

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

COMPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade 6
514-600

June 2003

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**
- **opportunities for teachers to meet together in a marking centre to discuss and interpret student performances in relation to teaching practices**

2. General Nature of the Assessment

The June 2003 assessment offers a number of core activities that 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 for a specific purpose and audience**
- **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
- establishing a marking centre where teachers examine and mark student work by applying the performance criteria following procedures that ensure reliability of the scores

5. Assessment Materials

The assessment includes the following materials:

- *Resource Booklet(s)*
- *Student booklet*
- *Teacher Guide*
- *Bibliography and other resources, such as web sites*

6. The Components of the Assessment

6.1 Overview

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

6.2 Personal Response to Literature

The performance criteria for Personal Response to Literature will reflect the levels of competency that the student attains aligned with the program and the scales of competency.

6.3 Writing for a Purpose and Audience

Based on the initial reading activity, a variety of writing text types will be proposed, such as story, letter, personal account, script or journal/diary. Students will select a text-type to use to write for a specific purpose and audience. A rubric will be provided for scoring purposes.

6.4 Use of Language Conventions

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

6.5 Reading for Information

Following the reading of texts, the students will be asked to make use of their understanding by means of a series of tasks. Performance criteria will accompany these tasks.

7. Distribution of the Assessment

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

A booklet of exemplars of student writing from the June 2002 assessment will be sent to school boards for distribution in February. These will allow teachers to assist students in understanding and applying performance criteria.

8. 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 range. Following the selection of the exemplars, marking will take place in a marking centre to ensure the reliability of the scoring. School Boards are responsible for providing release time for teachers to complete the marking.

9. Correcting the Assessment and Follow-Up

Correction of student work is done 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 anecdotal selection of student work in a variety of writing forms and across 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, teachers and students about their particular needs.

All schools using this assessment are asked to forward to the Ministère by June 30, 2003, samples of corrected student work from each performance level for each activity in the assessment. Teachers interested in working on the follow-up analysis are also encouraged to contact:

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