computer almost every day for homework.

Reading

3 Indicate the types of materials you read in English outside school most weeks.

a) Non-fiction books, e.g., biographies
Y Yes N No

b) Comics
Y Yes N No

c) Web sites, e-mail, chat messages
Y Yes N No

d) Letters
Y Yes N No

e) Magazines
Y Yes N No

f) Manuals, instructions
Y Yes N No

g) Newspapers
Y Yes N No

h) Novels, fiction, short stories
Y Yes N No

i) Song lyrics, poems
Y Yes N No

j) Religious or spiritual writings
Y Yes N No

4 Indicate the number of hours a week you read materials written in English outside school, not including your homework (choose one only).

a One hour or less

b More than one hour but less than three hours

c More than three hours but less than five hours

d Five hours or more

5 Indicate what English-language materials you have at home.

- a) Dictionaries, encyclopedias (print or electronic)
Y Yes N No
- b) Books
Y Yes N No
- c) Newspapers
Y Yes N No
- d) Magazines
Y Yes N No

Writing

6 Indicate the types of writing you do in English outside school most weeks.

- a) E-mail, chat messages
Y Yes N No
- b) Letters, journals, diaries
Y Yes N No
- c) Notes, directions, instructions
Y Yes N No
- d) Song lyrics, poems
Y Yes N No
- e) Stories, fiction
Y Yes N No
- f) Work-related writing
Y Yes N No

7 Indicate the number of hours a week you write in English outside school, not including your homework (choose one only).

- a) One hour or less
- b) More than one hour but less than three hours
- c) More than three hours but less than five hours
- d) Five hours or more

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Accountability Office**



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