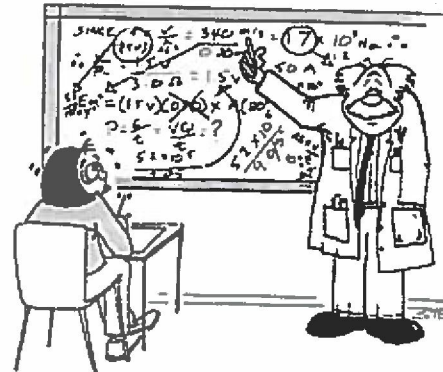


Dealing With Test Anxiety

Every student deals with some degree of anxiety, especially before writing a test like the O.S.S.L.T. Here are a few tips to help deal with some of that anxiety:

- Be **well-prepared** → you can't possibly know what the content of the test will be BUT your teachers have prepared you in terms of which *skills* will be assessed.
 - Review formats, structures, features
 - Reading: information, dialogue, real-life narrative, news report, graphic text
 - Writing: two prompts, a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion, news report
 - Responses will be in multiple choice, short and long prompts
 - Grammar, conventions



- Do as much **self-testing** as possible by using sample tests provided on EQAO's website and assess yourself with the scoring guides and rubrics so that you are familiar with the assessment language and the expectations.
- **Take care** of yourself → get enough sleep, good nutrition, exercise, some personal "down" time, and a *reasonable* amount of social interaction
- Think **positively!**
- **Organize** what you will need **the night before** the test: in a plastic zip-lock bag, place multiple pens, pencils, an eraser, liquid paper → zip-locks are less cumbersome than pencil cases and in most test/exam situations, pencil cases are not permitted anyway (zip-lock bags are compact and transparent)
- Get a good night **sleep**.
- Arrive at the test approximately 10-15 minutes before - but **not earlier or later** because this may cause increased anxiety.
- **Don't talk to anyone** about the test → this avoids you taking on someone else's anxiety – you don't need it!
- Make sure you **know the location** of the test before the test date.
- Find a spot in the testing room that **limits your distraction** → avoid sitting near your friends...
- Read all the instructions **carefully**.
- Focus on the **task at hand**, not the ramifications of this test.
- **Do your best**.
- After the test, **treat yourself**. Take the night off from work. Go out with friends and relax.

Alleviating Stress about the OSSLT

Strategies for Students Before the test

Believe in yourself. Believe that...

1. You know what the test is about.

- You've practiced sample questions in class
- You've checked the EQAO website and looked at a sample test and practiced some more
- There's nothing new in the test - your everyday activities in your courses contain the same types of reading and writing activities found in the OSSLT

2. You can face your fears about it.

- Sometimes simply talking about any fear makes it less fearful. Vent a little to a friend or a family member who is a good listener.

3. You have what it takes.

- Think Positively!
- Doubting your knowledge and your ability will only lead to hesitancy and second-guessing.

4. You are in control.

- Anytime you feel rattled, breathe deeply, slow down.
- Tell yourself, "It's only one test, right? Just one test. You won't die. The world won't end if you don't know the answer."

- Exercise during the test to release built-up tension. Move your shoulders up and down, circle your neck, or move it side to side. Wiggle your fingers.
- During the break, avoid talking about the test. Instead, walk around; eat a healthy snack

5. You are strong.

- The body and brain are connected, so get the right amount of sleep, eat well, and have a nutritious breakfast before the test
- exercise on a regular basis
- avoid caffeine

6. You are set!

- Prepare a pencil case with extra pencils, blue or black pens
- Double-check to make sure you have everything before you leave home
- Arrive at school a little earlier on the day of the test

During the Test

- 1. Review the whole test before you start.**
- 2. Read the directions.**
- 3. Answer the questions you know first.**
- 4. Answer every question.**
- 5. Identify key words.**
- 6. Organize your thoughts before you write.**
- 7. Write neatly.**
- 8. Use all of the time you're given.**

If you finish early, use the extra time to proofread and edit your answers.

Tackling Multiple Choice Questions

- Read all the answers
- Immediately answer any question for which you know the answer
- If you don't know the answer use context clues to eliminate wrong answers and make good guesses
- Star any question you skip so it will be easier to go back to the question later.

Dealing with Reading Passages

- Read all the questions associated with a passage before actually reading the passage to hone in on relevant points.
- Highlight or underline key words, phrases, ideas and to go back to the text to find evidence or clues to support the answers.
- Use text features - captions, graphs, charts, and illustrations; they enhance the text and present relevant details.