

LEARNERS' CONTEXT

EQAO data are derived mainly from our assessment results and from questionnaires completed by students and educators across the province during the assessments. Respondents' answers on EQAO questionnaires offer valuable contextual information about student learning in literacy and provide a context for interpreting the province-wide results over time. This information, considered alongside assessment results and data from other sources, **helps build a full understanding of student learning in Ontario.**

Here are some insights into learners' context in Ontario based on EQAO's questionnaires.

- While less than half of elementary-level students like to read (44% in Grade 3 and 42% in Grade 6), most see themselves as good readers (62% in Grade 3 and 67% in Grade 6).
- Fewer than half of elementary-level students like to write (45% in Grade 3 and 39% in Grade 6) and a similar percentage see themselves as good writers (48% in Grade 3 and 40% in Grade 6).
- The types of material read most frequently outside school by 51% of Grade 10 students are websites, e-mail or chat messages and blogs.
- The types of writing engaged in most frequently outside school by 52% of Grade 10 students are social media (Twitter, Facebook, blogs) or texting.



ASSESSMENT RESULTS

It is important to **compare results over time** to identify trends in student learning. Such analyses help us to understand achievement within subject areas and course types and among groups of students. EQAO bases its observations on five-year trends for this reason.

Primary Division (Grades 1–3) and Junior Division (Grades 4–6)

Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics: Reading and Writing Components

The primary- and junior-division Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics measure the reading, writing and mathematics skills *The Ontario Curriculum* expects students to have learned by the end of Grades 3 and 6. The results of the reading and writing components of these assessments over a period of five years are featured in the following bar graphs.

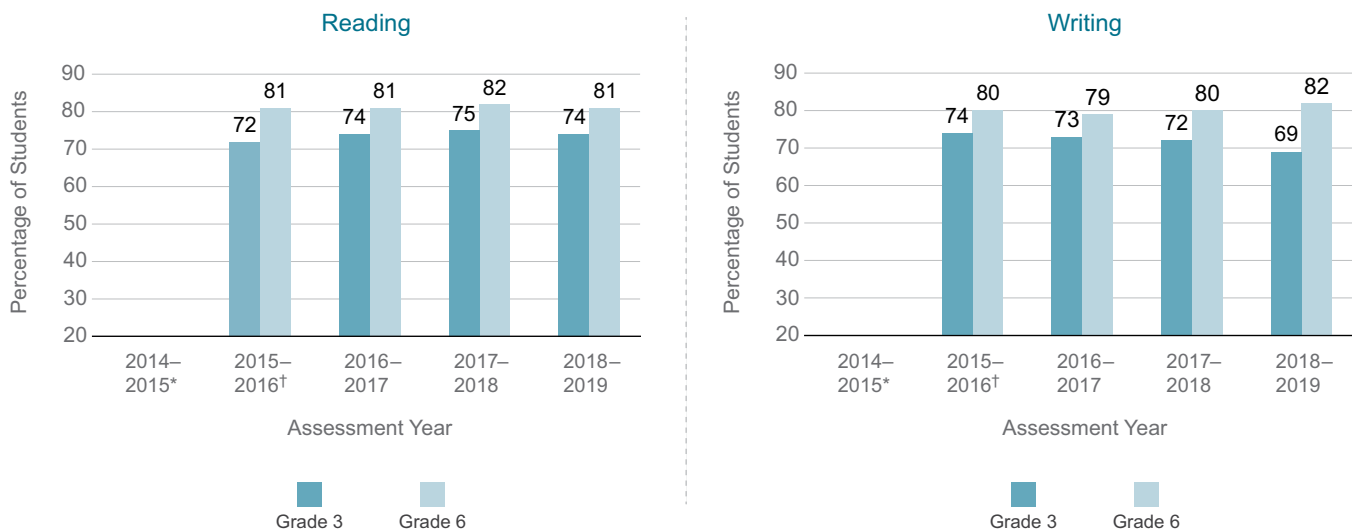
GRADE 3

- There were 131 544 Grade 3 students at the time of the 2018–2019 primary-division assessment.

GRADE 6

- There were 136 124 Grade 6 students at the time of the 2018–2019 junior-division assessment.

Percentage of Grade 3 and Grade 6 Students At or Above the Provincial Standard (Levels 3 and 4)



* Provincial-level results for the English-language school system are not available for 2015. Due to labour disruptions, a significant proportion of schools did not participate in the provincial assessments that school year.

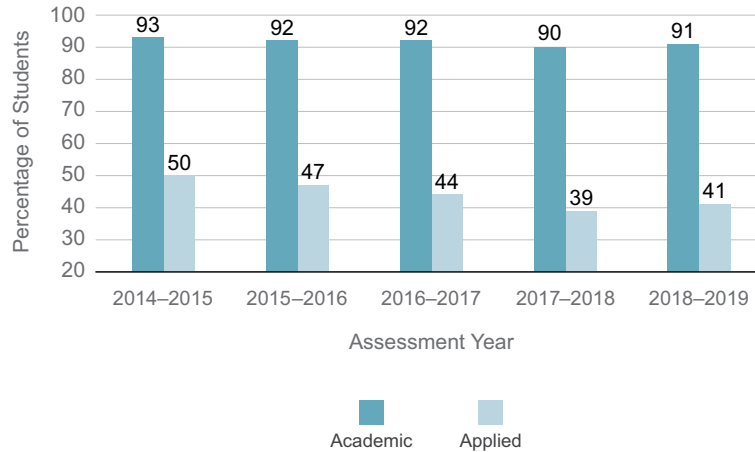
† In 2016, elementary schools in the Toronto Catholic District School Board did not participate in the assessments, due to labour issues.

Grade 10: Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

The OSSLT measures whether or not students are meeting the minimum standard for literacy across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9. The same version of the assessment is administered to students in the academic and applied courses. The results over a period of five years for students enrolled in academic and applied English courses are featured in the following bar graphs.

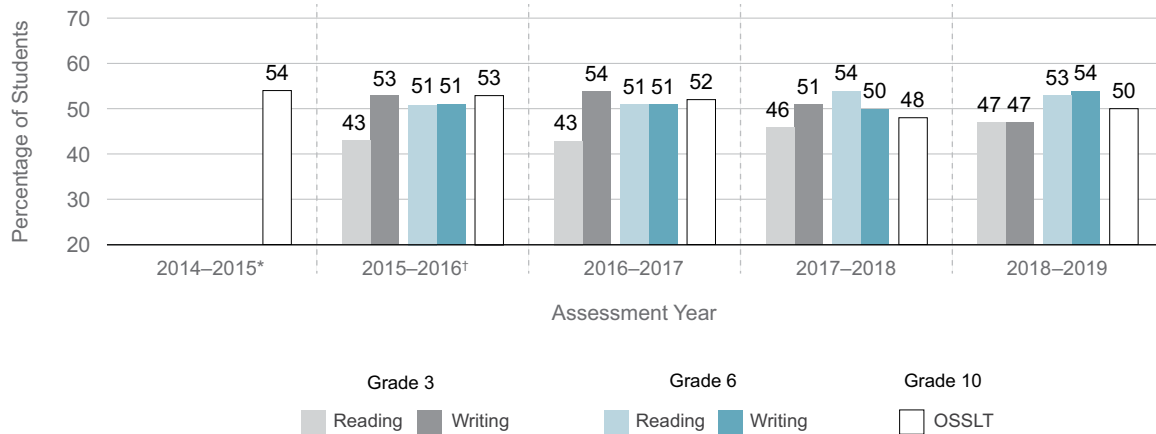
- Of the 134 168 students who were eligible to participate in the OSSLT for the first time, 124 251 (93%) participated fully.
- There were 97 228 participating students enrolled in the academic course and 22 437 participating students enrolled in the applied course who wrote the test for the first time in the 2018–2019 school year.

Percentage of Fully Participating First-Time Eligible Students Who Were Successful



Grades 3, 6 and 10: Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)

- During the 2018–2019 school year, there were 24 362 students with special education needs enrolled in Grade 3 and 29 692 students with special education needs enrolled in Grade 6.
- In the 2018–2019 school year, there were 22 322 students with special education needs who wrote the OSSLT for the first time.
- The following bar graphs show, for a five-year period, the percentages of students with special education needs who met the provincial reading and writing standards for the primary- and junior-division assessments or who were successful on the OSSLT.



* Provincial-level results for the English-language school system are not available for 2015. Due to labour disruptions, a significant proportion of schools did not participate in the provincial assessments that school year.

† In 2016, elementary schools in the Toronto Catholic District School Board and secondary schools in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board did not participate in the assessments, due to labour issues.

DATA OBSERVATIONS

Taking into account EQAO results and insights about learners in Ontario, we note some trends in literacy achievement that may benefit from further inquiry.

- For several years, EQAO has highlighted the achievement gap between students in academic and students in applied courses, and noted that students who had low achievement in Grade 6 are more likely to be successful on the OSSLT if they enroll in the academic English course.
- The fact that reading and writing achievement trends in Grade 6 are consistently higher than those in Grade 3 may be a reflection of students' developmental growth.
- The persistent discrepancy in achievement between students with special education needs and those without requires attention.

Please visit www.eqao.com for more information.

About EQAO

EQAO's tests measure student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to *Ontario Curriculum* expectations. The resulting data provide accountability and a gauge of quality in Ontario's publicly funded education system. By providing this important evidence about learning, EQAO acts as a catalyst for increasing the success of Ontario students.

The objective and reliable results from EQAO's tests complement the information obtained from classroom and other assessments to provide students, parents, teachers and administrators with a clear and comprehensive picture of student achievement and a basis for targeted improvement planning at the individual, school, school board and provincial levels. EQAO helps build capacity for the appropriate use of data by providing resources that educators, parents, policy-makers and others in the education community can use to improve learning and teaching. EQAO distributes an individual report to each student who writes a test, and posts school, school board and provincial results on its website.

Education Quality and
Accountability Office



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