

What do the Experts Say?

Learning to read is an ongoing cognitive need for all adolescents.

(Manuel 2003)

Weak reading comprehension, rather than an outright inability to read, is the main affliction of most struggling readers in middle and high schools. (Allen 2001; Cromley 2000; Greenleaf et al., 2001)

The identity formation and literacy achievement of adolescents are influenced by popular music, cultural texts, and other media.

(Moje et al. 2001)

Technology that motivates students to become independent readers can increase their sense of competence.

(Kamil, Intrator, and Kim, 2000)



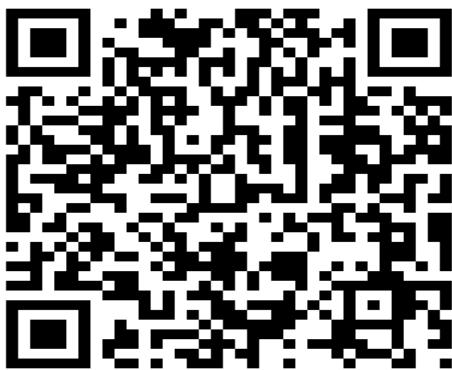
(UNESCO statement for the United Nations Literacy Decade, 2003 – 2012)

Did You Know...

- According to a new study, young people who had higher levels of proficiency in reading at the age of 15 had higher levels of education...and income by the time they were 25, than youth with lower proficiency in reading.
(Statistics Canada, 2011)
- Strong literacy skills give people more choices about their lives and more control over those choices.
(Literacy Matters, August 2003)
- "[C]hildren learn by example - if you recognize the importance of reading, your children will too!"
(ABC CANADA Family Literacy Foundation)

Resources

Check out www.eqao.com for parent resources, sample tests, and much more...



Additional Resources

www.abc-canada.org

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>

<http://readwriterock.com/main.html>

HELPING YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR THE ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST

(OSSLT)



Literacy is...

the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, discuss and think critically about ideas. Literacy enables us to share information and to interact with others.

(*Paying Attention to Literacy K-12, 2013*)



Adolescent Literacy

All students are equipped with the literacy skills to be critical and creative thinkers, effective meaning makers and communicators, collaborative co-learners, and innovative problem solvers in order to achieve personal, career and societal goals.

All students, individually and with others develop abilities to

THINK

access, manage, create and evaluate information in order to think imaginatively and critically to solve problems and make decisions including those related to issues of fairness, equity and social justice.

EXPRESS

use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, discuss and think critically about ideas.

REFLECT

think about their thinking and their skills to develop self-advocacy and an interest in life-long learning.



(Adolescent Literacy Guide, 2012)

The Purpose of the OSSLT

The OSSLT ensures that students have acquired the **essential reading and writing skills that apply to all subject areas in the provincial curriculum up to the end of Grade 9.**

All students working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) are required to write the literacy test in Grade 10. Students who have been eligible to write the OSSLT at least *twice* and have been unsuccessful at least *once* are eligible to fulfill the requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (**OSSLC**).

Successful completion of the OSSLT or OSSLC is a graduation requirement.

What Skills Are Assessed?

The OSSLT's **narrative, informational, and graphic reading** selections focus on:

Three Reading Skills

- Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas
- Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (making inferences)
- Making connections between information and ideas in reading selections, and personal knowledge and experience

Three Writing Skills

A combination of **short** and **long** writing tasks focus on these writing skills:

- Developing a main idea with sufficient details
- Organizing information and ideas in a coherent manner
- Using conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) in a manner that does not distract from clear communication

Literacy at Home

- Create a reading-friendly environment
- Make available a variety of reading resources: books, newspapers, e-books and magazines
- Set aside time when the whole family reads
- Include your teen in daily family tasks, such as: taking messages, keeping records, making lists, reading and following directions
- Plan events together, read flyers, pamphlets, maps and websites to gather information
- Discuss current events and encourage the sharing of opinions
- Find opportunities to brainstorm. (e.g. Plan a party, pros and cons list, etc...)
- Ask your teen to help you edit when you write
- Share family stories, ideas through conversation
- Plan weekly Family Game Nights and play games such as *Balderdash*, *Boggle*, *Scrabble*, *Game of Life*, etc... (N.B. Some electronic games help with vocabulary, reading, and thinking skills as well).



Helping your Teen Develop Skills

Practice:

- **Understanding explicit information.** Ask your teen, "What's the main idea?"
- **Making connections** (making inferences). Ask your teen, "How does this relate to other things you've read or that you know?"
- **Interpreting.** Ask your teen, "What does this mean to you?"
- **Predicting.** Ask your teen, "What do you think will happen next?"
- **Supporting an opinion.** Ask your teen, "Give me three detailed reasons why I should let you ..."