INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Compulsory Examination

English Language Arts

Elementary 6

June 2022

514-600

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INTRODUCTION

This document conveys information concerning the compulsory English Language Arts examination for the end of Elementary Cycle Three. Its primary aim is to provide general information about the examination and its administration. As it contains important information regarding the nature, scheduling and scoring of the examination, it should be distributed without delay to all Elementary Cycle Three English Language Arts teachers and consultants, including other personnel concerned with examination scheduling.

The Ministère de l'Éducation is responsible for producing a compulsory examination to be administered at the end of Elementary Cycle Three in the June exam session. The development of the examination and the validation process are both supported by the following ministerial documents: the [Québec Education Program](#), the [Framework for the Evaluation of Learning](#) and the [Progression of Learning in Elementary School](#). Feedback and information collected from previous examinations were also used in this process. In addition, the Ministère enlists teachers and education consultants representing different schools to contribute to the development of the examination.

The intention of this examination is to provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and competency, and to give teachers the opportunity to judge the extent of literacy development.

Schools must administer the compulsory examination in accordance with the [official schedule](#) for the examination session.

Information Specific to the Examination for the 2021-2022 School Year

The compulsory examination is in line with the *[Learning to Be Prioritized at the Elementary Level for the 2021-2022 School Year in the Context of the Pandemic](#)*.

The elements that could be used for exam purposes are indicated in Appendix I of this document.

The weighting assigned to the compulsory examination has been reduced to 10%. Clarifications in this regard are provided in Section 4.4.

The duration of the 2022 English Language Arts compulsory examination will be six hours (the narrative writing task is one hour shorter than it was in previous exams).

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1. STRUCTURE OF THE COMPULSORY EXAMINATION

The English Language Arts examination has certain distinctive features:

- It is developed following an inquiry approach to provide purpose and context for the tasks.

- It is a context-based examination that incorporates the processes and strategies commonly associated with reading, viewing, discussing, responding and writing.

- It is made up of distinctive tasks that stem from both context and guiding questions or statements used to establish a situation and a focus for the tasks, which are linked through related activities and discussions. Students are required to read and respond to a text, and to compose a narrative.

- Two tasks will be formally assessed: Response to Literature and Narrative Writing.

2.   MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THE EXAMINATION

Materials for the Teacher	Materials for the Students
• *Teacher's Guide* • *Media components*[1] • Model Character Card posters: A and B (1 set per class)	• *Literature Booklet* (1 per student) • *Processfolio* (1 per student) • Blank Character Card posters: C and D (1 poster per group) • Reference Materials: Dictionaries, thesauruses • Loose-leaf paper (provided by the school)
N.B. 1. Schools must ensure access to equipment for viewing the media components.	
2. Although students may bring their own reference materials, they will not be permitted to share them with others.	

It is forbidden to disclose any information about the content of a ministerial examination to anyone who is not directly involved in its administration, or to distribute any examination document, in whole or in part, at any time or by any means whatsoever, including social media.

3.   CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTERING THE EXAMINATION

3.1   Conditions for Administering the Examination

Schools are responsible for administering the examination according to the guidelines provided in the *Teacher's Guide*. All tasks are to be completed on the school premises, preferably in the regular classroom setting, unless otherwise indicated. In the case of combined classes, that is, classes made up of Cycle Three students from both Year 1 and Year 2, teachers are instructed to **administer the compulsory English Language Arts Cycle Three examination only to Year 2** students. For students of Year 1, teachers may provide other work during the examination period.

In the interests of equity and justice, any intervention on the part of teachers must be of the same nature and scope for all students across Québec. It is thus forbidden for anyone to help students in any way, for example by clarifying a question or rewording instructions. Examinations in which a teacher or any other school staff member is deemed to have overstepped the boundaries of their role may be declared invalid by the Ministère.

Certain digital tools (electronic dictionaries, word-processing software, etc.) may be used under certain conditions. Further details will be provided by the Direction de la sanction des études.

During the examination, students are strictly forbidden to have in their possession any digital device (smartphone, wireless headphones or earbuds, smartwatch, etc.) that can be used to communicate, access the Internet, translate text, or create, save or consult data.

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[1] The video will be available on the secure website of the Direction de la sanction des études. A physical copy (DVD) can be provided to educational institutions that request it.

3.2   Dates and Time Allocation

Schools must administer the Cycle Three Elementary English Language Arts compulsory examination in accordance with the official schedule for the examination session.

Generally, the tasks to be performed in this examination should take **approximately six hours** to complete. The suggested time allocations are approximations only and do not include teacher preparation time.

The *Teacher's Guide* provided by the Ministère will provide detailed instructions and procedures for each part of the examination. The tasks and procedures are organized sequentially to maintain uniformity across the province. **The prescribed sequence in the *Teacher's Guide* must be respected** to maintain the intended scaffolding for students.

It should be noted that **sustained blocks of time** for the performance of tasks are required to allow students to engage in activities that call for critical thinking and problem solving—components characteristic of competency-based learning. As students require sustained blocks of time to contextualize and to become familiar with the tasks, as well as to undertake both group and independent activities, certain individual tasks may take some students longer to complete than others. The time required to complete tasks will vary within classrooms across the province. Adjustments may be made according to different needs.

N.B. Planning, collaboration and flexibility among school administrators and cycle teams, particularly in French immersion contexts, is necessary to provide optimal examination conditions.

3.3   Description of the Tasks

Response to Literature

Reading performance will be assessed through a written response to illustrated literature. The task will require students to read the text and to construct meaning from the text through a response process. Students are called upon to think critically and to synthesize the ideas in the text. **Approximately four hours** should be allocated for this section of the examination, as well as preparation time prior to the task. See Appendix II for more information on *Response to Literature*.

Narrative Writing

Writing performance will be assessed through a narrative writing task that requires students to craft a story for a peer audience. This task requires students to draw upon their knowledge of the structures and features of narrative writing (story) and language conventions; students should consider how these two important elements interact to inform/entertain their peer audience. **Approximately two hours** should be allocated for this section of the examination, which includes activities to set the context.

Using Language to Communicate and to Learn

Talk for communication and learning will be used throughout the examination. Students will participate in activities that require them to discuss issues derived from the contents of the examination and the related activities. *To use language to communicate and learn* is not formally assessed in this examination; however, opportunities are embedded in the activities to facilitate further collection of data. See Appendix VII for the *Talk to Communicate and Learn Profiles*.

3.4   Students With Special Needs

The conditions for administering ministerial examinations may be adapted for students with special needs to enable them to demonstrate their learning. For further information on the implementation of these measures, please refer to Chapter 5, Support Measures for the Evaluation of Learning, in the document entitled Administrative Guide for the Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations (2015 edition).

4.   MARKING PROCEDURES

4.1   Marking Centre

School boards and private schools are responsible for marking the Written Response to Literature and the Narrative Writing. It is recommended that Cycle Three English Language Arts teachers come together, when possible, in a marking centre, to collaborate on the scoring of the students' performances. This opportunity to analyze and discuss students' work ensures the uniform interpretation of the criteria and indicators, as well as equity and reliability. It also offers an excellent opportunity for professional development in evaluation as teachers work collaboratively to select anchor papers drawn directly from the students' work. The anchor papers, representative samples of each level of competency, serve as benchmarks for the subsequent marking of students' work.

4.2   Criterion-Referenced Rubrics

Rubrics for scoring the two evaluated tasks are provided in Appendixes IV and V. As in past examinations, each rubric will describe five levels of performance. Teachers are required to determine the overall performance level for each task evaluated.

Whereas the performance criteria are developed using pedagogical terminology, teachers will find that examining exemplars with their students provides an ideal opportunity to help students understand the expectations and see samples of quality work, as well as to explain the criteria using plain language. For more information, see *Rubrics and Evaluation Guidelines* in Appendix III.

4.3   Exemplars

Annotated student exemplars drawn from the June 2016 Cycle Three English Language Arts examination are available on a secure website of the Ministère. This website is password protected and is accessible to either the school board consultant or the individual responsible for evaluation in the school/school board. The exemplars also include excerpts from students' responses and narratives providing teachers with samples of student work for each level of performance.

4.4   Calculating the English Language Arts Mark

Owing to exceptional circumstances, for the June 2022 exam session, the student's mark on the compulsory examination will count for 10%, instead of the usual 20%, of the final mark for the competencies: *To read and listen to literary, popular and information-based texts* and *To write self-expressive, narrative and information-based texts.*

The weighting of the competencies can be found in the Framework for the Evaluation of Learning.

APPENDIX I

Knowledge That Could Be Used in the Compulsory English Language Arts Examination for the 2021-2022 School Year		
(The elements of Cycle Three encompass those of Cycles One and Two.) The information below presents the elements of the Progression of Learning for English Language Arts, which may be used for exam purposes. Note that these elements are related to the content of *Learning to Be Prioritized at the Elementary Level for the 2021-2022 School Year in the Context of the Pandemic.* It should be noted that the layout differs from that of the original document and that some labels have been grouped together so that the presentation is concise.		
Conventions of Written and Media Language	**Language-Learning Processes**	**Text Types, Structures and Features**
Understanding the Conventions of Written Language	**Response Process**	**Self-Expressive Text Types**
Grammar Uses linguistic structures and features to express thoughts, ideas and information for a specific purpose and audience.	**Prereading/Viewing** Uses knowledge of the genre/text type to be viewed/read: immersion into models of the text type to determine important structures and features of the text type, and how these contribute to meaning in the text.	**Reflective Texts** **Structures and Features** Understands the purpose of the following structures and features and uses this knowledge when reading and writing/producing texts. Uses self-expressive language to relate ideas, feelings, experience. Synthesises of ideas and feelings to focus on what is most important.

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Conventions of Written and Media Language	**Language-Learning Processes**	**Text Types, Structures and Features**
Understanding the Conventions of Written Language	**Response Process**	**Self-Expressive Text Types**
Usage Conventions Selects words that convey the intended meaning and create a picture in the reader's mind. Uses literal and figurative language in a variety of ways.	**During Reading/Viewing** Relies on common structures and features of media texts to construct meaning.	**Narrative and Literary Text Types** **Structures and Features** The student understands the purpose of the following structures and features and uses this knowledge to construct meaning when reading, listening to and producing spoken and written texts. ➢ Plot structures and features ➢ Characterization, Setting ➢ Other features of narrative (conventions, humour, dialogue)
Mechanics Demonstrates proper use of spelling, capitalization and punctuation.	**After Reading/Viewing: Interpreting the Text** Constructs a personal response to the text. Uses details and evidence in the text to infer meaning. Integrates new information with what is already known to construct meaning. Uses evidence to distinguish between own thinking, values and beliefs and those presented in the text. Uses other readers' interpretations to clarify and extend own ideas through discussion.	

Response to Literature

Response to Literature requires students to read or listen to a text and view the images carefully to interpret and derive meaning from the text. Students should pay attention to what is implied or inferred (suggested, but not actually stated) in the text. As they read/view/listen to the text, they may draw further meaning by making connections to other texts they have read, viewed or listened to and to other experiences. Students should consider how the author and illustrator have crafted the text and images to enhance meaning.

When students write their response, they are exercising critical thinking. They consider new ideas and information in light of prior knowledge. This kind of thinking helps students to become better readers, to better understand texts and to extend their own ideas.

When responding to the text, students draw meaning from it by considering:

- *what they already know about the issues, problems and situations*
- *what they understand about the text*
- *the author's purpose and/or message*
- *their connections to the text from their own life experiences and/or other texts read, viewed or listened to, and how the connections helped them to draw meaning from the text*
- *how the author crafts and structures the text, and the specific features used to draw the reader's attention*
- *what they understand and what they think about the text, combining what they already know with new information learned (explain own opinion)*
- *which ideas or information will stay with them after reading/viewing the text*

Recommended Procedure

Students first read the entire story silently and independently. Following a second reading, students should make notes in preparation for a small group discussion. After the group discussion, they should add to their notes any new ideas drawn from the talk. A final reading helps consolidate their thoughts and ideas about the story before they write their response.

Rubrics and Evaluation Guidelines

A rubric is a tool used to evaluate complex tasks. It is a set of criteria and performance indicators based on the most significant attributes of specific tasks, arranged according to levels of performance.

The rubrics are task specific and describe five levels of performance. Teachers are to use the level descriptors at the top of the rubrics to anchor their evaluation, and then to use the criteria to determine where in that level a student's work best fits. The pluses and minuses allow for the score to indicate where the performance falls within each level.

Working with exemplars gives students and teachers concrete examples of quality work. It also aids with the vocabulary used in the rubrics. Teachers may wish to examine the evaluation criteria with their students and apply them to exemplars.

Converting Levels of Performance to Percentage Values

The Ministère requires that the overall level of performance for each task be converted to a percentage value. Therefore, the examination components Written Response to Literature and Narrative Writing should be assigned a percentage value, as indicated in the rubrics provided.

The numeric values indicate a possible range of up to three scores for each performance level; however, only the percentage values indicated can be assigned a score. For example, if the overall level of performance for the task is scored as 5-, the percentage score is recorded as 90%; 92% is not a valid score.

Using the Rubrics to Evaluate Performance

Optimal conditions for scoring students' work include teacher collaboration, marking in groups and shared decision-making. The rubrics provided for this examination on pp. 10-14 of this document were designed to assess the two specific tasks as indicated. When scoring students' work, teachers must be familiar with the required tasks and rubrics, noting the criteria for each performance level, as well as the level descriptors at the top of the rubrics.

Determine the Level of Performance

- Examine the preselected anchor papers that have already been scored, along with the rubrics provided for each task.
- After reading the student's work, refer first to the anchor sentence describing the level at the top of the rubric to determine the student's performance level.
- Read down through the criteria to find evidence to determine the score within the level.

Evaluating Specific Task Performance

Reading: A written response to illustrated literature is evaluated to determine the students' ability to bring meaning to and draw meaning from the text—in particular, drawing on the information/ideas in the text and the context in which the tasks are set.

- Written Response to Literature draws on the students' ability to interpret the text, their acquired knowledge about structures and features of texts, and their appreciation of the author and illustrator's craft as it relates to purpose and audience.
- The task calls for critical thinking.

Writing: A final piece of writing is evaluated to determine the students' ability to craft a narrative with a specific purpose and an audience of peers in mind.

Students must demonstrate sufficient control of language conventions. The guidelines for scoring a student's performance for the writing task, with consideration for use of language, are as follows:

- Consider the students' ability to apply language conventions, then determine where the performance best fits in one of the three *Descriptors for Scoring Written Language Conventions* (see p. 14). If the use of language conventions best fits in the **Partial** performance level, the score for the overall writing task **may not exceed Level 3- (60%).**
- This weighting should be applied after the Narrative Writing task has been scored. Therefore, refer to language conventions **only after selecting a performance level** for the writing using the *Rubric for Scoring Narrative Writing*.

Rubric for Scoring Written Response to Literature

LEVEL 5 – ADVANCED			LEVEL 4 – THOROUGH			LEVEL 3 – ACCEPTABLE		
The reader draws comprehensive meaning from the text.			**The reader draws clear meaning from the text.**			**The reader draws general meaning from the text.**		
Determine the profile level that best describes the student's overall performance and assign the corresponding score.								
N.B. Not all criteria need to be present in the response.								

CRITERIA

The reader examines the concepts and ideas in the text, making perceptive inferences and drawing on key ideas to support their own interpretation(s). Personal understanding is integrated in light of ideas in the text. Ideas are justified with insightful reasoning and references to the text. Through perceptive connections, the reader integrates personal experiences and/or other sources, enhancing their understanding of the text. The reader's connections and ideas may suggest a world view. Meaning is drawn from subtle cues in the text. An explanation is provided of how structures and features enhance the reader's understanding of the text. The effectiveness of the text is examined, and personal insights are offered that go beyond the text and apply to life in general.

The reader explores the concepts and ideas in the text, attending to underlying ideas to support their own understanding, offering personal opinions. Ideas are justified with sound reasoning and thoughtful references to the text. The meaning of the text is extended by clearly connecting personal experiences and/or other sources to ideas in the text. The reader makes inferences from cues in the text and shares how structures and features contribute to understanding. The text is evaluated, a personal opinion is offered and thoughtful conclusions about the text are drawn.

The reader identifies and addresses relevant concepts and ideas in the text; understanding of the text is supported with a personal opinion, a logical explanation and/or reference(s) to the text. Meaning of the text is supported by connecting personal experience(s) and/or other sources to the text in a general way. Structures and features of the text are identified, making general inferences that loosely support their understanding of the text. The reader reacts to the text, offering logical opinion(s) and drawing general conclusions about it.

Score	5+	5	5-	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-
	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%

Rubric for Scoring Written Response to Literature (cont.)

	LEVEL 2 – PARTIAL **The reader draws literal meaning from the text.**	LEVEL 1 – MINIMAL **The reader draws little or no meaning from the text.**	
	Determine the profile level that best describes the student's overall performance and assign the corresponding score.		
	N.B. Not all criteria need to be present in the response.		
CRITERIA	The reader draws literal meaning from the text and shares some ideas that may suggest a limited understanding of it. References to the text are unclear and/or illogical. Connections made are superficial in nature, providing minor support to the reader's understanding of the text. Structures and features are alluded to. The reader offers a mundane opinion about the text that reflects the obvious.	The reader lists minor details from the text. The ideas presented are uncertain and references to the text, if any, are confusing. Connections mentioned are irrelevant and may not link to the text. The reader comments on the text and may indicate preferences about it.	
Score	**2+**	**2**	**1**
	55%	50%	35%

Rubric for Scoring Narrative Writing

		LEVEL 5 – ADVANCED	LEVEL 4 – THOROUGH	LEVEL 3 – ACCEPTABLE
		The writer demonstrates comprehensive understanding of narrative writing.	**The writer demonstrates clear understanding of narrative writing.**	**The writer demonstrates general understanding of narrative writing.**
		Determine the profile level that best describes the student's overall performance and assign the corresponding score.		
CRITERIA	**Organization and Ideas**	The writer sustains a solid focus on unfolding events to create the story. Carefully selected details enrich development and lend authenticity to the story. Crafted transitions guide the reader to a strong conclusion, appearing effortless.	The writer sustains a clear focus on unfolding events to create the story. Interesting details enhance development and lend originality to the story. Effective transitions lead to a sound conclusion.	The writer sustains a logical sequence of unfolding events for the most part to create the story. Relevant details support development and convey a story that occasionally sparks interest. Transitions connect parts of the story and lead to an adequate conclusion.
	Voice	The writer speaks to the audience in a memorable and compelling voice that contributes to the narrative, revealing a strong sense of purpose.	The writer speaks to the audience in an expressive voice that lends clarity to the narrative, revealing a clear sense of purpose.	The writer speaks to the audience in a discernible voice that holds attention at times, revealing an occasional sense of purpose.
	Structures and Features	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a deliberate manner; effective choice of plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features enriches the narrative. The writer displays a unique style.	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a sustained manner; attention to plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features elaborates the narrative. The writer experiments with style.	The writer uses narrative structures and features in a wavering manner; attention to plot, setting, characterization and other structures and features may undermine the narrative at times.

		5+	5	5-	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3
	Score	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%

CRITERIA	**Language Conventions**	When considering the writer's control of language conventions, refer to the *Descriptors for Scoring Written Language Conventions* on page 14.

Rubric for Scoring Narrative Writing (cont.)

		LEVEL 2 – PARTIAL **The writer demonstrates partial understanding of narrative writing.**		LEVEL 1 – MINIMAL **The writer demonstrates little understanding of narrative writing.**
		Determine the profile level that best describes the student's overall performance and assign the corresponding score.		
CRITERIA	**Organization and Ideas**	The writer's story requires further development; story elements are loosely connected. Details are strung together. Transitions lead to a simple conclusion.		The writer's ideas are disjointed and confusing. Details are disconnected and/or random.
	Voice	The writer addresses the audience unevenly and fails to connect with the reader. An indistinct sense of purpose is evident through the writer's voice.		The writer disregards the audience for the most part; voice is flat or absent. A sense of purpose and direction is lacking.
	Structures and Features	The writer uses narrative structures and features through a simple sequence; attempts to use plot, setting and characterization are evident but confusing.		The writer suggests a series of loosely connected events or actions that allude to the story. Use of narrative structures and features is, for the most part, lacking.
	Score	**2+** 55%	**2** 50%	**1** 35%
	Language Conventions	When considering the writer's control of language conventions, refer to the *Descriptors for Scoring Written Language Conventions* on page 14.		

Descriptors for Scoring Written Language Conventions

The writer must demonstrate sufficient control of written language conventions, as detailed in the Progression of Learning in Elementary School.

ADVANCED CONTROL

The writer demonstrates solid control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are applied consistently, guiding the reader smoothly through the text. Errors in language conventions rarely occur and do not interfere with meaning.

ACCEPTABLE CONTROL

The writer demonstrates acceptable control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation,capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are applied consistently. Errors in language conventions may occur and rarely interfere with meaning.

PARTIAL CONTROL

The writer demonstrates partial control of language conventions (i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax, paragraphs and sentence structure). They are neglected or applied inconsistently. Frequent errors in language conventions impede meaning overall.

N.B. If the use of language conventions is scored as **Partial**, the overall writing task **cannot be scored higher than Level 3- (60%).**

Talk to Communicate and Learn Profiles

The profiles below support teachers in evaluating a student's ability to use *Talk to Communicate and Learn* in a variety of contexts. Teachers should keep in mind that a student may perform at different levels throughout the school year (moving up and down the profile scale) depending on the discussion topic, student grouping for the task and the individual personality of the student.

It is therefore important for teachers to assess the Talk competency throughout the year, providing a variety of groupings, contexts and topics for students to demonstrate their skill at using *Talk to Communicate and Learn*.

ADVANCED

The student articulately shares perceptive, insightful ideas and provides helpful information that focuses the discussion. The student uses precise vocabulary to provide key details and asks relevant questions that move the discussion forward. The student paraphrases ideas to clarify thinking and synthesizes new information effectively. The student reacts intuitively and respectfully to the ideas of others, establishing a positive tone for the conversation through encouraging facial expressions and body language.

THOROUGH

The student clearly shares thoughtful ideas that guide the conversation. Effective use of key vocabulary and pertinent questions encourage discussion. The student paraphrases ideas and builds on the ideas of others. The student is respectful of others and contributes positively to the tone of the conversation through appropriate facial expressions and body language.

ACCEPTABLE

The student shares logical ideas that contribute to the conversation and attempts to use key vocabulary and to paraphrase ideas. The student may build on the ideas of others and, when prompted, asks questions and clarifies ideas. The student is respectful of others and participates positively in the discussion.

PARTIAL

The student may share logical ideas at times but struggles to participate meaningfully in the conversation and may offer ideas that are not relevant to the main topic. The student may misuse or disregard vocabulary and requires prompts and support to ask questions and clarify ideas. The student's body language and facial expressions may have a negative impact on the tone of the conversation.

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