



Guide for Parents

MINISTERIAL EXAMINATION

English Language Arts

Secondary V

Reading 612-520

Production 612-530

December 2024

The *Charter of the French language* and its regulations govern the [consultation of English-language content](#).

Coordination and content

Direction de l'évaluation des apprentissages

Direction générale de la formation générale des jeunes

Direction générale principale de la pédagogie et des services à l'enseignement

Secteur de la réussite éducative et de la main-d'œuvre

This document is also available in French.

Title of French document:

Guide à l'intention des parents – Épreuve ministérielle

Anglais, langue d'enseignement – 5^e année du secondaire

612-520 et 612-530

English version

Services linguistiques en anglais

Direction du soutien au réseau éducatif anglophone

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Ministère de l'Éducation

ISSN 2818-9566 (PDF)

(French version: ISSN 2818-9558)

Legal Deposit – Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2024

24-170-09A

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to inform parents about the Secondary V ministerial examination in English Language Arts. It presents the structure of the exam and the administration procedures, as well as sample documents from a past exam.

The [Information Document](#) is also a recommended resource. It provides complementary information as well as the most recent version of the rubrics.

SECTION 1 MINISTERIAL EXAMINATIONS

NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EXAMINATIONS

The Secondary IV and V ministerial examinations are set by the Minister of Education for the certification of studies and for awarding the Secondary School Diploma. Every year, the Ministère organizes three exam sessions for these examinations: one in December/January, one in May/June and one in August.

Each ministerial examination is designed to evaluate the learning set out in the [Québec Education Program](#) and is based on the [Framework for the Evaluation of Learning](#) and the [Progression of Learning](#).

As everyone enrolled in any given exam session must write the same examination, the dates and times indicated in the [official examination schedule](#) must be respected. Only the Minister may authorize changes to the set schedule.

CONDITIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE EXAMINATIONS

Educational institutions are the main entities responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the exams to take place (e.g. providing examination rooms), regardless of the education model (teaching provided at school or homeschooling).

To ensure equity and justice, the exam conditions must be the same for all candidates in Québec who write the exams. For this reason, the individuals designated to administer the examinations are given precise instructions to follow.

During an examination, it is forbidden for anyone to help the candidates in any way whatsoever by, for example, clarifying the task, providing additional information, explaining or translating words or expressions, or reformulating instructions. Examinations where a staff member has overstepped the boundaries of their role may be declared invalid by the Ministère.

Measures that adapt the conditions for administering ministerial examinations may be taken to enable candidates with specific needs to demonstrate their learning. In order to request special measures, please communicate with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination at the beginning of the school year or, in the context of homeschooling, when setting up the learning project. The educational institution will analyze the candidate's needs and determine which adaptive measures will be permitted, if any.

SECTION 2 OVERVIEW OF THE EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The format of the Secondary V English Language Arts ministerial examination has been revised. The examination now takes place over the course of two days rather than three, *REACT* magazine has been shortened and renamed *The REACT File*, small group discussion has been removed, and the Written Production task and the related rubric have changed.

EVALUATION OF COMPETENCIES

The Secondary V English Language Arts examination is designed to evaluate the following competencies:

- Competency 2, *Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts*
- Competency 3, *Produces texts for personal and social purposes*

SUMMARY OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination takes place in an exam room at two specific times, as set out in the [official examination schedule](#).

The examination takes place in the following order:

Part	Steps
DAY 1 – Part I: Response to a Literary Text (2.5-hour block)	• Reading a literary text, making notes and organizing ideas (1 h) • Writing a response to a literary text (1 h 30 min) Approximately 500-700 words
DAY 1 – Part II: Reading for Stance (30-minute block)	• Reading <i>The REACT File</i>, making notes and organizing ideas as preparation for the Written Production (30 minutes)
DAY 2 – Part III: Written Production (3-hour block)	• Writing the draft of the Written Production (1 h 20 min) • Writing the final version of the Written Production (1 h 40 min) Approximately 600-800 words

AUTHORIZED AND UNAUTHORIZED MATERIALS

Authorized materials

Only print versions of the materials listed below may be brought to the examination and used.

- Standard English dictionary
- Bilingual dictionary (English and another language)
- Thesaurus

Candidates may bring their own reference materials or use those provided by the educational institution. Those who bring their own reference materials will not be permitted to share them with others.

Unauthorized materials

The following materials are not authorized.

- All homemade documents (class notes, grammar book prepared by the school or at home, etc.)
- All digital tools (electronic dictionaries, word-processing software, etc.), unless their use has been planned in conjunction with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination¹

Candidates are also strictly forbidden to have **in their possession** any digital device (smartphone, wireless headphones or earbuds, smartwatch, etc.) that can be used to communicate, access the Internet, translate text, or create, save or consult data.

SECTION 3 STEPS IN THE EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

PART I: RESPONSE TO A LITERARY TEXT

Writing the examination

Upon arrival in the examination room, each candidate receives a copy of *Student Booklet I – Response to a Literary Text*. Candidates have 2.5 consecutive hours to read the literary text in the booklet, reflect on it and respond to it, in a critical manner. Candidates are expected to move beyond their initial understanding of the text toward a more thoughtful and perceptive interpretation of it.

Candidates read the literary text silently and independently. They may make notes while reading the text and are encouraged to read the text more than once. Before writing the response, candidates may organize their ideas.

¹ The use of certain digital tools (electronic dictionaries, word-processing software, etc.) could be authorized under certain conditions but must be planned in conjunction with the educational institution responsible for administering the examination at the start of the school year or, in the case of homeschooling, when the learning project is implemented.

Working independently, candidates will write a response of approximately 500 to 700 words to the literary text. The numbers indicated serve as a guideline only; a word count will not be taken.

As stated in the [Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations](#), candidates are permitted an extra 10 minutes to complete Part I – *Response to a Literary Text*, an extra 5 minutes to complete Part II – *Reading for Stance* and an extra 15 minutes to complete Part III – *Written Production*.

At the end of the task, candidates must return their booklet to the examiner before leaving the examination room.

Excerpts from a Response to a Literary Text task are presented on pages 6 and 7.

No candidates may leave the examination room before at least half the time allotted for the exam has elapsed. Any candidate who has a good reason to leave the examination room must be accompanied by an authorized person designated by the educational institution. This rule applies to all three parts of the exam.

Marking

The corrector will mark the response using the rubric provided by the Ministère. This rubric can be found in Appendix I.

PART II: READING FOR STANCE

The second part of the examination, which lasts 30 minutes, is compulsory but is not evaluated. It is used to prepare for the written production the next day.

Upon arrival in the examination room, each candidate is given a copy of *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance* and *The REACT File*.

Candidates first read the information about the task and the instructions provided in the booklet.

Next, candidates are required to read *The REACT File*, a five-page collection of texts that explores a topic. These resource materials offer different viewpoints, opinions and information on a topic. The content of the texts helps candidates develop a stance or position in light of the guiding topic.

In *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance*, they may make notes while reading the texts. Candidates may also organize their ideas as preparation for writing an expository text that takes a position in Part III of the examination.

At the end of the task, candidates must return their booklet and *The REACT File* to the examiner before leaving the examination room.

Excerpts from a Reading for Stance task, *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance* and *The REACT File*, are presented on pages 8-10.

PART III: WRITTEN PRODUCTION

Writing the examination

In the third and final part of the examination, which lasts 3 consecutive hours, candidates work independently to write an expository text that takes a position. The text should be approximately 600 to 800 words and be suitable for inclusion in *The REACT File*. The number of words indicated serves as a guideline only; a word count will not be taken. Candidates may select from the following genres but are not limited to this list: argumentative essay, commentary article, open letter, opinion article, persuasive essay or persuasive speech. See p. 13 for the definition of the expository text types. The expository text will address a guiding topic related to the content explored in *The REACT File*. A clear stance or position must be developed while addressing the audience. Codes and conventions of writing an authentic expository text must also be considered. **Candidates may not write fiction or non-prose texts such as poetry.**

Upon arrival in the examination room, candidates are given three exam booklets:

- their copy of *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance*
- their copy of *The REACT File*
- a copy of *Student Booklet III – Written Production*

First, candidates read the information about the writing task provided in *Student Booklet III – Written Production*. Next, they review the notes they made in *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance*, and write the first draft of their expository text that takes a position in this booklet.

Using *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance*, and working independently, candidates will refer to the *Suggestions for Revision of the Written Production* (see p. 12) in order to determine the extent of the revision needed to improve their draft of the written production. They will then proceed to revise and edit their work in order to write a final version of the expository text that takes a position. Candidates will then produce the final version of their expository text that takes a position in *Student Booklet III – Written Production*.

At the end of the task, candidates must return their booklets and *The REACT File* to the examiner before leaving the examination room.

Excerpts from a Written Production task are presented on pages 11 and 12.

Marking

The corrector will mark the written production using the rubric provided by the Ministère. This rubric can be found in Appendix II.

SECTION 4 EXCERPTS FROM A MINISTERIAL EXAMINATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EXCERPTS FROM A RESPONSE TO A LITERARY TEXT TASK

Task and Instructions

Task:

A response is a single-draft piece of writing which reflects your, the reader's, critical thinking about a text. In your response, you move beyond your initial understanding of a text toward a more thoughtful and perceptive interpretation of it.

Read the short story "Scars" by Don Aker. As you read, consider the topics and possible meanings suggested in the text and make notes. After you have read and made notes, you may organize your ideas in preparation for writing your response.

Respond to the text "Scars." In your response, interpret the text to demonstrate your understanding. Do not summarize or retell the story. Refer to the *Rubric for Scoring a Response to a Literary Text* (pp. 18-19).

Time Allotted:

- **Reading:** 1 h
As you read, think about the story and the possible meanings suggested in the text, make notes and organize your ideas on **pp. 6-8**. You may also annotate the story.
- **Written Response:** 1 h 30 min
Please write your response on **pp. 9-17**. It must be double-spaced (written on every second line).

Length: approximately 500 to 700 words

Rubric: The rubric on **pp. 18-19** indicates how your work will be scored. Refer to the rubric as you work.

Excerpt from a literary text

Scars

Short Story by Don Aker

On this particular day, he was dismantling an ancient VW Kombi van in the field behind our house. The August air lay on us like a quilt, and I watched my father's green work shirt grow black with sweat as the axe pistoned up and down. I longed to slip away to the river for a swim, but I knew my father. We would stop when the job was finished.

I looked at the growing pile of scrap metal and felt resentment work its way up my neck in hot waves. I hated being there. Not just because it was a Saturday and it was August, but because the work was a constant reminder of my brother's absence. My brother, who could make kites out of bread bags, who could build a raft out of poplar saplings and twine, who could fix the radio my father had given him, and who could die in four months from a disease I still couldn't spell.

I hated being there.

"Daniel!"

I turned to see my father staring at me.

"What?"

"I need the pinch bar."

I reached toward the tools spread on the grass.

"Not the cat's paw. The pinch bar!" . . .

Source: Aker, Don. "Scars." *Nelson English 10*. Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd. 2013. 23-29. Print.

EXCERPTS FROM A READING FOR STANCE TASK

Task and instructions

Task:

In Part II of the examination, you will read the print texts in *The REACT File*. These texts contain a variety of perspectives and information on the topic of **Relationships**. After you read the file, you will organize your ideas from your reading in preparation for writing an expository text that takes a position. Your text should be suitable for inclusion in *The REACT File*. **You may not write fiction or non-prose texts such as poetry.** Your focus is on the topic of **Relationships**.

Time Allotted:

Read *The REACT File*, make notes (pp. 1-2) and organize your ideas (pp. 3-5): 30 min

Task: You will focus on the topic of **Relationships**.

Example of a quote from *The REACT File*

“Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it forgoes revenge and dares to forgive an injury.”

- E. H. Chapin
(pastor and poet)

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Example of a profile from *The REACT File*



Sibling Rivalry?

Pernell Karl, Malcolm-Jamaal Justin and Jordan-Carmichael Subban are three famous brothers in the hockey world. Three elite athletes: how competitive can life in the Subban household have been? Oddly enough, now that they are fierce opponents, none of the three seems to have suffered at all from sibling rivalry.



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All three brothers played for the same junior team, the Belleville Bulls. Each of them was drafted to the NHL. Malcolm is a goaltender in the Boston Bruins organization, Jordan is a defenseman for the Vancouver Canucks and P.K. is a star defenseman for the Montreal Canadiens.

Even though they shared the same interests as they grew up, they have quite different personalities, and this is partly what explains their lack of antagonism toward one another. Jordan is described as very serious with the “better moves,” Malcolm as quiet and high-achieving, and P.K. as flamboyant, brash and very intense.

Three hockey players, three personalities, three brothers: learning from one another while focusing on their own progress, each one happy for the others’ successes.

Neighbors

BY DAVID ALLAN EVANS

They live alone
together,

she with her wide hind
and bird face,
he with his hung belly
and crewcut.

They never talk
but keep busy.

Today they are
washing windows
(each window together)
she on the inside
he on the outside.
He squirts Windex
at her face:
she squirts Windex
at his face.

Now they are waving
to each other
with rags.

not smiling.

Allan Evans, David. "Neighbors." *Inside Poetry*.
Don Mills, Ontario: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
Canada. 1987. 79-80. Print.

EXCERPTS FROM A WRITTEN PRODUCTION TASK

Task and instructions

Task:

In Part III of the examination, you will write a draft and a final version of an expository text that takes a position. Your text should be suitable for inclusion in *The REACT File*. You may select from the following genres but are not limited to this list: argumentative essay, commentary article, open letter, opinion article, persuasive essay, or persuasive speech. **You may not write fiction or non-prose texts such as poetry.** The expository text must reflect a focused position or stance that addresses the writing task below and respect the codes and conventions of expository writing.

Refer to the *Suggestions for Revision of the Written Production* (p. 13) and the *Rubric for Scoring an Expository Text* (p. 14) in *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance*. Create a draft version of your expository text that takes a position in *Student Booklet II*. Consider possible revisions to your draft that you could make before writing the final version of your expository text that takes a position. Write the final version in *Student Booklet III – Written Production*. Your final version must be double-spaced (written on every second line).

Time Allotted:

- **Draft and revision of the written production (*Student Booklet II* pp. 6-12):**
1 h 20 min
Use the *Suggestions for Revision of the Written Production* on p. 13 and the rubric on p. 14 of *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance* to prepare the final version of your expository text that takes a position.
- **Final version of the written production (*Student Booklet III* pp. 2-10):**
1 h 40 min

Length: approximately 600 to 800 words

Rubric: The rubric on p. 14 of *Student Booklet II – Reading for Stance* indicates how your work will be scored. Refer to the rubric as you work.

Writing Task:

Write an expository text that takes a position on the topic of **Relationships**.

Revision sheet

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISION OF THE WRITTEN PRODUCTION

The revision process is a crucial step in the development of your writing. It allows you, the writer, an opportunity to improve your writing by making changes to your work that will clarify your purpose and satisfy your intended audience. Refer to the questions below as you consider possible revisions to your expository text that takes a position. Please note that revision means more than correcting spelling and improving handwriting.

Questions to assist in the revision of the content (ideas, information, point of view, organization, purpose):

- Did I choose a topic related to the theme? What genre of expository text did I choose to highlight my topic?
- What is the purpose of my expository text? Is it clear?
- What is my specific position on my topic? Is it clear to my audience?
- Who is my audience? How did I develop my position for my audience? Are my ideas/arguments convincing?
- How did I organize my ideas/arguments?
- Have I respected the codes and conventions of my chosen genre of expository writing?
- How did I use techniques and word choice to convince my audience of my position?
- Did I use language conventions (grammar, punctuation and spelling) that effectively convey my ideas?

Expository Text Types

In order to complete the Written Production task, candidates may select a type of expository writing that takes a position. They may choose to blend elements of different genres, as well. They may not write fiction or non-prose texts such as poetry.

Candidates may select from the following genres but are not limited to this list:

- An **argumentative essay** uses logic, reason, and facts in its arguments to convince the audience of a certain position. It acknowledges opposing views/arguments for the purpose of refuting them. An argumentative essay also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of essay writing.
- A **commentary article** uses an expert's voice to persuade the audience of a thought-provoking position. It might challenge the status quo or take a different angle on a current issue. It also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of article writing.
- An **open letter** uses facts, examples, and rhetorical strategies to convince the audience of a certain position. It also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of open letter writing.
- An **opinion article** uses opinions and emotions to convince the audience of a certain position. It also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of article writing.
- A **persuasive essay** uses opinions and emotions in its arguments to convince the audience of a certain point of view. It also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of essay writing.
- A **persuasive speech** uses rhetorical strategies to convince the audience to adopt a certain point of view or to take action. It also adheres to the specific codes and conventions of speech writing.

APPENDIX I RUBRIC FOR SCORING A RESPONSE TO A LITERARY TEXT

		LEVEL 5 – ADVANCED			LEVEL 4 – THOROUGH			LEVEL 3 – ACCEPTABLE		
Profile		The reader demonstrates an extensive understanding of the text through insightful interpretations, discerning inferences and compelling explanations of ideas, with well-defined references to the text.			The reader demonstrates a solid understanding of the text through thorough interpretations, relevant inferences and comprehensive explanations of ideas, with pertinent references to the text.			The reader demonstrates an adequate understanding of the text through straightforward interpretations, commonplace inferences and acceptable explanations of ideas, with general references to the text.		
		(The student response does not need to satisfy all the criteria.)								
Indicators that support the profile		The reader draws in-depth meaning from the text through perceptive interpretations that go beyond the text and illuminate other familiar life circumstances or contexts. They link their own personal reactions to specific aspects of the text by elaborating on how those aspects shape their own understanding of the text. They form a well-reasoned opinion about the overall impact of the text. The reader evaluates/critiques the impact of codes and conventions on the meaning of the text. They make significant associations between the text and other issues, events and/or texts.			The reader draws detailed meaning from the text through thoughtful interpretations based on ideas developed in the text. They link their own personal reactions to specific aspects of the text by describing their effect on their own understanding of the text. They form a sound opinion about the overall impact of the text. The reader discusses the impact of codes and conventions on the meaning of the text. They make convincing associations between the text and other issues, events and/or texts.			The reader draws general meaning from the text through basic interpretations linked to ideas within the text. They link their own personal reactions to specific aspects of the text by referring to their effect on their own understanding of the text. They form a sensible opinion about the overall impact of the text. The reader identifies codes and conventions and hints at their impact on the meaning of the text. They make obvious associations between the text and other issues, events and/or texts.		
		5+55-			4+44-			3+33-		
Score		100%95%90%			85%80%75%			70%65%60%		

RUBRIC FOR SCORING A RESPONSE TO A LITERARY TEXT (CONT.)

LEVEL 2 – PARTIAL		LEVEL 1 – MINIMAL
Profile	The reader demonstrates a limited understanding of the text through unsubstantiated interpretations and little explanation of ideas, with vague references to the text.	The reader demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the text based on irrelevant interpretations that are not supported with references to the text.
	(The student response does not need to satisfy all the criteria.)	
Indicators that support the profile	The reader's understanding of the meaning of the text is undeveloped and their interpretations consist mainly in retelling or summarizing the text. Their personal reactions are unexplored. Their opinion is unclear and unsupported. The reader mentions the codes and conventions of the text and shows little awareness of their impact on meaning. They make vague associations between the text and other issues, events and/or texts.	The reader's interpretation of the text is inaccurate and unfocused. Their opinion is confusing or missing. The reader makes little or no reference to the codes and conventions of the text. They make unrelated associations, if any, between the text and other issues, events and/or texts.
Score	2+	1
	55%	35%

APPENDIX II RUBRIC FOR SCORING AN EXPOSITORY TEXT

CRITERIA	ADVANCED			THOROUGH			SATISFACTORY			LIMITED		
SNAPSHOT	The writing skillfully accomplishes its purpose through crafted language, organization and use of codes and conventions. Ideas are complex and insightful.			The writing fulfills its purpose with an overall sense of control through its use of language, organization and codes and conventions. Ideas are clear.			The writing addresses its purpose inconsistently through basic control of language, organization and use of codes and conventions. Ideas are relevant but general.			The writing addresses its purpose inadequately through minimal control of language, organization and use of codes and conventions. Ideas are underdeveloped or undeveloped.		
	The writer:			The writer:			The writer:			The writer:		
Audience and Purpose	Chooses an insightful topic			Chooses a thoughtful topic			Chooses a relevant topic			Chooses a simplistic or unrelated topic		
	Demonstrates a tightly focused position			Demonstrates a clear position			Demonstrates a vague or inconsistent position			Demonstrates little or no position		
	Develops ideas with complexity and appeal			Develops clear and logical ideas			Demonstrates clear ideas but may be inconsistent			Demonstrates little or no development of ideas		
	Crafts and sustains an effective voice and tone, may use humour, irony or satire			Creates a convincing voice and tone			Creates identifiable voice and tone but may be inconsistent			Demonstrates little or no awareness of voice and tone		
	Engages the audience			Demonstrates awareness of audience			Demonstrates inconsistent awareness of audience			Demonstrates little or no awareness of audience		
Writer's Craft	Selects codes and conventions intentionally to craft an authentic text			Uses codes and conventions effectively to structure a text			Uses codes and conventions that are evident but rudimentary			Uses codes and conventions with little control, or ineffectively		
	Implements a variety of simple and complex techniques for effect			Uses a variety of techniques; may attempt complex techniques			Attempts to use a variety of techniques			Uses techniques minimally or ineffectively		
	Manipulates language and word choice for impact			Uses varied appropriate word choice			Uses adequate word choice			Uses ineffective word choice		
	Uses varied sentence structures to create specific effects			Uses varied sentence structures to make the writing easy to read			Attempts to use a variety of sentence structures			Uses ineffective sentence structures		
Organization of Ideas	Sequences ideas in a purposeful manner			Sequences ideas in an organized manner			Sequences ideas but flow may falter at times			Uses sequencing that is confusing or not evident		
	Creates continuity and unity with well-chosen transitions			Uses transitions to establish continuity			Uses transitions that are not always effective			Demonstrates inappropriate or no use of transitions		
	Develops paragraphs effectively with purpose and intent			Develops paragraphs effectively			Attempts to develop paragraphs			Uses paragraphs that are confusing or not evident		
Language Conventions	Uses language conventions to enhance ideas through deliberate and skillful use of grammar, punctuation and spelling			Uses language conventions to convey ideas through appropriate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling						Uses language conventions that interfere with ideas due to unsatisfactory use of grammar, punctuation and spelling		
Level Score	5+	5	5-	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-	2	1	
	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	35%	

