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Test Specifications

Grade 7 Provincial Literacy Assessment

This document summarizes the test specifications of the Reading and Writing Components of the Grade 7 Provincial Literacy Assessment.

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Test Specifications Grade 7 Provincial Literacy Assessment

Overview

The Grade 7 Provincial Literacy Assessment is an assessment of students' literacy abilities based on the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Outcomes (Grade 6)* and the *Provincial Achievement Standards in Reading and Writing (End of Grade 6)*. It is comprised of a Reading Comprehension Component and a Writing Component. Students receive a reading score and a writing score; the components are not blended into an overall literacy score. Data obtained from this assessment provides information about individual student achievement and provides a perspective on trends in school, district, and provincial achievement in literacy.

Reading Comprehension

The Reading Comprehension Component consists of 50 selected response (multiple choice) items based on a selection of literary and information texts. Students read the passages and indicate their responses in the assessment booklet, which is later machine scored. Students have 90 minutes to complete this component with up to 100% extra time available as a universal accommodation. Texts and items for the assessment are selected by a committee of New Brunswick educators based on the *ELA Curriculum Outcomes (Grade 6)* and the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)*.

The provincial standards outline two specific categories of text: literary and information. Three levels of comprehension response are detailed within the provincial standards: literal, inferential/interpretive, and personal/critical/evaluative. Item selection committees choose questions that measure students' abilities to respond to both categories of text on all of these levels. This allows individual results to be reported based on achievement in each genre and level of response as well as overall.

The document titled "Grade 7 Literacy Assessment Test Specifications: Reading Comprehension" on page 4 provides a breakdown of the Reading Comprehension Component by text categories and comprehension responses. The document also indicates the number of questions assigned to each category and comprehension response level.

The Grade 7 Literacy Assessment aligns with the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)*; however, not all aspects of these standards can be measured effectively in a selected response format. The document titled "Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6) Appropriate for Multiple Choice Item Format" on pages 5-6 provides the specific elements of the comprehension responses that are appropriate for this assessment format. It should be noted that on-going classroom assessment of these specific bullets is not limited to selected response questions such as multiple choice. Comprehensive formative assessment in the classroom will continue to be an effective measure of all aspects of the *Provincial Reading Achievement Standards*.

The *Administration of Provincial Assessments Protocols and Procedures 2010 (Revised)* found on the portal at <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/AaE/Pages/default.aspx> provides detailed information on the administration of the Reading Comprehension Component of the Grade 7 Literacy Assessment.

For information on Exemptions and Accommodations, please refer to *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions (2010)* which can be found on the portal: <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/AaE/Pages/default.aspx>.

Grade 7 Literacy Assessment Test Specifications: Reading Comprehension

	Literary Texts		Information Texts	
	Continuous Prose (1-2 passages)	Non-Continuous Prose and Poetry (1-2 passages)	Continuous Information Text (1-2 passages)	Non-Continuous Information Text (1-2 passages)
Literal Responses (20%)	5 items		5 items	
Inferential/Interpretive Responses (60%)	15 items		15 items	
Personal/Critical/Evaluative Responses (20%)	5 items		5 items	
Total	25 items		25 items	

Literary Texts

Continuous Prose may include short stories, myths, legends, drama, etc.

Non-Continuous Prose and Poetry may include poems, song lyrics, comics, excerpts from graphic novels, etc.

Information Texts

Continuous Information Text may include articles, descriptive reports, short biographies, etc.

Non-Continuous Information Text may include charts, graphs, maps, recipes, schedules, advertisements, graphic hybrid texts, etc.

For further description of Text Complexity and the characteristics of both Literary Text and Information Text, please refer to the *Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)* at <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/cd/Pages/default.aspx>

**Provincial Reading Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)
Appropriate for Multiple-Choice Item Format**

<p align="center">Comprehension Responses (Appropriate Achievement)</p>	<p align="center">Comprehension Responses (Strong Achievement)</p>
<p>Literal Response– “Reading the Lines”</p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Respond accurately to most literal questions by selecting and locating relevant details B. Identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text; explain how events are related to the theme C. Identify main ideas and supporting details; summarize key points 	<p>Literal Response– “Reading the Lines”</p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Distinguish between important and unimportant details
<p>Inferential/Interpretive Response– “Reading Between the Lines”</p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Make logical inferences about characters (motivations, traits, feelings or personality), and story events; describe relationships between characters and effect on the plot or overall theme B. Interpret relationships among several ideas to draw conclusions (e.g. plot, sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution) or make comparisons 	<p>Inferential/Interpretive Response– “Reading Between the Lines”</p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E. Make thoughtful inferences (i.e., inferences that require more thoughtful engagement with the text)

<p>C. Use context clues and prior knowledge to explain the meaning of new vocabulary/technical terms; provide obvious interpretations of more subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language</p> <p>D. Interpret/use text features to understand the text (headings and subheadings, captions, font, maps, keys/legends, cutaways, graphs)</p>	
<p>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response– “Reading Beyond the Lines”</p> <p>Students</p> <p>A. Make personal connections: compare/contrast with personal experiences/relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text, text-to-world comparisons; many connections go beyond the obvious</p> <p>B. Recognize some aspects of an author’s style/techniques (e.g. dialect, descriptions, figurative language)</p> <p>C. Respond critically to texts: recognize language used to manipulate, persuade, or control; detect prejudice, stereotyping and bias</p> <p>D. Recognize purpose, structure, and features of a variety of text forms (e.g. short story, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy)</p>	<p>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response– “Reading Beyond the Lines”</p> <p>Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also</p> <p>E. Make insightful text-to-text and text-to-world connections</p>

Writing

In the Writing Component, students independently complete a piece of writing in response to a prompt they have selected from a variety of prompts provided. Students have 90 minutes to complete the Writing Component with up to 100% extra time available as a universal accommodation. Writing prompts are developed by a committee of New Brunswick educators based on the *ELA Curriculum Outcomes (Grade 6)* and the *Provincial Writing Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)*. In addition to specific prompts, students are also given the option of selecting a topic of their own choice.

Students' writing is scored by a committee of New Brunswick educators based on the traits of writing outlined within the provincial standards: content, organization, word choice, voice, sentence structure, and conventions. Because the provincial standards specify that students must demonstrate control of each trait in order to meet the standards, each trait is given equal weight and students are expected to achieve a rating of at least Appropriate Achievement (AA) in each trait in order to pass the Writing Component. This allows individual results to be reported based on achievement in each trait of writing as well as overall.

The document titled "Grade 7 Literacy Assessment Test Specifications: Writing" found on page 8 indicates the text forms students are invited to produce.

The Writing Instructions on page 9 and the Revising and Editing Checklist on page 10 will be found in the student booklet. The Writing Prompt handout on page 11 provides a template of what will be distributed to students at the beginning of the Writing Component.

The *Administration of Assessments Protocols and Procedures 2010 (Revised)* found at <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/AaE/Pages/default.aspx> provides detailed information on the administration of the Writing Component of the Grade 7 Literacy Assessment.

For information on Exemptions and Accommodations, please refer to *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions (2010)* which can be found on the portal: <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/AaE/Pages/default.aspx>.

Grade 7 Literacy Assessment Test Specifications: Writing

Writing (Students will select a prompt and produce one of the following forms)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Personal<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Memoir○ Biography/Autobiography○ Narrative ○ Expository<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Persuasive○ Descriptive○ Explanatory
<p>The <i>Provincial Writing Achievement Standards</i> include a wide range of text forms; however, not all of the forms are appropriate for a large-scale demand writing assessment format. The text forms listed above are measurable in this format. Students are not to submit a poem, questions/answers, or a research report using research materials.</p>

For further description of Text Forms and their characteristics, please refer to the *Writing Achievement Standards (End of Grade 6)* located on the portal at <https://portal.nbed.nb.ca/tr/cd/Pages/default.aspx>

REVISING AND EDITING CHECKLIST

Your writing will be evaluated based on the Provincial Writing Achievement Standards. This checklist, based on the criteria for Appropriate Achievement, will help you with your revising and editing.

Content

- I selected a topic with a main idea.
- I included straightforward and predictable ideas/events.
- I supported my ideas with effective details.

Organization

- I used my introduction to let my readers know what I will be writing about.
- I put my ideas in a logical order and organized them into paragraphs.
- I included an obvious conclusion.

Word Choice

- I included precise words and/or technical language.
- I included descriptive words (adjectives, adverbs, strong verbs, strong nouns).

Voice

- I made my reader interested in my topic.
- I showed that I care about my topic.
- I included personal feeling, energy, and individuality.

Sentence Structure

- I included different kinds of sentences, both simple and complex.
- I included a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to make my writing interesting.

Conventions

- I used correct end punctuation and capitalization.
- I included internal punctuation (commas, quotation marks, apostrophes).
- I used correct spelling.
- I used correct verb tenses, subject/verb agreement, and pronouns.

Writing Instructions for Students

Time: 90 Minutes (with up to 90 extra minutes, if needed)

You have been given a Writing Prompts handout with six writing prompts. Read all of them carefully and choose only one. Produce an independent piece of writing of approximately 200-250 words (about two pages).

- **Plan:** Brainstorm, plan and organize your ideas on page 31. (approximately 10-15 minutes)
- **Draft:** Develop your rough draft on pages 32-35. (approximately 30-40 minutes)
- **Revise and Edit:** Use the checklist on page 30 to revise and edit your writing. You are encouraged to use a dictionary and thesaurus. (10-20 minutes)
- **Final Copy:** Complete your final copy on pages 36-39. (10-20 minutes)

PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR REAL NAME OR MAKE REFERENCE TO YOUR OWN COMMUNITY BY ITS REAL NAME ANYWHERE IN YOUR PIECE OF WRITING. YOU MAY INCLUDE FICTITIOUS NAMES AND PLACES.

For educational purposes only, it is possible that your composition (which would remain anonymous) could be selected for publication in a booklet of student writing samples for distribution to schools.

Writing Prompts

Read all of the following writing prompts carefully and choose only one. Produce an independent piece of writing of approximately 200-250 words (about two pages).

Choose one of the following:

- Prompt #1
- Prompt #2
- Prompt #3
- Prompt #4
- Prompt #5
- Write about a topic of your own choice. You may use one of the following text forms: persuasive, descriptive, explanatory, memoir, narrative, or biography/autobiography.

Note: Your writing should not be in the form of poetry, question/answers, or research reports using research materials.

Please DO NOT use your real name or make reference to your own community by its real name anywhere in your piece of writing. You may include fictitious names and places.

