



GUIDE to EQAO Assessments in Secondary School

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

Ontario students write province-wide assessments of their reading, writing and math skills at key stages in their education:

Grade 3 reading, writing and math, assessed at the end of the primary division

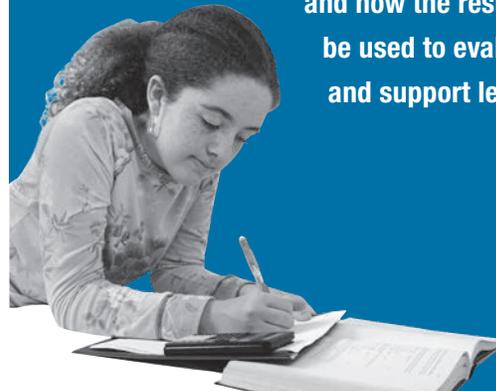
Grade 6 reading, writing and math, assessed at the end of the junior division

Grade 9 math, assessed in the first year of secondary school

Grade 10 literacy, assessed as a graduation requirement

The assessments are administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), an independent agency of the Ministry of Education.

This brochure will help you understand the two EQAO assessments Ontario students write in secondary school and how the results can be used to evaluate and support learning.



What is on the EQAO assessments?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

This assessment evaluates the math skills students are expected to have learned by the end of Grade 9. Different versions of the assessment are administered in the academic and the applied math courses.

OSSLT

This assessment evaluates the literacy skills students are expected to have learned across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9.

Each question on every EQAO assessment is based directly on *The Ontario Curriculum*, which is what students are learning in classrooms every day.

When do the assessments take place?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Students in first-semester math courses write the assessment during a two-week period in January; students in second-semester or full-year courses write the assessment during a two-week period in late May and early June. Each school determines its own assessment dates during the assessment period.

OSSLT

Each year, all students across Ontario write the OSSLT on the same date, usually in late March or early April.

Do students have to study for the assessments?

No. Since EQAO assessments are based entirely on *The Ontario Curriculum*, they should not require special preparation. Students can use the examples of the assessment materials released at www.eqao.com to become familiar with the format of the provincial assessments and the types of questions that will be asked.

Do all students have to take the EQAO assessments?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

All students working toward their academic or applied Grade 9 math credit are required to take this assessment.

OSSLT

All students working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) must take this assessment.

Successful completion of the OSSLT is the primary way to satisfy the literacy requirement for the OSSD. Students may write the OSSLT more than once. Students who are unsuccessful on the OSSLT may be eligible to take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) in order to satisfy this graduation requirement.

Students with special education needs are permitted some accommodations that are consistent with their regular classroom assessment practices. Special provisions may also be permitted for English language learners.



When and how are EQAO results released?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Results are released in September of the next school year.

OSSLT

Results are released in June of the same school year.

Students will receive EQAO's Individual Student Report directly from their school.

Schools and school boards receive detailed reports about their students' achievement to help inform their improvement planning. Overall school- and board-level results are available to the public on EQAO's Web site.

How are EQAO results reported?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Achievement is reported according to the province's four achievement levels. These are the same levels teachers use in the classroom and on report cards to report student achievement. The provincial standard is Level 3, which corresponds to achievement in the 70 to 79 percent range. Students meeting or exceeding the standard (i.e., achieving Level 3 or 4) on the assessment have demonstrated most or all of the math knowledge and skills expected at the current stage of their education.

OSSLT

The OSSLT is a minimum-competency assessment. Achievement is therefore reported as "successful" or "unsuccessful." Students who are successful have demonstrated the minimum level of literacy that is expected by the end of Grade 9.

Do EQAO results count toward students' grades?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

This assessment can count for up to 30% of students' final course marks. Schools and/or school boards decide whether to count the provincial assessment and for how much.

OSSLT

The results do not count toward students' grades, but successful completion of the OSSLT, or the alternative literacy course, is a requirement for a graduation diploma.

Why are EQAO assessment results important?

Students need to master fundamental literacy and numeracy skills before the end of high school, and the provincial assessments remove all subjectivity from evaluating whether they have. The assessments take place early enough in students' secondary schooling that more support can be provided to those who don't meet the minimum literacy level or the provincial math standard. EQAO results can inform improvement planning by helping to identify areas of learning that may need more attention.

EQAO results are also important because they are the only publicly available evidence of achievement that is comparable for all students across the province.

How should EQAO assessment results be used?

EQAO assessment results should be reviewed alongside students' daily classroom work and other assessment information to gauge student learning and determine where more support may be needed. For students who don't meet the provincial math standard or are unsuccessful on the OSSLT, it is particularly important for teachers and parents to discuss how to work together to close learning gaps and improve student achievement before the end of high school.

Why does Ontario conduct province-wide assessments?

Ontario conducts provincial assessments in order to

- inform the improvement of instructional programs and strategies to help all children succeed and
- strengthen the accountability of the public education system.

Visit www.eqao.com for more information.



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