

# **INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

## **COMPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

Grade 6  
514-600

June 2002

Québec 

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## 1 Objectives of the Assessment

Complementary assessments in English Language Arts are optional evaluation practices that the Ministère develops in co-operation with teachers and consultants in the province. They have, as their principal aim, a desire to offer quality instruments in language assessment to schools that may not necessarily have the time nor training to develop their own instruments. Nor may these schools wish to purchase existing standardized tests that do not reflect teaching practices in classrooms.

In addition, these assessments offer:

- **models of authentic assessments that schools may adapt or revise according to their own wishes**
- **opportunities for staff development in grading student work according to specified criteria that have been developed for these assessments**
- **realistic information about what our students are capable of doing, drawn directly from sample work of Anglophone students in Québec schools**
- **insights into assessment approaches that are new and of proven validity**
- **concrete, descriptive evidence of students' performance for professional information and for use at the end of the year in conjunction with students' year-long performance.**

## 2 General Nature of the Assessment

The June 2002 assessment offers a number of core activities which target key language abilities. All activities can be modified and/or incorporated into existing evaluation practices.

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

- **personal response to literature**
- **writing a personal narrative account**
- **use of language conventions**
- **reading for information**

The assessment reflects practices consistent with the *Elementary Language Arts I-VI* program and the document *Elementary Language Arts: Definition of Domain, Cycle One and Cycle Two*. As well, the assessment offers guidance to teachers who seek to inform themselves about the effectiveness of their classroom practices. All activities are realistic in that they give students opportunity to use language in real situations.

### **3 Learning Principles Incorporated Into the Assessment**

These principles include :

- giving students time to work through a task in more than one session
- Fostering the integrated use of all the language processes (listening, responding, communicating, ....)
- allowing social interaction by thinking together, trying out ideas and seeking feedback

### **4 Evaluation Principles Incorporated Into the Assessment**

These principles include :

- 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 of these performance criteria
- providing students with scoring criteria in advance
- 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

### **5 Assessment Materials**

The assessment includes the following materials:

- *Resource Booklet*
- *Student Booklet*
- *Teacher Guide*

## **6 The Components of the Assessment**

### **6.1 Overview**

The assessment will focus on the following language abilities: **personal response** to literature; writing a **personal narrative** ; **use of** language conventions; and, reading for information.

### **6.2 Personal Response to Literature (\*)**

The performance criteria for **Personal Response To Literature** are included in this Information Document.

### **6.3 Writing a Personal Narrative**

**A model will be included for teachers to use in demonstrating the writing characteristics particular to the personal narrative. The performance criteria for this task are included in this document.**

### **6.4 Use of Language Conventions(\*)**

Performance criteria are also provided for this measure. The students' **writing of a personal narrative** will serve as the basis for these criteria. Students will **be given time during the examination to draft and revise their writing.**

### **6.5 Reading for Information(\*)**

Students will **read (a) written account(s). They will be asked to make use of their understanding by means of a series of tasks. Performance criteria will accompany these task-questions.**

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\* **Subject to ongoing revision**

## 7 Performance Criteria for Response to Literature

### Performance Level One

1. The student draws meanings from the text which are **comprehensive** and **substantive** as well as **perceptive** and **personalized**. The response shows that these meanings:
  - **extract** understandings from the text that go beyond surface coverage and reveal a balanced examination of story events and occurrences, including those story details which offer insight into human experience;
  - **explore and elaborate**, with story details, on certain of these understandings in a manner which shows how the reader relates to the text in terms of his or her own experiences;
  - **extend** the reader's self-knowledge appreciably in terms of broader applications of the story to life, relationships and values.

### Performance Level Two

2. The student draws meanings from the text which are **comprehensive** and **personalized**. The response shows that these meanings:
  - **extract** understandings from the text that go beyond surface coverage and reveal a balanced examination of story events and occurrences and some of the story details which offer insight into human experience;
  - **explore and elaborate** on certain of these understandings in a manner which shows how the reader relates to the text in terms of his or her own experiences;
  - **extend** the reader's self-knowledge in terms of broader applications of the story to life, relationships and values.

### Performance Level Three

3. The student draws meanings from the text that can be described as **limited** in coverage and **literal** in interpretation. The response shows that these meanings:
  - **extract** surface-level understandings from the text, often in a selective manner;
  - **explore and elaborate** on these understandings in a limited way;
  - **extend** the reader's self-knowledge minimally in terms of broader applications of the story to life, relationships and values.

### Performance Level Four

4. The student draws meanings from the text that are **disconnected**, even **irrelevant**, from story events and occurrences. The response shows that meanings:
  - **extract** details which are only a sequential relating of story events and occurrences;
  - **explore and elaborate** on understandings insufficiently or may step outside of the text altogether in relating his or her own experiences;
  - **extend** the reader's self-knowledge insufficiently in terms of broader applications of the story to life, relationships and values.

## 8 Performance Criteria: Criteria Personal Narrative

### Performance Level One

1. The writer relates the circumstances of an event and/or happening that has been **experienced personally**.
  - ◆ The account is **focussed** on the experience and the focus is **sustained** from the beginning to end;
  - ◆ **Thoughtful attention to detail** helps the reader to visualize the circumstances and become captivated by the unfolding events;
  - ◆ The writer **shares** with the reader **why** this story is meaningful and memorable.

### Performance Level Two

2. The writer relates the circumstances of an event and/or happening that has been experienced **personally**.
  - ◆ The account is **focussed and sustained** for the most part;
  - ◆ **Sufficient attention to detail** helps the reader to visualize the circumstances and maintain interest in the unfolding of events;
  - ◆ The writer makes **an effort to share** with the reader **why** this story is meaningful and memorable.

### Performance Level Three

3. The writer refers **loosely** to an event and/or happening that has been experienced **personally**.
  - ◆ The focus is **unclear and unsustained** for the most part;
  - ◆ **Some attention to detail** helps the reader to make sense of the story but offers little to create reader interest;
  - ◆ **Little effort** has been made to convey **why** this story is meaningful and memorable.

### Performance Level Four

4. The writer refers **loosely or not at all** to an event and/or happening that has been **experienced personally**.
  - ◆ The account **lacks focus**;
  - ◆ **Insufficient details** impede the reader's understanding of an interest in the story;
  - ◆ **Very little effort** has been made to convey **why** this story is meaningful and memorable.

## **9 Performance Criteria For Conventions Of Print\***

- 1. The writer demonstrates throughout a firm grasp of writing conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation and paragraphing).**
  - Errors are minor and do not affect the reading of the text.
  
- 2. The writer demonstrates a reasonable grasp of writing conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation and paragraphing) most of the time.**
  - Errors do not make the text difficult to read.
  
- 3. The writer demonstrates throughout a weak grasp of some of the writing conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation and paragraphing).**
  - Errors make the text difficult to read.
  
- 4. The writer demonstrates a weak grasp of most writing conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation and paragraphing).**
  - Errors make the text almost impossible to read.

## **10 Distribution of the Assessment**

School boards and private schools are sent two copies of the assignment materials. They assume responsibility for photocopying sufficient booklets.

## **11 Administering the Assessment**

Schools are responsible for administering the assessment, following the guidelines stated in the *Teacher Guide*. Schools are, however, given latitude in determining when the assessment is used, and which parts of it. The June calendar date chosen for this assessment allows schools a time for teachers to meet and confer about exemplar papers that will be used as the standards for performance in each mark range.

**\* Subject to ongoing revision**

## 12 Correcting the Assessment and Follow-Up

All teachers versions of the assessment are corrected locally, using the scoring criteria found in the *Teacher Guide*. Exemplar papers (representative samplings) of student work in each mark range will be selected and agreed upon by teachers. These, in turn, will serve as benchmarks for the subsequent marking of student work. These exemplars should be drawn directly from the students' own work.

The Ministère will make every effort to offer schools in the province an anecdoted selection of student work in a variety of writing forms and across all the mark ranges. It is foreseen that such a collection will aid teachers, as well as students, in assessing their work. Such a bank of materials would be updated over the years and would undoubtedly serve to inform schools, staff and students about their particular needs.

All schools using this assessment are asked to forward to the **Ministère, by June 30, 2002**, samples of corrected student work from each performance level for each component activity. Teachers interested in working on the follow up analysis are also encouraged to contact:

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