

**Elementary Literacy Assessment
Administration Guide
2014**

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Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Exemption and Adaptation Policy

These administrative guidelines should be read carefully prior to the administration of the Elementary Literacy Assessment.

Consistency across the province is very important to the administration of this assessment. To ensure consistency, these guidelines have been prepared to clarify how the assessment is to be administered.

All materials must be kept in a secure area prior to the assessment. Assessment materials are confidential. Photocopying of assessment materials is not permitted.

Contact Linda MacDonald, Literacy Achievement Specialist at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at 438-4901 concerning any issues.

Administration Schedule

Date	Assessment Component	Approximate Time
Tuesday, May 6	Reading Comprehension 1 Writing 1 (rough copy)	1 hour per activity
Wednesday, May 7	Reading Comprehension 2 Writing 1 (good copy)	1 hour per activity
Tuesday, May 13	Reading Comprehension 3 Writing 2 (Field Test)	1 hour per activity
Wednesday, May 14	Reading Comprehension 4	1 hour

Setting the Stage for Students

It will be beneficial to let students know ahead of time what this assessment entails.

Share the administration schedule with the students. Students will feel happier and more relaxed once they know what to expect.

Let the students know that the assessment activities will be much like what they do in their everyday work. They will engage in reading and answering questions in a written format.

The major difference which needs to be explained to students is that for the assessment they have to work independently. Discuss what it means to work “independently.” A few suggestions are: *Working independently means that students work all by themselves without teacher help. Working independently means that students do the best work they can do on their very own. Working independently means that students believe they can do the work and they do the work, without teacher help.*

Discuss with students the concept of right or wrong answers. Some of the questions do not have right or wrong answers. The questions ask students what they think and why they think that. Students have to support why they think a certain way.

Let students know that their work will be marked by teachers who will not know them. Therefore it is important to answer all questions with as much information as they can and to print (write) as neatly as they can so that the teachers can read it.

Information for Teachers

It will be beneficial for teachers to familiarize themselves with the Administration Guide prior to each assessment period. Keeping ahead of the task will facilitate the process.

Each activity is arranged in the Administration Guide in the same way.

The components are linked to curriculum outcomes from the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4 - 6*.

The required materials for each activity are listed, specifying which materials have been provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Helpful hints are included to provide clarity. They are important to read before administering each activity.

The procedure provides the steps to follow for each activity. Following the specified procedure will yield consistency in the administration of the assessment.

The last step in the procedure always refers to the adaptations that may be made for students with documented adaptations. Teachers must strictly adhere to these guidelines.

The reading booklets should accompany the student work booklet when returning the assessment materials to your School Contact. Due to the secure nature of this assessment, photocopying of the reading passages and/or questions is not permitted.

Each student will complete a reading piece (with questions) and one part of each writing component per day. The assessment can be carried out at any time during the school day. This will be an individual school decision. The optimum learning time is often considered to be in the morning, so teachers may wish to include this thought in their decision. Scheduling the assessment earlier in the day may allow extra time for students needing more time to finish.

Students should be seated so they can have as much privacy as possible.

Students are not to go ahead in their booklets. Stop signs have been included at the end of the activity.

Students will not revisit a previous reading activity on a succeeding day. For example, a student should not go back and add more detail to the Reading 1 assignment once the task is completed and he/she is supposed to be working on Reading 2. **Students will produce a good copy of their writing in Writing 1 only. Writing 2 is a field test so a good copy is not required.**

Approximately five minutes before it is time to collect the reading and writing pieces, ask students to check their work for final revisions.

Each student booklet has an **Exemption/Modification/Adaptations** form included on the back page. Teachers must check the appropriate box for any student with an IEP, Modified Program or Adaptations and attach a photocopy of the first and second page of the student's IEP, the first page of the Modified Program or Adaptations form to their assessment booklet.

Students are required to complete all components of the assessment. If a student is absent for part of the assessment, time should be provided when the student returns to school, within reason, to complete what he/she missed.

Please note: Booklets that are returned with parts not completed (reading comprehension) will not be marked as half marks are not given. The achievement standard is based on the four stories as a whole.

This assessment includes all Grade 6 students, except those with exemptions. It is important that all students complete the assessment within the regular classroom, unless exclusion is part of the requested student adaptation. The class discussions prior to the assessments are extremely beneficial to all students participating in the assessment.

Although approximate times have been given, these are guidelines for teachers. **Students should be given as much time as needed to complete the components of the assessment, using teacher discretion.**

Split classes/grades - what does the rest of the class do? The decision is left to teacher's discretion. Perhaps have the rest of the class work on an independent reading or writing activity. If this is problematic, please contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Linda MacDonald) at (902) 438-4901.

Activity - Reading / Writing

Curriculum Links - Reading and Viewing

The Elementary Literacy Assessment is based upon the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6*. Below are the General Curriculum Outcomes and Specific Curriculum Outcomes explicitly addressed by the assessment.

General Curriculum Outcome - Reading and Viewing (GCO 4)

Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 80*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Reading and Viewing (SCO 4.3)

Students will be expected to use a wider range of pictorial, typographical, and organizational features of written texts to obtain, verify, and reinforce their understanding of information. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 80*)

(SCO 4.4)

Students will be expected to use and integrate the various cueing systems (pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic) and a variety of strategies with increasing independence to construct meaning. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 80*)

- identify main idea and supporting details of a text
- identify principles of order in text (time, cause and effect, space)
- interpret figurative language
- use clues from the text and personal experiences to gain an understanding of character
- recognize different emotions and empathize with literary characters
- recognize the elements of a story or plot
- making connections between what they read and their own experiences and knowledge

General Curriculum Outcome - Reading and Viewing (GCO 6)

Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 84*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Reading and Viewing

(SCO 6.2)

Students will be expected to reflect on and give reasons for their interpretations of an increasing variety of texts. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 84*)

General Curriculum Outcome - Reading and Viewing (GCO 7)

Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts applying their knowledge of language, form, and genre. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 86*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Reading and Viewing

(SCO 7.3)

Students will be expected to respond critically to texts. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 86*)

- applying a growing range of strategies to analyse and evaluate texts
- demonstrating a growing awareness that all texts reflect a purpose and a perspective
- recognizing when language is being used to manipulate, persuade, or control them
- detecting prejudice, stereotyping and bias

Curriculum Links - Writing and Other Ways of Representing

The Elementary Literacy Assessment is based upon the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6*. Below are the General Curriculum Outcomes and Specific Curriculum Outcomes explicitly addressed by the assessment.

General Curriculum Outcome - Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(GCO 8)

Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning; and to use their imaginations. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 88*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 8.1)

Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation;

- to generate and organize language and ideas
- to record, develop, and reflect on ideas
- to describe feelings, reactions, values, and attitudes
- to record and reflect on experiences and their responses to them

(*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 88*)

(SCO 8.3)

Students will be expected to make language choices to enhance meaning and achieve interesting effects in imaginative writing and other ways of representing. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 88*)

General Curriculum Outcome - Writing and Other Ways of Representing (GCO 9)

Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 90*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 9.1)

Students will be expected to create written and media texts using an increasing variety of forms

- demonstrate understanding that particular forms require the use of specific features, structures, and patterns

(*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 90*)

(SCO 9.2)

Students will be expected to address the demands of an increasing variety of purposes and audiences

- make informed choices of form, style, and content for specific audiences and purposes

(*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 90*)

General Curriculum Outcome - Writing and Other Ways of Representing (GCO 10)

Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and media to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness. (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 92*)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes - Writing and Other Ways of Representing

(SCO 10.2)

Students will be expected to use the conventions of written language in final products

- punctuation - period, exclamation mark, question mark, apostrophe in contractions, in the possessive
- abbreviations - invitations, addresses, dates, days of the week, months of the year, organizations, acronyms
- use capitals for proper names, titles, places, organizations, days, months, holidays, beginning of sentences, first word in direct quotation
- paragraphs - topic sentence, grouping ideas, concluding sentence
- sentences - concept of sentence, kinds of sentences, run-on sentences, combining sentences (connectives), phrases, clauses
- spelling

(Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades 4-6, p. 92 and p. 231-233)

Required Materials

- Reading Booklet (provided)
- Student Work Booklet (provided)
- Pencil / Eraser

Helpful Hints

Share with the students the chart/page entitled, “Types of Questions.” The chart is included in this administration guide. You will need to put it on an overhead transparency. This chart includes sample questions in the format used in this assessment.

Demonstrate the procedure for answering a multiple choice question:

- explain to the students there are four answers given but only one is the correct answer, remind students that only one circle should be shaded in, read the question and the four possible answers, and answer the question and shade the circle beside the answer.

Demonstrate the procedure for answering an open-response question:

- explain to the students that this type of question asks you to give a written answer, and include in your explanation that the answer may not require the amount of lines provided (some people write big, etc.)

Share with the students the chart entitled, “Tips for Answering Multiple Choice Questions” included in the student booklet.

Share with the students the chart entitled, “Tips for Answering Open-Response Questions” included in the student booklet.

Share with students the area in the Student Reading Passages Booklet where the writing component (rough copy) is located.

Procedure

The time frame is approximately 60 minutes (with introduction) per reading/writing passage. You may or may not require the full hour.

Establish a “When you are done” activity for students prior to the assessment. This activity should be a quiet independent task to allow all students quiet, uninterrupted time to complete the assessment. Having a novel to go to when they are finished is one idea. Colouring/drawing is not recommended as students may rush through the assessment to get to that activity. The decision is left to teacher’s discretion.

Writing 1 (rough copy) / Reading 1

Distribute the reading booklets and the student booklets.

Have students locate the first writing activity in the back of the reading passages booklet.

Read the form of writing at the top of the page.

Read the prompt to the students.

Read the “When you write, be sure to:..” box to the students.

Ask the students to locate the planning space. Discuss how this space should be used (ideas, thoughts, web, notes, etc.) before they begin to write. You will need to ensure that students do not spend too much time in this area.

Explain to students that this is not a space for them to draw a picture after they have finished writing.

Teachers cannot do a brainstorming activity with the students prior to the writing assessment.

Read the prompt a second time.

Explain to students that they will be writing a rough copy today and then revising and editing for the good copy tomorrow.

Encourage the students to read the prompt to themselves before they begin.

Students may use dictionaries, thesauri, class charts, and word walls during the writing assessment. Students should realize that this is a final copy which will be read by others and should be legible. **The teacher or other students cannot act as a dictionary. Use of a spell checker or grammar checker is not permitted.**

Students will write independently for the remainder of the time. There should be **no teacher or peer conferencing.**

Do not collect writing booklets from students until the allotted time is over. This may encourage students who finish early to revisit their writing.

Remember that adaptations may be used for individual students. **Verbatim scribing is not allowed for the writing component of this assessment. Please refer to the Exemptions and Adaptations Policy for adaptations that are appropriate for this type of assessment.**

Reading 1

Have students locate the reading passage in the reading booklet and the question and answer section in the student booklet.

Have students locate the **Stop Sign** at the end of the section. Explain that they should complete all of the questions up to the **Stop Sign** and are not to work on any activities beyond the **Stop Sign**.

Remind students that this is not a memory test and they are expected to interact with the text as they read and answer each of the questions. Looking back to the story is expected and will help to answer the questions correctly.

Tell the students they are to read independently and cannot have any words supplied by the teacher.

Students are required to read the questions as well as the text. Assistance cannot be given in completing the tasks beyond what is indicated in the next two bullets.

No help is to be given with vocabulary when reading the text.

The questions **cannot** be read to the students. Words related to the context of the text cannot be read or explained to the students. Procedural language such as *give an example* can be explained to the students as it does not affect the understanding of the story.

Dictionaries cannot be used during the reading comprehension assessment.

Collect the booklets at the end of the allotted time.

Remember that adaptations may be used for individual students, such as verbatim scribing of written responses. A scribe shall record only as the student dictates, without prompting. *Please note the changes regarding the use of a scribe in the Exemptions and Adaptations Policy included at the end of this document)*

The question and answer section of the reading component is assessing comprehension, not writing skills, therefore the student does not have to supply spelling, capitalization or punctuation. The student dictates and the scribe writes. **Reading the text or the questions to the student is not an acceptable adaptation.**

Writing 1 (good copy) / Reading 2

Distribute the reading booklets and the student booklets.

Students will do a good copy of Writing 1. Space is provided in the student booklet for the good copy. The good copy in the student booklet will be the only copy that will be marked. Once the reading passages booklet (with the rough copy) are returned, they will be discarded. Please make sure students are aware of this.

Students can revise/edit and transfer their writing into the student booklet where space is provided.

Reading 2 - follow the same procedure as Reading 1

Writing 2 (field test) / Reading 3

Distribute the reading booklets and the student booklets.

Have students locate the second writing activity in the back of the reading passages booklet. Writing 2 is a field test. The purpose of a field test in writing is to test the prompt, not the student. The students will not be producing a good copy of the field test writing.

Read the form of writing at the top of the page.

Read the prompt to the students.

Ask the students to locate the planning space. Discuss how this space should be used (ideas, thoughts, web, notes, etc.) before they begin to write. You will need to ensure that students do not spend too much time in this area.

Explain to students that this is not a space for them to draw a picture after they have finished writing.

Teachers cannot do a brainstorming activity with the students prior to the writing assessment.

Read the prompt a second time.

Encourage the students to read the prompt to themselves before they begin.

Students may use dictionaries, thesauri, class charts, and word walls during the writing assessment. Students should realize that this is a final copy which will be read by others and should be legible. **The teacher or other students cannot act as a dictionary. Use of a spell checker or grammar checker is not permitted.**

Students will write independently for the remainder of the time. There should be **no teacher or peer conferencing.**

Do not collect writing booklets from students until the allotted time is over. This may encourage students who finish early to revisit their writing.

Reading 3 follow the same procedure as Reading 1 and 2

Reading 4 follow the same procedure as Reading 1, 2 and 3.

After the Assessment

Teacher Information

When the assessment is completed, please follow these directions:

Packaging

Ensure that requested documentation (IEP, Modified, Adaptations) is attached. A photocopy of the first and second page of the IEP document, and the first page of the Modified Program is required. Any assessments received without required documentation will not be processed until documentation is received.

Ensure that all materials are returned to the School Contact.

School Contact Information

Prior to the Assessment Date

Locate a safe, secure storage space for the assessments.

The assessment booklets will arrive already sorted by class. Please ensure that there is a package of booklets for each Grade 6 class.

If you have new students to your school and there is not an assessment booklet with their name on it, please use one of the three blank assessments (per class) that have been provided. Please fill in their name, school number and student number on each booklet.

Schools that do not use any of the blank assessments must return all blanks with the rest of the assessments. Each booklet is coded and must be returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Assessment booklets should not be viewed prior to the day of the assessment. This helps with fairness and consistency across the province.

Assessment Dates

On the day of the administration, deliver the assessments to each Grade 6 class.

Remind the teacher to ensure the Exemption / Adaptation form on the back of each student booklet is completed and documentation can be attached once the assessment is complete. It is the school contact's responsibility to ensure that all assessments requiring documentation is complete before sending the assessments back to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

After each session, materials must be gathered and stored for secure reasons.

Arrange a pick up time with each Grade 6 teacher. After each session, materials must be gathered and stored for secure reasons. Assessments should not sit in a classroom or on a teacher's desk unless it is during the assessment session .

Arrange a pick up time with each Grade 6 teacher.

After the Assessment

Collect all assessment material.

Ensure all assessments have been collected.

Ensure the Student Tracking Forms are complete.

Once the assessments have been collected, take them to the school office and arrange for pick up. Contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at 438-4887 for pick up.

If a student is absent on any day during the assessment dates (May 6, 7, 13, 14), time should be given to the student to complete the assessment. Allow a few days for completion. Do not send the box of assessments until all assessments are complete.

Students must complete the full assessment. In the reading component, the four stories and questions are considered one assessment. Students who finish just two or three will not be marked with half marks.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda MacDonald, Literacy Achievement Specialist, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at (902) 438-4901.

Sample Questions (format)

Multiple Choice Question

Why do children go to school?

- to stay healthy
- to make friends
- to learn
- to play

Open-Response Question

What is your favourite subject in school and why?

* Remind students that their answer to an open-response question may not require all of the lines provided.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Common Assessment Program – Exemptions and Adaptations

Definitions

IEP (Individualized Education Plan)

A written record that documents the collaborative process for the development of an individualized plan for a student with special educational needs. This planning is a continuous and integrated process of instruction, assessment, evaluation, decision-making and reporting. The IEP outlines support services and educational program adaptations and/or modifications.

(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 75)

Modified

A process which changes the prescribed curriculum to meet a student's special needs. Modified courses do not provide the same credit as a prescribed course. Details of the modified course must be documented and included in the student's file and the student's record or transcript should indicate that the course has been modified.

(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 75)

Adapted

A documented process that allows a student with special needs to participate in a prescribed curriculum (course) with changes in format, instruction strategies and/or assessment procedures that retain the learning outcomes of the curriculum. This adaptation may include alternate formats, instructional strategies and/or assessment procedures. Full credit will be granted for such courses but adaptations used will be documented and kept on the student's file and/or transcript.

(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2005, p. 73)

Guidelines for Identifying Students Eligible for Total Exemptions, Partial Exemptions, Adaptations/Accommodations and EAL

Total Exemptions

Total exemptions from the assessment should be considered for those students who have a cognitive deficit, multiple handicapping conditions or a learning disability to such a degree as would render the assessment inappropriate and/or emotionally harmful.

Exemptions will be allowed for students who have been identified with exceptionalities and have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Modified Program in place as of December 1, 2013. The entire booklet for those students must be returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development with documentation attached, i.e., a photocopy of the first two pages of the IEP/Modified Program.

Exemptions (Other)

Specific circumstances may prevent a student from participating in the assessment. Such circumstances may include:

- **Long-term illness** – student was unable to write the assessment during the designated time frame.
- **Bereavement** – student was not able to participate during the designated time frame, due to a significant loss.
- **Other** – student was unable to participate due to some other circumstance not listed above. The nature of the circumstance must be specified in written format and attached to the student's assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Partial Exemptions

Partial exemptions from the assessment should be considered for those students currently identified with exceptionalities and have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Modified Program. These students would be identified as children who are able, with adaptations/ accommodations, to attempt a specific component of the assessment. Adaptations used to support the student during instruction should be provided during the assessment, if such adaptations do not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment, as it is important that the results of the assessment accurately reflect the **independent** abilities of the student. Appropriate documentation must be attached to the assessment booklet, i.e., a photocopy of the IEP/Modified Program and completed Adaptation/Accommodation form, before returning to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Adaptations

Adaptations used to support the student during instruction should be provided during the assessment, if such adaptations do not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment, as it is important that the results of the assessment accurately reflect the **independent** abilities of the student. Photocopies of that documentation must be attached to the assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Students currently working with adaptations are not eligible for exemption.

English Second Language (EAL)

EAL students are expected to participate in the assessment. Appropriate adaptations/ accommodations, if required, should be provided and documentation of adaptations/ accommodations must be attached to the assessment booklet before returning to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Note: Though it is expected that the English As An Additional Language student participate in the assessment, if the student's English language skills are not sufficiently developed, then a school-based decision involving, at minimum, the student, the student's

parent or guardian, the student's teacher and principal at the school may be to exempt the student from participating in the assessment.

Acceptable Adaptations/Accommodations

Additional Time

Students for whom "additional time" is a documented adaptation may require more than the additional time given to the entire class during the assessment.

Verbatim Scribing

*** Teachers with students who will use a scribe to complete the assessment this year will need to complete an application form made available from the Department Of Education and Early Childhood Development Assessment and Evaluation Unit.**

Students with a visual or physical impairment, injury or learning disability and for whom "verbatim scribing" is a documented adaptation

If a scribe is required, the scribe writes exactly what the student dictates. Scribes do not edit or proof-read student responses, nor do they advise, suggest or imply that changes are required. The student is required to indicate where punctuation and capitalization are to be inserted.

Verbatim Reading

Students who need instructions or prompts read to them by the teacher or communicated through sign language.

Only verbatim reading of directions or prompts should be used. Reading comprehension passages and questions accompanying them may not be read out loud to students.

Alternate Setting

Students for whom “alternate setting” is a documented adaptation.

Students placed in alternate settings must complete the assessment independently.

Ideally,

the assessment should be supervised by the student’s teacher, even in the alternate setting.

However, if this is not possible, and someone other than the student’s teacher is supervising the assessment, this supervisor must know the parameters of the assessment, and the integrity of the assessment must be maintained. The name and the role of the supervisor must be noted on the photocopy of the documented adaptation that is attached to the student’s assessment booklet when the booklet is returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Assistive Technology

Students with a visual or physical impairment, injury or learning disability, for whom “assistive technology” is a documented adaptation.

Students may use assistive technology in the writing portions of the assessment, if such assistive technology does not compromise or alter the validity of the assessment. Such assistive technology, therefore, should not include such features as cueing systems or grammar or spell-checks, as these would compromise the validity of the assessment. The type of assistive technology (and software) used must be specified on the documented adaptation that is attached to the student’s assessment booklet when the booklet is returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Personal FM System

Students who require a personal FM system during a regular school day.

English/Foreign Language Dictionary

ESL students are permitted to use an EAL dictionary (paper or electronic).

