

**BOOKLET**

**1**

March 2007

# Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

**SESSION 1**

**OSSLT 2007  
RELEASED SELECTIONS  
AND TEST QUESTIONS**

# **Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test**

## **Session 1**

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

## Nelson Mandela made an honorary Canadian



In a simple ceremony at the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, Ontario, Nelson Mandela became the first living recipient of honorary Canadian citizenship. 1

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien praised Mandela, the first black president of South Africa, for triumphing over the suffering of South Africa by successfully challenging fear and ignorance. “Today, you are doing us the greatest honour of all by accepting our invitation to join the Canadian family.” 2

As a young lawyer, Mandela was unjustly imprisoned for 27 years. After his release, he was head of the African National Congress that in '94 made the transition from outlaw organization to national government in South Africa. 3

Mandela’s life has been based on tolerance, generosity and a lasting commitment to freedom. In his struggles against a racist government that segregated its people and tortured its enemies, Mandela rejected revenge and won agreements and understanding. He consistently opted for what was right over what was popular or advantageous. “Your respect for diversity within your own society and your tolerant and civilized manner of dealing with the challenges of difference and diversity have always been an inspiration,” Chrétien said. 4

Mandela joins Raoul Wallenberg, the only other honorary Canadian citizen. Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, had already died in a Soviet prison camp when he was recognized for saving thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis during the Second World War. Mandela and Wallenberg are two genuine heroes for Canadians to admire. 5

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

**1** What question is not answered in paragraph 1 of this news report?

- A Who?
- B Why?
- C What?
- D Where?

**2** Which of the following shows how South Africa has progressed in its fight against racism?

- F A black man became president.
- G President Mandela was imprisoned.
- H Mandela became the first honorary Canadian citizen.
- J South Africa divided black people from white people.

**3** According to paragraph 4 of this selection, Chrétien praised Mandela for his

- A generosity.
- B civilized manner.
- C rejection of revenge.
- D commitment to freedom.

**4** The best meaning for the word “tolerant” as used in paragraph 4 is

- F patient.
- G pleasant.
- H different.
- J accepting.

**5** Honorary Canadian citizenship was awarded to Nelson Mandela and Raoul Wallenberg because they

- A joined their families in Canada.
- B were friends with the Prime Minister.
- C represented the values of Canadian people.
- D helped Canadians in the Second World War.



**Written Answer**

**6** Do Canadians benefit from people becoming honorary citizens? Explain your answer using information in the selection and your own ideas.

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**Rough Notes**

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*

End of Section I. Continue to Section II. 

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

**1** Choose the correct option to fill in the blank.

\_\_\_\_\_ got wet when it rained.

- A He and I
- B Him and I
- C He and me
- D Me and him

**2** Select the sentence that is written correctly.

- F Mrs. Brown is a teacher who help students.
- G Dr. Smith, like many other doctors, study diseases.
- H Of all the building materials, wood is one of the best.
- J Vitamin A is one of many vitamins that is good for you.

**3** Choose the best opening sentence for this paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_ The trail is a great place for people living in the city to get out into the fresh air and exercise. Cyclists, walkers, in-line skaters and people pushing baby carriages all share this beautiful trail. On special occasions, the trail is used for marathon races and fundraising walks. The Waterfront Trail is an asset to the Mississauga community.

- A Parts of the Waterfront Trail use Mississauga's roadways.
- B Litter has become a problem for the Mississauga Waterfront Trail.
- C The Waterfront Trail has become popular among Mississauga's citizens.
- D Some citizens of Mississauga are questioning the building of the Waterfront Trail.

**4** Choose the sentence that does not belong in this paragraph.

- (1) Avalanches occur often in western Canada.
- (2) When the snow on steep mountainsides gets too heavy, it starts to slide.
- (3) Avalanches can slide at speeds of 300 kilometres an hour.
- (4) Sometimes there are covered bridges over trains travelling through mountainous areas.
- (5) When there is a dangerous buildup of snow, avalanche experts start an avalanche on purpose.
- (6) This way they can prevent people from getting hurt by unexpected avalanches.

- F Sentence 2
- G Sentence 3
- H Sentence 4
- J Sentence 5

**Short Writing Task** (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

**1** Choose a time of year and explain how it affects the way you feel.

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**Rough Notes**

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*

**Writing a News Report****1**

- Task:** Write a **news report** based on the headline and picture on the next page.
- You will have to make up the facts and information, answering some or all of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
  - You must relate your newspaper report to **both** the headline **and** the picture.

**Purpose and**

**Audience:** to report on an event for the readers of a newspaper

**Length:** The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

## Students raise money for a good cause



### Rough Notes

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*

*Write your report on the lines provided on the following page.*



Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.



Canadian rock star Avril Lavigne reportedly loves wearing running shoes, singer Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones got married in them and actor Dudley Moore (whose feet were different sizes) bought 30 custom-made pairs in one day. However, these modern

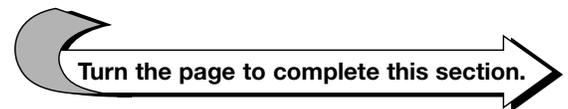
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When — as some people believe — members of a Brazilian tribe dipped their feet into the liquid latex of rubber trees some 300 years ago, they created the world’s first running shoes. The vulcanizing process, in which heat is used to make rubber more elastic and longer lasting, was developed in the 1860s, making it possible to manufacture rubber soles for shoes. But it wasn’t until almost 40 years later that canvas-and-rubber shoes appeared. For years after that, running shoes were white or black, low cut or high cut and criticized as uncomfortable and unhealthy. In 1962 the first modern running shoe, with a comfortable wide front, a rippled sole and a shock-absorbing design, was marketed. Further improvements followed: designer colours, new sole patterns, “breathable” nylon uppers, pumps that inflate the heel area and more. Technology has caught up with the running shoe. A model has even been produced with a built-in microchip that measures the wearer’s speed and distance covered and the number of calories burned.

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**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** According to this selection, what changed in the running shoe in 1962?
- A the use of latex
  - B the high cut style
  - C the design of the sole
  - D the “breathable” nylon uppers
- 2** The phrase closest in meaning to “vulcanizing” as used in line 9 of this selection is
- F heating rubber.
  - G inflating the heel area.
  - H dipping feet into liquid latex.
  - J creating rubber-soled running shoes.
- 3** “Further improvements followed: designer colours, new sole patterns, ‘breathable’ nylon uppers, pumps that inflate the heel area and more.” What is the purpose of the colon (:) in this sentence?
- A to signal a contradiction
  - B to link an idea and examples
  - C to separate two contrasting ideas
  - D to introduce an emphatic statement
- 4** In this selection, “but” (line 11) signals that a contrasting point is going to be made. What other word in this selection does the same thing?
- F after
  - G when
  - H further
  - J however
- 5** Why would the ability to inflate the heel area be an improvement to the running shoe?
- A It cushions the impact.
  - B It makes the latex last longer.
  - C It cools the foot inside the shoe.
  - D It produces different sole patterns.
- 6** The information in this passage is organized
- F according to time.
  - G through comparisons.
  - H using supported opinion.
  - J by advantages and disadvantages.

**Written Answer**

- 7** Summarize this selection. Include a main idea and one point that supports it.

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**Rough Notes**

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**Education Quality and  
Accountability Office**



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The information in this booklet is being collected under authority of clause 4 (1) (b) and subsection 9 (6) of the *Education Quality and Accountability Office Act*, 1996, for the purposes of administering and marking tests of pupils in secondary schools and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of secondary education, in accordance with section 3 of the Act. Inquiries regarding this collection should be directed to the Senior Policy Analyst, EQAO, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1200, Toronto, ON M5B 2M9 • 1-888-327-7377.

**BOOKLET**

**2**

March 2007

# Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

**SESSION 2**

**OSSLT 2007  
RELEASED SELECTIONS  
AND TEST QUESTIONS**

# **Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test**

## **Session 2**

**Writing a Series of Paragraphs****1**

**Task:** Write a **minimum of three paragraphs** expressing an **opinion** on the topic below. Develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.).

**Purpose and**

**Audience:** an adult who is interested in your opinion

**Length:** The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.

**Topic:** **Should every student be required to take a Physical Education class every year of high school?**

*Write your series of paragraphs on the lines provided on the following two pages.*

**Rough Notes**

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*





**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

**1** Select the sentence that is written correctly.

- A “Yes, it is.” she replied.
- B “My friend writes songs” I said, “as well as music.”
- C “Where did he learn to write songs and music” asked Ranjit?
- D “Isn’t that the song that your friend wrote for you?” asked Jan.

**2** Choose the sentence that has correct punctuation.

- F Kathys brothers grew up in Sudbury, but they didn’t play hockey on the towns team.
- G Kathy’s brothers grew up in Sudbury, but they didn’t play hockey on the town’s team.
- H Kathys’ brothers grew up in Sudbury, but they didn’t play hockey on the town’s team.
- J Kathy’s brothers’ grew up in Sudbury, but they didn’t play hockey on the towns’ team.

**3** Choose a place to insert the following sentence:

“After ten minutes, we got to the ticket booth and paid for the tickets.”

(1) My brother and I wanted to go to the school play. (2) The first thing we had to do was to wait in line to buy our tickets. (3) Then we had to find seats in the crowded hall. (4) After another wait, the lights were turned off. (5) Finally, the play began.

- A after Sentence 1
- B after Sentence 2
- C after Sentence 3
- D after Sentence 4

**4** Choose the option that best combines all the information in the boldfaced sentences.

**Her team was winning by one point.**

**There was one minute left to play.**

**Tara scored a goal.**

- F There was one minute left to play and Tara scored a goal.
- G When Tara scored a goal, her team was winning by one point.
- H Tara’s team was winning by one point when Tara scored a goal with one minute to play.
- J Scoring a goal, Tara’s team was winning by one point and it was in the last minute of play.

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

## Famous at Fifteen



Flavia Bujor (pronounced Bu-JO) was born in Romania in 1988 and emigrated to Paris with her parents at the age of two. Her father and mother encouraged her love of books by reading her fairy tales and plays. She could read before she started school, and as a six-year-old she wrote poems. Later, her writing included short stories and the beginnings of novels. At the age of twelve, she decided to write a whole novel, just to see if she could.

Flavia had always enjoyed daydreaming and thinking up stories. The storyline for her first novel, *The Prophecy of the Stones*, evolved as she wrote it: characters or events that seemed important at the beginning became less significant as the story developed. The novel she finally wrote is the story of a hospitalized teenager who imagines a fantasy world where three heroines join together to save their land.

Flavia tried not to base the characters on people she knew. She enjoyed trying to imagine different kinds of characters, each with his or her own personal history. Another challenge was to think about how the characters would most likely react to the extraordinary situations they are faced with in the novel.

Flavia wrote the book over the course of six months. She says that at first she would write just whenever she felt like it. Sometimes she wrote every day, but, at other times, weeks could go by when she wouldn't write a line. A lot of the book was written while she was on vacation. She took writing paper with her, and when she returned home she transferred the writing to her computer. Flavia says that she did not try to write her first draft perfectly but let her ideas flow freely. Later, she would revise what she had written and improve the way she had expressed her ideas.

As she finished each chapter, she would give a copy to family and friends to see whether they liked it and thought she should continue. At times, she would lose faith in the story or have trouble writing certain scenes. Whenever that happened, her friends encouraged her to go on with the book and helped her believe that she could finish it.

One friend of the family thought Flavia's work was so good he sent some pages to a publisher. The publisher, amazed that a young person could write so well, contacted Flavia immediately and offered her a contract. After that, Flavia felt that she had to finish the novel.

*The Prophecy of the Stones* was published when Flavia was fourteen. The publishing company arranged for Flavia to travel from her home in France to other countries in order to promote her book. By the time she was 15, *The Prophecy of the Stones* was a bestseller in Europe and many companies around the world had bought the rights to publish it in their countries. It has been translated into more than 20 languages.

Flavia says of her book, "For me it's like a dream. I really didn't think it was possible to publish it. The hardest thing by far is to believe in it for the entire process." And what of the future? She comments: "I want to continue writing, but I don't want to do only that. I couldn't imagine spending all my days at home in front of a computer."

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** Flavia moved to Paris in about
- A 1988.
  - B 1990.
  - C 1994.
  - D 2000.
- 2** Why are there parentheses around “pronounced Bu-JO”? (paragraph 1)
- F This information is not accurate.
  - G This information is not essential.
  - H It is a quotation from another source.
  - J The writer is uncertain about this information.
- 3** What is the best meaning for “evolved” as used in paragraph 2?
- A finished
  - B changed
  - C simplified
  - D lengthened
- 4** Paragraph 3 refers to “another challenge.” What was the first challenge?
- F inventing different characters
  - G basing characters on people she knew
  - H predicting how characters would react to each situation
  - J thinking of new situations for the characters to face
- 5** According to this selection, what happened when Flavia found it hard to write?
- A She would become depressed.
  - B She got support from her friends.
  - C She revised what she had written.
  - D She concentrated on getting to the end.
- 6** Which of the following best describes the way Flavia approached her writing?
- F She made sure she wrote every day.
  - G She became impatient when revising her work.
  - H She finished the book before showing anyone.
  - J She allowed herself freedom as she wrote.
- 7** What does this selection suggest about Flavia’s attitude toward being a published author?
- A She loves all the attention she gets.
  - B She likes having to work on a computer.
  - C She does not want it to take over her life.
  - D She finds being a celebrity very annoying.
- 8** Which one of the paragraphs listed below relates most closely to the selection’s title, “Famous at Fifteen”?
- F paragraph 4
  - G paragraph 5
  - H paragraph 7
  - J paragraph 8



- 9** The main purpose of this selection is to
- A show how hard it is to get published.
  - B explain how to get help from your family.
  - C demonstrate that luck determines success.
  - D describe how a teenager became successful.

End of Section VIII. Continue to Section IX. 

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

## Cheat

“Congratulations,” said Nadi as she caught up with Tom in the school corridor.	1
“Thanks,” mumbled Tom. He didn’t even look at her.	2
“You deserved to win. I really liked the way your bear escaped. It was so . . . ”	3
“Original?” he suggested.	4
“Yes. I never thought it would end up there, of all places. Your brain must work in a much different way than everyone else’s.”	5
“I guess it does.”	6
“How did you ever come up with such an idea? I mean, it was —”	7
“You should have won,” he interrupted.	8
“What?”	9
“Your story had a more surprising ending than mine.”	10
“It’s nice of you to say that, but I don’t —”	11
“I cheated. I copied my story from a book,” he said. “I didn’t mean to. It was from a book I read years ago and had forgotten about. But during the writing competition I saw the picture of the bear above the teacher’s desk and then the story just wrote itself. It was only when I got home that I realized the stories were similar.”	12
“That’s not really cheating,” Nadi insisted.	13
“Not really, but I feel it gave me an unfair advantage. So I’ve just been to see the principal and I’ve asked her to disqualify me from the writing competition.”	14
“And what will . . . ” she was confused.	15
“Your horse story was good. It means that you will get first prize. Congratulations,” he said before walking slowly down the hall.	16
“But I don’t want to win this way,” Nadi thought as she watched Tom leave. She began to wonder if she had once read a story about a horse that saved a town.	17

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** What do the ellipsis points ( . . . ) at the end of paragraph 3 suggest?
- A Nadi has nothing else to say.
  - B Nadi knows what Tom thinks.
  - C Nadi is uncertain of what to say next.
  - D Nadi doesn't want to hurt Tom's feelings.
- 2** "How did you ever come up with such an idea? I mean, it was —" (paragraph 7)
- Which of the following would best complete Nadi's sentence?
- F so unusual.
  - G not as good as mine.
  - H so perfectly obvious.
  - J copied from somewhere else.
- 3** In paragraph 15, Nadi is "confused" because she
- A is afraid she has cheated.
  - B is unsure of the effect of Tom's decision.
  - C thinks the competition might be cancelled.
  - D wonders if Tom will have to write another story.
- 4** "She began to wonder if she had once read a story about a horse that saved a town." (paragraph 17) Which of the following is the most likely reason for this ending?
- F to suggest that Nadia has cheated
  - G to raise questions in the reader's mind
  - H to show that Nadi's head is full of stories
  - J to bring the storyline to a clear conclusion
- 5** How do Nadi's feelings about the results of the competition change during this selection?
- A from concern to relief
  - B from happiness to anger
  - C from acceptance to doubt
  - D from uncertainty to certainty

**Written Answers**

**6** Using information from this selection, explain what Nadi’s actions show about her character.

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**7** Do you think Tom had an “unfair advantage”? (paragraph 14) Explain your answer using information from this selection and your own ideas.

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**Rough Notes**

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*

**Short Writing Task** (Answer in full and correctly written sentences.)

**1** State one of your goals in life. Explain why it is important to you.

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**Rough Notes**

*Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.*

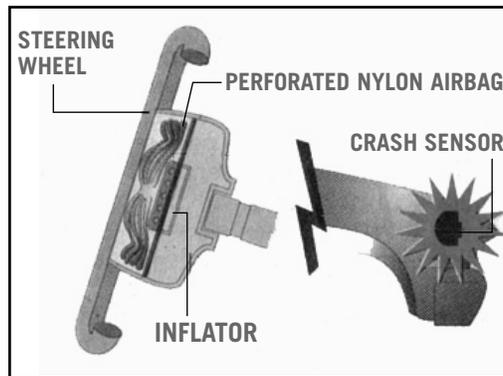
Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow it.

## How Airbags Work

The airbag is a safety feature found in all new cars. It is designed to help protect drivers and passengers from serious injury. On impact, the airbag inflates, moving toward the person at up to 300 km/h — as fast as a race car at the end of a straightaway.

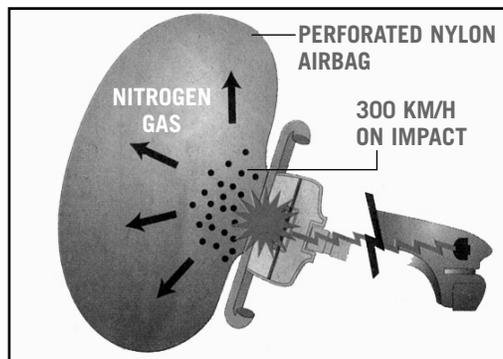
### 1. CRASH

**Within 20 milliseconds (0.02 seconds) of impact:** The airbag is triggered by sensors when the crash force is more than the equivalent of 14–20 km/h into a solid barrier.



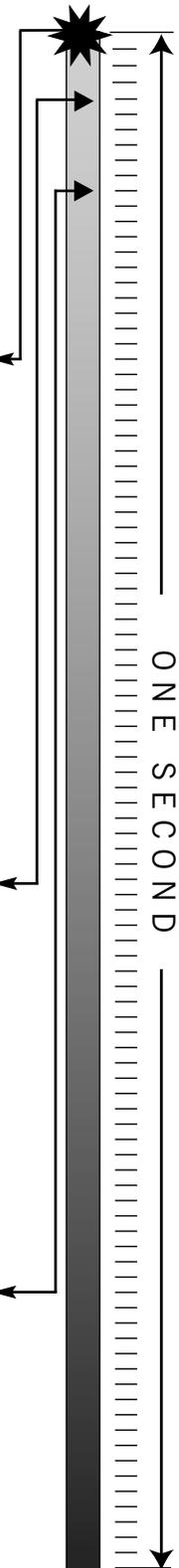
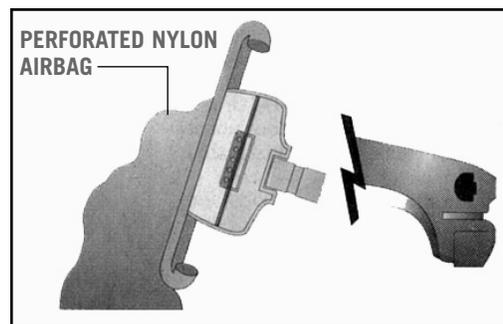
### 2. INFLATE

**Within 20–40 milliseconds of impact:** A device at the base of the bag releases nitrogen gas that inflates the bag, which then moves toward the person at speeds of up to 300 km/h. By 60 milliseconds, when it reaches the person in the seat, the airbag is fully inflated.



### 3. DEFLATE

**Within 100 milliseconds (1/10 second) of impact:** The airbag begins to deflate as gas escapes through tiny holes, ensuring the person is not trapped by the bag.



Adapted from "How airbags work" by Gerry Malloy, published in the *Toronto Star*, Saturday, October 13, 2001.

**Multiple-Choice** (Record the best or most correct answer on the Student Answer Sheet.)

- 1** What is the best meaning for the word “impact” as used in the first paragraph?
- A crash
  - B safety
  - C injury
  - D protection
- 2** What is represented by each line marked on the right side of the shaded bar?
- F 1 millisecond
  - G 10 milliseconds
  - H 100 milliseconds
  - J 1000 milliseconds
- 3** What does the star at the top of the shaded bar stand for?
- A a noise
  - B inflation
  - C an injury
  - D a collision
- 4** The long arrows connecting the illustrations to the shaded bar are used to show
- F why the airbag inflates.
  - G when each event happens.
  - H how the airbag saves lives.
  - J what happens to the driver.
- 5** Why are there numbers in the subheadings?
- A They show the order of events.
  - B They tell how quickly the airbag inflates.
  - C They explain the pictures in the boxes beside them.
  - D They introduce the descriptions that follow the subheadings.
- 6** What would a driver most likely say after experiencing the activation of the airbag in this selection?
- F The honking horn was caused by the escaping gas.
  - G When the airbag hit my chest, it was like a gentle push.
  - H It all happened so fast that I didn’t even see the bag inflate.
  - J As soon as I felt the bump, I took off my glasses so they wouldn’t be broken.

**Background Information** (Record your answers on the Student Answer Sheet.)

We need to know about your background, so we can see how students with different experiences do on the test. All responses will be summarized and reported at the school, board and provincial levels.

Read each question carefully. If no answer seems exactly right, fill in the circle on the Student Answer Sheet with the response closest to what you want to say.

**Language Background**

- 1** a) Is English the first language you learned at home?  
       **Y** Yes    **N** No
- b) What languages do you speak at home (choose one only)?
- A** Only or mostly English
- B** Another language (or languages) as often as English
- C** Only or mostly another language (or other languages)

**Home Computer Use**

- 2** Indicate how often you use a computer at home for homework (choose one only).
- A** I don't have a computer at home.
- B** I never or hardly ever use the computer for homework.
- C** I use the computer once or twice a month for homework.
- D** I use the computer once or twice a week for homework.
- E** I use the computer almost every day for homework.

**Reading**

- 3** Indicate the types of materials you read in English outside school most weeks.
- a) Non-fiction books, e.g., biographies  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- b) Comics  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- c) Web sites, e-mail, chat messages  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- d) Letters  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- e) Magazines  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- f) Manuals, instructions  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- g) Newspapers  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- h) Novels, fiction, short stories  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- i) Song lyrics, poems  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- j) Religious or spiritual writings  
           **Y** Yes    **N** No
- 4** Indicate the number of hours a week you read materials written in English outside school, not including your homework (choose one only).
- A** One hour or less
- B** More than one hour but less than three hours
- C** More than three hours but less than five hours
- D** Five hours or more

**5** Indicate what English-language materials you have at home.

- a) Dictionaries, encyclopedias (print or electronic)  
Y Yes N No
- b) Books  
Y Yes N No
- c) Newspapers  
Y Yes N No
- d) Magazines  
Y Yes N No

### Writing

**6** Indicate the types of writing you do in English outside school most weeks.

- a) E-mail, chat messages  
Y Yes N No
- b) Letters, journals, diaries  
Y Yes N No
- c) Notes, directions, instructions  
Y Yes N No
- d) Song lyrics, poems  
Y Yes N No
- e) Stories, fiction  
Y Yes N No
- f) Work-related writing  
Y Yes N No

**7** Indicate the number of hours a week you write in English outside school, not including your homework (choose one only).

- A One hour or less
- B More than one hour but less than three hours
- C More than three hours but less than five hours
- D Five hours or more

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