

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROTOTYPE EXAMINATION

ENGLISH, LANGUAGE ARTS

End of Secondary Two

632-212

2008

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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	FORMING JUDGMENT OF LEVELS OF COMPETENCIES ATTAINED BY STUDENTS	1
2.1	Procedures for Forming a Judgment for the End of Year Competency Report	1
3	OVERVIEW OF THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION (LES)	2
4	GENERAL NATURE OF THE LES	2
4.1	Content.....	2
4.2	Learning Principles Incorporated Into the Learning and Evaluation Situation	3
4.3	Evaluation Principles Incorporated Into the Learning and Evaluation Situation.....	3
4.4	Rubrics.....	3
5	ASSESSMENT MATERIALS	3
6	THE COMPONENTS OF THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION	4
6.1	Overview	4
6.2	Content.....	4
6.3	Reading and Response to Multigenre Texts	4
6.4	Writing for Purpose and Audience	4
6.5	Use of Language to Communication and to Learn	4
6.6	Use of the Cross-Curricular Competencies and Global Judgment	4
7	ADMINISTERING THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION	5
8	SCORING THE ASSESSMENT	5
8.1	Procedures.....	5

1 INTRODUCTION

This Information Document summarizes directives concerning the end of Secondary Cycle One English Language Arts prototype Learning and Evaluation Situation (LES), scheduled for administration between April and June 2008. It is important that this document be reproduced and forwarded as quickly as possible to teachers, and others responsible for evaluation at the secondary level.

Please note that the use of the prototype is optional, and that school boards are not obliged to administer it. If administered, school boards may elect to use some or all of the activities as they see fit. However, it is suggested that the LES be administered as described in the *Teacher's Guide* for maximum benefit and validity. Suggested time for administration is indicated in this document.

If schools or school boards elect to administer this prototype LES, please note that the results should **not serve as the only source** for assessment of students' competency development for the end-of-cycle competency report. This report relies upon teacher judgment drawn from evidence gathered from a sufficient number of work samples of complex tasks administered throughout the school year. Therefore information on student performances acquired by means of this LES is combined with year-long and/or cycle performances in order to determine the levels of competency attained. The levels of competency are determined with reference to the *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One*.

All the materials for the June 2008 Learning and Evaluation Situation prototype will be deposited on the Web site in May 2008. An access code will be forwarded to those responsible for the reproduction and distribution of exams in each school board by May 2008.

2 FORMING JUDGMENT OF LEVELS OF COMPETENCIES ATTAINED BY STUDENTS

At the end of cycle, teachers are required to judge the levels of competencies reached by students by referring to the *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One*. Information gathered by means of ongoing assessment of complex tasks throughout the year and/or cycle supports this judgment.

2.1 Procedures for Forming a Judgment for the End of Year Competency Report

- Analyze the data collected on each student for each competency to reach a preliminary judgment before administering the prototype. The data should include samples of work collected over the school year and/or cycle. The preliminary judgment is formed with reference to the *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One*. Generally speaking, the most recently collected data provides the most pertinent information regarding the level of competency reached by the end of the year or cycle. Therefore, the scores attained on the prototype in June **should not be the only source** of information about each student's level of competency.
- Towards the end of the school year, administer the LES prototype.
- Compare the results gathered from samples collected during the year or cycle and those gathered at the end of the year, including those from the prototype. The information acquired from both sources is then consolidated into a final judgment. Should there be a great difference between the results from the prototype as compared to those collected over the year or cycle, do not include the results from the prototype in the final judgment.
- Finally, refer to the *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One* to determine the final judgment.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION (LES)

In co-operation with teachers and consultants in the province, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) designs quality instruments in language assessment. These instruments provide insights into assessment approaches that are of proven validity. Furthermore, they provide opportunities for professional development in evaluation strategies by scoring student work according to specified criteria. The goal is to analyze and describe the performance of students in English schools in Québec at the end of Secondary Cycle One. Teachers may include the evidence from this assessment in conjunction with students' year-long performances to form judgments about the levels of competency attained by the end of the cycle for the end-of-cycle report.

The June 2008 LES offers core activities that target key language competencies. It is useful to recall at this time that features incorporated into this LES have been determined through direct and ongoing consultation with English Language Arts teachers and consultants throughout the province. Feedback that was received following the 2007 Secondary Cycle One prototype LES has also been given consideration.

While evaluation at the end of cycle calls for the use of an Evaluation Situation (ES), this assessment tool developed for the prototype examination resembles more a Learning and Evaluation Situation (LES). This is because it is necessary for both teachers and students to become familiar with LES formats before turning attention to evaluation situations. Therefore, this assessment tool will serve as a model with which teachers can initiate alternative learning and evaluation processes in their classrooms.

4 GENERAL NATURE OF THE LES

The 2008 LES offers a number of core activities that target key language abilities as described in the Québec Education Program (QEP). For students with special needs, all activities can be adapted or modified and incorporated into the students' existing evaluation procedures as described in her/his current and up-dated Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Modifications and/or adaptations must follow those that are already in place and that are applied for instruction during the current school year.

4.1 Content

The activities are designed in such a way that they yield information on the following:

- Reading/viewing and listening to literary, popular and information-based texts, followed by response
- Writing self-expressive, narrative or information-based texts for a specific purpose and audience
- Using language conventions
- Using talk to communicate and to learn
- Using cross-curricular competencies

The LES reflects practices consistent with the following documents: *Québec Education Program*; *Evaluation Framework*; and *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One*. As well, the LES offers guidance to teachers who seek to inform themselves about the effectiveness of their classroom practices. All activities are authentic in that they give students opportunity to purposefully use language in real situations.

4.2 Learning Principles Incorporated Into the Learning and Evaluation Situation

These principles include the following:

- Integrated use of all the language processes (listening, responding, communicating)
- Time for students to work through a task in more than one session
- Peer interaction to explore ideas and to seek feedback

4.3 Evaluation Principles Incorporated Into the Learning and Evaluation Situation

These principles include the following:

- Providing students with precise information about what is expected of them
- Defining precisely what is valued or expected of the students in their work (performance criteria)
- Providing calibrated descriptive ranges of performance
- Providing students with scoring criteria in advance, along with examples of student work (exemplars for practice in applying the criteria)
- Ensuring that what is defined is measurable, and that what is measurable is consistent with curriculum
- Using multiple examples of student work when evaluating performance
- Establishing an evaluation centre where teachers examine and score student work by applying the performance criteria following procedures that ensure reliability of the scores. **Sufficient time should be allocated for evaluating students' work.**

4.4 Rubrics

The rubrics will describe five levels of performance to be consistent with the five levels of performance that make up the *Scales of Competency Levels, Secondary School Education, Cycle One*.

Whereas the performance criteria are elaborated using professional language intended for teachers, teachers will find that examining the exemplars with their students provides an ideal opportunity for helping students restate the criteria in a language that is more familiar to them. With time and frequent practice with exemplars, students will be able to develop rubrics for tasks collaboratively with their teachers.

5 ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

The assessment includes the following materials, which will be provided by the MELS:

- A video in DVD format
- Resource package(s) for students
- Student Booklet(s)
- Teacher Administration Guide
- A bibliography, and a list of supplementary resources, including Web sites

6 THE COMPONENTS OF THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION

6.1 Overview

The assessment will focus on the following language competencies: reading of written and/or visual texts; response to multigenre texts; writing for a particular purpose and audience; use of language conventions; using language to communicate and to learn; activating cross-curricular competencies. Five-point rubrics will be provided for scoring the tasks.

6.2 Content

Within the context of an essential question that focuses on an issue related to the environment, students will be given time to read, listen to and discuss ideas that are presented through the multigenre texts and the video. Throughout this process they will be building their knowledge and understanding about the essential question as they prepare for different complex tasks. The essential question will require students to exercise critical thinking and assume a viewpoint based on what they have seen, read, heard and discussed throughout the **LES**.

6.3 Reading and Response to Multigenre Texts

After several readings of the text(s) followed by discussion in both large and small groups, students will write their thoughts about and reactions to the issues and themes elaborated in the text(s). Performance criteria for response to literature will describe the levels of competency in reading that the student demonstrates in completing these tasks.

6.4 Writing for Purpose and Audience

Based on a variety of visual texts provided with the LES, students will take and defend a position on the issue presented through the essential question. Students must be given sufficient time during the examination to draft and revise their writing. Performance criteria for writing will describe the level of competency that the student demonstrates through the task(s), and will include criteria for the evaluation of use of language conventions.

6.5 Use of Language to Communicate and to Learn

Talk for communication and learning will be embedded throughout the LES. Students will not be required to give an oral presentation; however, they will participate in activities that feature talk for learning. Students will be asked to reflect on how the activity affected their learning and on the quality of their own participation.

6.6 Use of the Cross-Curricular Competencies and Global Judgment

The use of cross-curricular competencies will be integrated into the tasks. The rubrics provided will incorporate indicators related to the cross-curricular competencies addressed by the tasks.

7 ADMINISTERING THE LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION

Schools are responsible for administering the LES, following the guidelines stated in the *Teacher's Guide*. Please note that students read the assigned texts independently, **unless otherwise indicated** in the *Teacher's Guide*. All tasks are to be completed on school premises. This LES is officially scheduled to be administered between May and June, 2008. Generally, all the tasks should take approximately 7 hours in total. If necessary, more time may be allocated to revise writing. Teachers will need to designate a block of time during which they will administer the LES in a sustained, continuous procedure.

It should be noted that **sustained time** on tasks is required to allow students to engage in activities that call for critical thinking and problem solving—components characteristic of competency-based learning. As students require sustained time to contextualize and to become familiar with the tasks, as well as to undertake both group and independent activities, the required time to complete some individual tasks may take longer than others. Some classes may require more or less time to complete some tasks. Adjustments may be made according to the differing needs of groups; however, sufficient time must be allowed for students to sustain and complete tasks as described in the *Teacher's Guide*. As some tasks may take more than one hour to complete, such as composing and revising a narrative text, schools are asked to adjust schedules accordingly. Materials will be sent out to schools prior to the beginning date in April, to allow teachers to become familiar with the texts and procedures.

8 SCORING THE ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of student work is done locally in a marking centre, using the scoring criteria (rubrics) found in the *Teacher's Guide*. Teachers work collaboratively to select anchor papers drawn directly from the students' work that are representative samplings of each level of competency. The anchor papers serve as benchmarks for the subsequent marking of student work. Approximately three days are required to complete the anchor papers.

8.1 Procedures

- After students have finished the LES, teachers should meet to establish anchor papers.
- These anchor papers serve as standards of performance.
- Sufficient time should be provided for teachers to complete the evaluation of student work in a centre organized for this purpose to ensure reliability of the scoring.
- School boards are responsible for providing time for teachers to complete the marking.

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