



## Test Your Literacy Skills!

Trying the OSSLT yourself is the best way to see the literacy skills students are expected to acquire according to *The Ontario Curriculum*.

Below is a sample of multiple-choice questions from the 2009 OSSLT. The OSSLT also includes long and short writing tasks. To view some examples as well as sample student responses at different skill levels, go to [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

- 1** Choose the best opening sentence for the following paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_ . In 1999, at least six billion people lived on earth, and predictions indicate that another billion will be born by 2020. Scientists estimate that the world's population will increase to nine billion by 2054 and ten billion by the end of the 21st century. Humans need to find a way to sustain a booming population and continue to provide everyone with the necessary resources.

- A. Population growth is an increasing concern.
- B. People predict the world's population growth.
- C. There are enough resources on earth for everyone.
- D. Scientists believe that too many people live on earth.

- 2** Choose the sentence that correctly shows possession.

- A. There's land here.
- B. Their land is here.
- C. There is land here.
- D. They're landing here.

- 3** Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

- A. The mayor of Vancouver declared, The 2010 Winter Olympics will attract thousands of tourists.
- B. The mayor of Vancouver, declared "that the 2010 Winter Olympics would attract thousands of tourists."
- C. The mayor of Vancouver declared that "the 2010 Winter Olympics," would attract thousands of tourists.
- D. The mayor of Vancouver declared, "The 2010 Winter Olympics will attract thousands of tourists."

- 4** Which sentence does NOT belong in the paragraph?

(1) Extracurricular activities can be an important part of school life. (2) Joining clubs can help students make friends and develop their skills and interests. (3) Good sportsmanship can be developed on school teams. (4) Learning skills are usually emphasized in school courses. (5) Students who participate in extracurricular activities enjoy many benefits.

- A. Sentence 2
- B. Sentence 3
- C. Sentence 4
- D. Sentence 5

- 5** In which sentence of the following paragraph does the verb need to change to make the sentence correct?

(1) Darren went to the store and bought a loaf of bread. (2) On his way home, he runs into his best friend. (3) He forgot he had to take the bread home. (4) Instead, he played games with his friend until dinnertime. (5) When he finally got home, his mother was very annoyed with him.

- A. Sentence 1
- B. Sentence 2
- C. Sentence 3
- D. Sentence 5

Answer Key: 1: A; 2: B; 3: D; 4: C; 5: B

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

### Who ate pasta first?

The October 2005 issue of *Nature* magazine reported that archaeologists found a 4000-year-old bowl of noodles at a site in western China. This discovery may be proof that China invented pasta. 1

“These are definitely the earliest noodles ever found,” said Houyuan Lu, a researcher in Beijing who studied the ingredients of the perfectly preserved pasta. 2

The fist-sized clump of noodles was found inside an overturned bowl, which had protected the noodles from three metres of sediment. The delicate yellow noodle dough had been made from a local variety of millet instead of the usual wheat or rice grains. The dough had been pulled into 50-centimetre-long strands before being boiled. Archaeologists think that the noodles were buried during a flood that wiped out the Qijia culture in the late neolithic era. 3

Are noodles another Chinese invention along with paper and gunpowder? This has been a hotly debated question. Some historians say the 13th century Italian explorer Marco Polo brought noodles from China back to his homeland. Another historical interpretation is that Italians had noodles before that time. Prior to the recent archaeological discovery, researchers only had information from written documents, personal accounts and menus: they had not been able to find any actual food to prove either hypothesis. This discovery may support the theory that noodles were first eaten in China. 4

The people who live where the ancient noodles were found still eat millet noodles today. 5

Adapted from “China finds Neolithic noodle dish,” published in the *Toronto Star*, October 13, 2005, Associated Press. Used with permission of the Associated Press. Copyright © 2005. All rights reserved.

**1** A “hotly debated question” (paragraph 4) is a question that is

- A. easy to answer.
- B. rarely considered.
- C. boring to think about.
- D. passionately argued about.

**2** Why is Marco Polo mentioned in this news report?

- A. He is credited with inventing pasta.
- B. He visited China in the 13th century.
- C. He claimed the Italians invented pasta.
- D. He brought noodles from Italy to China.

**3** The information in paragraph 4 is organized to

- A. compare and contrast ideas.
- B. describe the steps in a process.
- C. present events in chronological order.
- D. provide details in order of importance.

**4** What evidence do researchers consider most convincing in answering the question of the origin of noodles?

- A. ancient menus
- B. personal accounts
- C. preserved food
- D. written documents

**5** The archeologists described in this selection

- A. wrote a news report.
- B. dug up an ancient object.
- C. restored a prehistoric site.
- D. discovered ways to preserve food.

Answer Key: 1: D; 2: B; 3: A; 4: C; 5: B

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